

# *Western Sierra Charter Schools*

## **Student and Parent Handbook**



*"Committed to Family-Centered Education!"*

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# **Western Sierra Charter Schools**\_\_\_\_\_

Western Sierra Charter Schools is a 501c3 non-profit corporation whose sole purpose is the governance of Mountain Home School and Glacier High School. Both schools are chartered with Yosemite Unified School District but as a charter school we operate independently.

## **STAFF CONTACTS**\_\_\_\_\_

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To contact one of us or one of our Advising Teachers, please visit our website at [www.wscsfamily.org](http://www.wscsfamily.org)

# **WELCOME LETTER**

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## **MESSAGE FROM OUR Director**

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Greetings Students and Families of Mountain Home School Charter and Glacier High School Charter!

We are committed to three foundational principles. First, parents are to be active leaders in their child's education. Secondly, each student's academic program is personalized to meet the needs of that individual student. Finally, we are committed to maintaining high expectations of excellence in both academic rigor and personal conduct for students, parents and faculty.

Mountain Home School was founded in 1994 to serve the mountain community of families looking for an alternative to the traditional K-8 seat-based schools. Glacier High School was founded in 2002 for the purpose of creating a high school program similar in structure to Mountain Home Charter's elementary program. Today, both schools serve students at our resource center in Fresno.

Our job here is to provide you with the resources you need to accomplish the job you desire to do with excellence. We provide you with four types of resources. First we provide your family with guidance from professional, credentialed and experienced teachers. Second, we conduct classes and field trips taught and led by our teachers and designed around our students' needs and interests. Third, we supply you with a wide variety of curriculum and learning materials. Finally, we are a forum and meeting place for home-schooling families. Thus we provide you a network of other families pursuing similar goals as yours.

This handbook is intended to give you a short introduction to how our school program works. It is not a complete overview of our program nor does it provide an answer for all questions. Perhaps the best place to get the answers you need is from the staff at school or other “veteran” parents.

Please take the time to read it carefully and keep it handy throughout the school year. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to call or come by. Mountain Home and Glacier High School are service organizations. If there is any way we may be of assistance please let us know.

Again, welcome to Mountain Home & Glacier High!

Michael Cox, Executive Director



## CHARTER & PROGRAM DISTINCTIONS

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California Public Charter Schools were established in 1992 by the California Charter School Act. This Act allowed charter schools to be established as an option for students, parents, teachers and community members to design self-governing schools in order to meet the needs of the community.

These independent public schools are designed and operated by educators, parents, and other community leaders. Each charter school is sponsored by a school district or county board of education which monitors the school's quality and integrity. Charter schools operate by law and are created to be free of much of the education code and bureaucracy that hinders traditional government schools from meeting the needs of students.

Charter schools have the freedom to be designed as site-based, home-based, or hybrid programs. Regardless of program type, all charter schools are programs of choice. This means that each school is held accountable by its own participants to maintain academic and programmatic excellence. These participants attend voluntarily and are free to leave the program if it is not meeting their needs.

Glacier High School Charter was created to be a complementary high school program for the elementary program of Mountain Home School Charter. Glacier was developed to support a parent-led education. Glacier is a "hybrid" program which offers on-site instruction through teacher led courses, on-site counseling and tutoring, and a foundation of supported home-based curriculum.

As charter schools, Mountain Home and Glacier enjoy the freedom to innovate and collaborate with students and parents. We use the term "personalized learning" to explain how each student receives individualized attention and a customized program. Our program is not designed to meet every need or desire, but we excel at what we are designed to offer; parent-led education for students and personalized learning for all.

**For Glacier High School information, see page 27**

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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## **MOUNTAIN HOME SCHOOL CHARTER**

Vision Statement.....	8
Mission Statement.....	8
Resources.....	9-10
Services.....	11
Communication.....	11
Student Policies & Practices.....	11
Requirements.....	11-14
Assessments and Testing.....	14
Meetings.....	14-15
Samples.....	15-17
Attendance.....	17-18
Student Conduct.....	18-19
Suicide Prevention Policy.....	19-20
What do I teach?.....	20
Writing Student Goals.....	20-21
Grade Level Expectations.....	21-23
Teaching the Curriculum.....	23-24
On-Site Classes.....	24
Termination of Enrollment.....	24-25
Withdrawing Your Student.....	26

## **MOUNTAIN HOME'S VISION STATEMENT** \_\_\_\_\_

The vision of Mountain Home is to create a rigorous, dynamic and accountable learning community that is built upon voluntary association, parent leadership, personalized student learning, and high academic standards for all students.

Mountain Home will accomplish these four complementary goals by providing all students and parents with: personal, experienced teacher guidance and support; powerful and proven instruction; ongoing, multiple modality assessments; and a large and growing inventory of high quality, standards aligned instructional resources that offer both breadth and depth in curriculum and auxiliary materials. As a result, students will develop the skills necessary to become responsible lifelong learners who understand personal dedication and desire as the keys for success.

## **MOUNTAIN HOME'S MISSION STATEMENT** \_\_\_\_\_

Provide the community with an effective educational alternative that assists parents in the education of their students, inspiring them to learn and grow to their highest potential and become responsible contributing community members.

# RESOURCES

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Our central school location is in Oakhurst. We also have a resource center in Fresno. All *resources*, including the Advising Teachers, are available in our *central*/location of Oakhurst, as well as in Fresno.

## Resource List:

### Codes:

\* = Can be checked out for home use.

# = Can be copied for your use.

+ = Must stay on site but can be used while at MHSC

### Equipment:

- + copy machine.
- + binding machine
- + paper cutter
- + computers (students must have permission of the Advising Teachers)
- + Ellison Dye Cutter

### Books:

- \* textbooks and teacher's guides in all subject areas at all grade levels
- \*# supplementary materials (such as study guides and test books)
- \* special workbooks (such as handwriting and vocabulary)
- \* library books
- \*+ a few resource books (atlas, dictionary, etc.)
- \*+ homeschooling books and articles about homeschooling



\*+# curriculum resource books (literature units, science ideas, math drills, seasonal units, thematic units, black-line masters of maps, etc.) Only a limited amount of these may be checked out.

### **Learning Aids that we may carry:**

- \* math manipulatives (clock face, base ten blocks, tangrams, attribute blocks, counters, Cuisineaire Rods, geometric solids, etc.)
- \* math equipment (meter sticks, measuring jars, balance, compasses, protractors, calculators, abacus, meter/yard wheel, etc.)
- \* science equipment (microscopes, dissection kits, scales, thermometers, magnets, rock and mineral kits, etc.)
- \* science supplies (litmus paper, microscope slides and coverslips, flasks, petrie dishes, owl pellets, filter paper, and a few chemicals)
- \* learning "games" and activities (puzzles, phonics games, Learning Wrap-Ups, flash cards, Lyrical Science, Foreign Language curriculum, etc.)
- \*+ audio and video tapes

### **Non consumable Items:**

You may take these home to assist with your instruction but these items must be returned when you are finished. You are responsible for the replacement costs of these items if lost or destroyed.

Examples of non-consumables: Textbooks, rulers, yardsticks, meter sticks, scissors, protractors, compasses

### **Consumable Supplies:**

You are not responsible for the replacement cost of these items.

Examples of consumable supplies: Pencils, paper, workbooks, paint, glue, crayons, construction paper, lined paper, drawing paper, etc.)

## **SERVICES**\_\_\_\_\_

The regular services available from traditional public school are available through Mountain Home Charter:

- health screening
- vision screening
- school pictures
- State Mandated testing
- Access to the County Instructional Media Center (ERS)
- Section 504 of the Americans With Disabilities Act
- Special Education – referral and assessment
- scoliosis screening
- hearing screening
- student accident insurance
- testing (for special programs)

## **COMMUNICATION**\_\_\_\_\_

At the beginning of each school year, a master schedule of classes is available for students and parents. The schedule is then broken down to times and dates of classes/events and can be found on the school website calendar at [www.wscsfamily.org](http://www.wscsfamily.org).

A monthly newsletter is also posted on the website which updates and announces event and class schedules for the following month.

If you require a hard copy of this newsletter, please contact your Advising Teachers.

Occasionally, you may receive a recorded phone call with pertinent information. These may include cancellations, field trips, events, etc.

## **STUDENT POLICIES & PRACTICES**\_\_\_\_\_

### **Requirements**

1. You are responsible for the supervision of your student during normal Mountain Home School hours.
2. You are responsible for the transportation of your student to Progress Meetings, special classes, and other activities unless otherwise arranged. You must have appropriate insurance coverage on your vehicle to transport students, even your own.
3. Students in grades 1 through 8 should be instructed for a **minimum** of *20 hours* per week (4 hours daily). Kindergarten students should be instructed for *15 hours* weekly (3 hours daily). All students should receive a minimum of *180 days* of instruction per school year that matches our school calendar. Unusually high absence rates (more than 20 days per school year) are not acceptable.
4. Students should receive instruction in *all* the following subject areas (not required to cover all subject areas on a daily basis):
  - \*Language Arts (Reading, English Grammar, Writing, Spelling)
  - \*Mathematics
  - \*Science
  - \*Social Studies (Geography, History)
  - \*Fine Arts (Art, Drama, Dance, Music)
  - \*Physical Education: students are **required** to have at least 20 minutes daily
5. The Advising teacher, parent, primary teacher, and student must sign a written agreement at the beginning of enrollment.
6. The Advising teacher, primary teacher, and student will work together to plan yearly and interim goals.

7. The primary teacher and student ***must formally meet*** with the Advising Teachers at least once every 20 teaching days. This scheduled Progress Meeting will be scheduled by the primary teacher and Advising Teacher.
8. ***The primary teacher must notify the school or Advising Teacher prior to the meeting time if you and your student are unable to make the scheduled meeting.*** If you do not contact us you will be considered noncompliant. (See "Termination of Enrollment.")
9. The primary teacher must keep a file of all student work to share with the Advising Teachers at the scheduled Progress Meeting. The student and Advising teacher will regularly review and maintain an assessment portfolio with work samples from all subject areas.
10. The primary teacher must sign to verify minimum daily attendance on the Daily Attendance sheet. **This form must be returned to the school within a strict time frame at the end of each school month.** Failure to return attendance on time is treated as non-compliance. (See "Termination of Enrollment.")
11. The parent is responsible for all material checked out from MHSC. **Due to MHSC's growing population, the checkout period of resource materials, library books, and equipment is a maximum of 4 weeks** (This excludes yearly curriculum). The parent will reimburse the school for any lost or damaged materials.
12. The parent **must** comply with all deadlines for return of materials which were borrowed from the Madera County Instructional Media Center. Material not returned to MHSC on a timely basis is the responsibility of the parent. **You may call Madera County Office of Education to make arrangements for extension or the return of late items – (559) 673-6051 ext 275.**

13. We require the following documents: health and dental records (or waivers), birth certificate, passport, baptismal certificate, or immigration certificate, if available. TB test needed within 90 days of enrollment (or waiver), proof of residence (for your student's cumulative file), and school records.
14. For better assistance, please inform us if your student has an active *I.E.P.* (Individual Educational Program) or a Section 504 from any other school prior to enrollment.
15. All students in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8th grade are required to participate in annual standardized testing (during April/ May). Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students are also given an end of year assessment. This is part of our Charter.
16. Families who leave Mountain Home School Charter must schedule and participate in an exit evaluation before withdrawing from the school. ***All books, materials, and equipment must be returned to the school at that time. Also, any lost or damaged items must be paid for at that time.***

## ASSESSMENTS AND TESTING \_\_\_\_\_

Every student will be assessed in math and English language arts at the beginning and at the end of the year. Students may also be assessed in the middle of the year. Advising Teachers will work with parents to use the assessment results to help set goals and objectives. We also use this information to record progress.

Students in grades 3-8 are required to participate in State Testing that occurs during April or May.

## MEETINGS \_\_\_\_\_

The reason for regular meetings with an Advising Teacher is ***school accountability***. We have stated in our Charter that we will evaluate student progress and provide recommendations and assistance on a regular basis.

Initially, frequent visits (one each week) can help the new homeschooling family adjust to their new situation. By meeting more often the parent gets more support during this most difficult transition period. Once a family has established a regular routine and is more confident with homeschooling, official visits can be scheduled less frequently, up to once every 20 school days.

You are *welcome* to visit MHSC any time during regular hours. You are **required** to come to your scheduled progress meeting. Because of the numbers of families and expanded schedule of activities, we must adhere to a strict schedule. You and your Advising Teachers can agree upon a day and time for each scheduled progress meeting. It is *very* important that you do not miss a scheduled meeting.

**Please have the following ready for your meeting:**

- 1- Record of studies accomplished: This could be in the form of lesson plans, monthly journal, written list, or other records showing work completed.
- 2- All school work, tests, art project, photos of projects or student activity, completed since the last meeting.
- 3- Plans for the near future: These can be written down or be ready to discuss them.
- 4- You and your student(s): We regularly discuss learning with the students and use informal questioning to assess student progress.

Also, please tell us about:

- Any questions you may have.
- Equipment or materials you need.
- Special news regarding your student.

## **SAMPLES**\_\_\_\_\_

What your Advising teacher really needs to see is *proof of progress*.

You should bring in all work from each subject area to the scheduled meeting with your Advising Teachers. All work should be corrected. You and the Advising Teachers can decide which samples will be kept for your student's portfolio. A minimum of 4 samples in different subject areas will be collected. On the following pages are some *suggested* work samples from each subject which would be appropriate for the student portfolio.

### **Reading:**

A complete/corrected page from a reading workbook.

A complete/corrected test.

A book report.

Primary: A picture about something from the story (with or without a sentence about it).

Middle: A short book report.

Intermediate: A short or long report, focusing on the entire story or book, or on a single element, such as plot, characters, setting, etc.

Some other written or "artistic" response to a poem, short story, or book can also be used.

### **Language Arts:**

A complete/corrected page from an English workbook/Language Exercise book.

A written page of English work.

A complete/corrected test.

A sample of good writing, corrected.

Primary: A picture with a sentence explaining it.

Middle: Spelling or English sentences, a paragraph, a short letter, a story, a short report, etc.

Intermediate: A story, poem, report, letter, essay, etc., from any subject area.

### **Social Studies:**

A complete/corrected page from a geography/history workbook, study guide, or map activities packet.

A complete/corrected test.

A labeled map.

A report, model, collection of pictures, chart, poster or other artistic response to a topic in social studies.

A written response to current events or activities.

**Mathematics:**

A complete/corrected page from a mathematics textbook or workbook with all work/steps shown

A complete/corrected test.

A handwritten page of problems complete/corrected.

A paragraph which explains how to solve a specific mathematics problem.

**Science:**

A complete/corrected page from a science workbook or study guide.

A complete/corrected test.

A written description of an experiment.

A labeled picture or diagram of some aspect studied in science (e.g. plant or animal cell, parts of plant or flower, parts of an atom, types of levers, internal organs of humans or animals, growth chart, weather chart, ecosystem, water cycle, etc.)

A report, model, collection, or artistic response to a topic in science.

## **ATTENDANCE**

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Attendance accounting is important to the existence of our school. Our operating funds come about from the attendance of children. We receive revenue based strictly on enrollment and how many days of attendance for each student.

Being a charter school where students stay home to accomplish their education raises questions about actual *attendance*. How do we count attendance for children who don't physically attend a classroom? We base our attendance on two things: Parental accounting for the required time spent in home instruction and the judgment of the Advising teachers.

### **Keeping Attendance Records**



Our attendance accounting system begins with the parent. You must keep track of how many regular school days you instructed your child for at least the minimum amount of time required (See "Requirements"). You'll teach nearly every day. In fact, you will probably teach more than the required 180 school days. Many families teach on weekends and during holiday and summer breaks, however, **we can only count the days listed on the calendar and attendance as regular days of instruction.**

We do not receive revenue for days when a child has an "excused absence," such as an illness, a doctor's appointment, a funeral, etc. If you do not teach your child because he/she is ill, you cannot count this as a day of instruction. Please speak with an Advising Teacher if you have further questions regarding attendance.

We use the Daily Attendance form for attendance accounting. Soon after you enroll for the school year, you will receive a packet of accounting forms for each month of the school year. If you lose this packet, you may print-out the forms you need from the school website: [www.wscsfamily.org](http://www.wscsfamily.org)

1. **In blue or black ink, sign (no initials please) at the bottom of each attendance form for that instructional period.**
2. **Mark absent if a student was not instructed on a regular school day.**
3. **Return the attendance form to your Advising teacher by the due date at the bottom of the form.**

You may **mail** your form or **come in** and turn it in to your Advising teacher. Failure to turn in the attendance will result in non-compliance.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT** \_\_\_\_\_

Mountain Home School takes pride in the professional and positive learning environment provided for our students. This quality learning environment is everyone's responsibility. In addition to the rigorous curriculum, excellent staff, and proper facilities, we have

high expectations for our students.

We are confident that all students will treat other students, staff, and campus visitors with courtesy and respect. Reports of verbal or physical abuse will be reported to and dealt with by the Principal. (Any Ed Code 48900 offense). Any student who feels another participant is disrupting the student's learning environment is strongly encouraged to report that misconduct to the Principal as soon as possible.

*{WSCS has a **Student Behavioral Expectations Policy** that every student and their parent/guardian must agree to and sign. This is part of the enrollment packet.}*

**Mountain Home School is an open campus** and does not prevent students from coming or going. Furthermore, consistent with California Ed Code 44808, Western Sierra Charter Schools and Mountain Home School does not assume responsibility for any student who is off the school grounds. While students are on campus they are to remain in the normal areas of campus usage.

## **SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY**\_\_\_\_\_

Assembly Bill (AB) 2246 requires all county offices of education, school districts, state special schools and charter schools serving pupils in grades 7-12 to adopt pupil suicide prevention policies. AB 2246 represents an effort to address rising youth suicide rates.

Protecting the health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance to the school district. The WSCS Board has adopted a suicide prevention policy which will help to protect all students through the following steps:

1. Students will learn about recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, using support systems, and seeking help for themselves and friends. This will occur in all health classes.
2. Each school will designate a suicide prevention coordinator to serve as a point of contact for students in crisis and to refer students to appropriate resources.

3. When a student is identified as being at risk, they will be assessed by a school employed mental health professional who will work with the student and help connect them to appropriate local resources.

4. Students will have access to national resources which they can contact for additional support, such as:

- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – 1.800.273.8255 (TALK), [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)
- The Trevor Lifeline – 1.866.488.7386, [www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

5. All students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they, or a friend, are feeling suicidal or in need of help.

6. Students should also know that because of the life or death nature of these matters, confidentiality or privacy concerns are secondary to seeking help for students in crisis.

7. For a more detailed review of policy changes, please see the district’s full suicide prevention policy.

## WHAT DO I TEACH? \_\_\_\_\_

In response to this question, another question needs to be added: ***What Do You Want Your Child to Learn?*** One of the reasons this school became a charter school was to allow for complete personalized learning. The primary teacher, the student, and the Advising Teachers can work together to determine annual goals. Know where you are going – that's the starting point. The primary teacher and Advising teacher can then work together to formulate a basic plan to guide the student to his/her annual goals.

## WRITING STUDENT GOALS \_\_\_\_\_

When you first meet with your Advising Teacher you will be writing yearly goals for your student – what you want your student to accomplish by the end of the school year. These can be very simple

to write or very difficult to write depending on the types of goals you want to set for your student.

### **Some rules you should consider about goal writing:**

1. **Make them measurable.** Once you set a goal think about how it can be measured. Even teachers who have to think in terms of goals more frequently than you sometimes forget to make the goals measurable on a continuum. They instead make the goal a "Yes" or "No" type. This type of goal cannot be obtained unless it is done perfectly. It's all or nothing? Even if the student did 70%, 85%, or 98% of what needed to be done, they didn't achieve the 100% goal. **A measurable goal gives the student something to shoot for without dismissing the effort needed to get there.** The real learning generally takes place on the way to obtaining goals.
2. **Make them obtainable for your child.** Be realistic. Don't make them too easy to obtain but don't put them so far above their ability that they become frustrated in attempting them. You should be flexible, and the goals should be flexible too.
3. We are interested in academic goals but they aren't the only goals to consider. For instance, you may want your child to become more helpful in the home, more active in the community, more confident in public, etc. These are all good measurable goals that help to make a well-rounded individual. They are also describing skills that are learned. Yes, they can be part of your student's goals.

## **GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS** \_\_\_\_\_

There will be many families who are new to homeschooling who will have no idea where to begin. Although they know they want to homeschool, they have not read up on what is to be learned at each grade or age. That is exactly what your Mountain Home School Advising Teachers is for! We provide grade level objectives which

are tied to California learning standards. The standards provide a starting place for recommended learning. However, if you wish to emphasize different learning objectives, that is your prerogative. Your Advising Teachers can help you go further in the curriculum or to slow down depending on the learning needs of your child.

***What if my child is above or below grade level in one or more subject areas?*** Many children are not exactly on grade level in all academic areas. That's fine, they all are different. That's one of the advantages of personalized education. You can address your student's *learning needs* rather than his/her *grade level*.

If your student is below grade level in a subject, teach them the concepts that they need to learn. Don't try to teach them at grade level. It will only frustrate them and you. *Learning* doesn't happen when students are frustrated.

### **There are three main levels in learning.**

1. ***Review*** takes place when a student understands the concept completely. A student must have some practice and rehearsal to *learn* a concept. However, by going over and over *what they already know*, they only get *review*. This *isn't* really *learning*.

This is why one-on-one education works so well. You don't need to do a lot of review if your student understands the idea or concept. You can tell when you have reached this stage. It comes just after the student gets all problems correct, gets all spelling words correct, gets all answers in science correct, etc.

– and it comes just before the phrase, "*I'm bored!*" or "*This is boring!*"

2. ***Learning*** takes place when a student encounters an idea or concept that they can begin to understand by using past experience, stored knowledge, or newly developed skills. Learning takes place in the student and you sometimes don't see it happen. That's why we have students perform things like practice and rehearsal. These elements of learning show that

the learning is understood and can be applied. If the student does not get correct answers in practice and rehearsal, learning didn't take place. When this occurs, it's time to back up and try the idea from a different approach.

We don't learn something by doing it once. Most of us need to practice new ideas and concepts and skills. Learning research says that it takes 8 to 16 rehearsals for most people to learn a new idea or skill. Research also shows that if you learn to do something incorrectly it will take many more rehearsals of the correct learning to replace the incorrect learning. That is why it is so difficult to change a habit.

3. ***Frustration*** happens when a student is not ready to learn a new concept or idea because they do not have the background knowledge or skills to attempt it. No amount of rehearsals will help them learn it. They are simply not ready. You'll have to back up and prepare them by giving them what they are missing.

## TEACHING the CURRICULUM\_\_\_\_\_

There are a few things to consider when choosing curriculum for your student.

1. How does your child learn? Each child has strengths and weaknesses with different styles of teaching. Some learn best from hands-on, some from listening, some from seeing or watching.
2. What do you feel comfortable with? If you aren't into doing a lot of active hands-on presentations, you probably won't offer them to your child. On the other hand, you may really love using videos, interesting illustrated books, or talking/interviewing persons with knowledge.
3. There are different homeschool philosophies that different families choose to embrace. If you are interested in learning

more about these philosophies, please feel free to contact a Advising Teachers.

Although it may be easy to become overwhelmed with the various subjects and the amount of curriculum, be assured, there are creative ways to cover all curricular areas. Your personal requirements are based on the goals you will help to write for your students.

One way of instructing in all areas without working in every subject every day is to alternate subjects. Many people will work on the three R's daily, while focusing on science one week and social studies the next. Some people use Fridays as fine arts and physical education day. The main idea is to provide a well-rounded education for your children.

## **ON SITE CLASSES** \_\_\_\_\_

Mountain Home School offers a variety of onsite classes. These classes are enrichment and not intended to take the place of the schooling the parent is doing with the student at home. Some of these classes in the past have included art, music, science, engineering, history, and math. We sometimes offer classes that assist in curriculum. These classes have included writing and higher level mathematics.

Upcoming classes will be noted in the current newsletter. Sign-ups for classes are usually located on the sign-up board at MHSC.

## **TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT** \_\_\_\_\_

Yosemite Unified School District has specific policies concerning student suspension and expulsion. In addition to these, Mountain Home School Charter will terminate a student's enrollment for the following reasons:

## Non-compliance:

If the parent, as the primary teacher, or student is not fulfilling the requirements of the written agreement.

Example - No work samples supplied.

Example - Missing scheduled meetings.

Example - Student not accomplishing a reasonable amount of work.

Example - Attendance Sheet not returned by the due date.

**NOTE:** You will be given reasonable opportunities to correct any non-compliance issues. If the issue is not corrected and continues, a second non-compliance will be given. If the issue still continues, the student will be dismissed prior to receiving a third notice.

Other reasons for termination of your student's enrollment are:

### Inappropriate Placement:

Example 1 - Student is unhappy/unsuccessful in this option. Although this condition can often be improved by working closely with a Advising Teachers, the initial excitement of homeschooling sometimes disappears completely for a child who is lonely, works better with groups than as an individual, or cannot accept a parent as a teacher. *This is more likely to occur with a child who has been **happy** in a traditional classroom.*

Example 2 - Parent does not have time to spend schooling one-on-one. Often the economic situation in the home requires that both parents work. Some self-motivated students can be successful in this situation, but most students are not. *Also, a child cannot be left unattended during school time even if they are doing school work.*



## **Lack of Success:**

Although many people try homeschooling, not all are successful at it. Many people feel they are not doing a good job of home-schooling initially but they usually *catch on* in a few months. Your Advising Teachers will assist parents and allow time for them to adjust to their new role. If, after a reasonable time, the Advising Teachers does not see success he/she will recommend another educational option.

## **WITHDRAWING YOUR STUDENT\_\_\_\_\_**

### **The Exit Evaluation**

Whether we are terminating your student's enrollment or you are withdrawing your student from our school, you must attend an exit evaluation. At the meeting your student will complete a final assessment. This allows us to close out all paperwork on your student before sending records on to their next school.

You must turn in all books, materials, and equipment at the time of the exit evaluation.

# **GLACIER HIGH SCHOOL CHARTER**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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EXPECTED SCHOOL WIDE LEARNING RESULTS.....	29
VISION STATEMENT.....	30
MISSION STATEMENT.....	30
PROGRAM OVERVIEW	
PARENT-LED INSTRUCTION.....	31
SITE-BASED INSTRUCTION.....	31
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.....	32
COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS.....	32
STUDENT POLICIES & PRACTICES	
ATTENDANCE.....	33
COLLEGE PREP COURSES.....	33
ACADEMIC HONESTY.....	34
NON-COMPLIANCE.....	34
STUDENT CONDUCT.....	35
SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY.....	35-36
REPORT CARDS, TRANSCRIPTS & CREDITS.....	36-37
GRADES, GRADING & GPA.....	37
MINIMUM - MAXIMUM CLASS LOAD	
& UNITS PER SEMESTER.....	38
REPEATED COURSES.....	38
PARTIAL CREDIT, DROPS, & WITHDRAWS.....	38-39
SUCCESSFUL CLASS COMPLETION.....	39
ON-SITE COURSES.....	39

ATTENDANCE.....	39-40
CLASS BEHAVIOR.....	40
CLASS PRE-REQUISITES.....	40-41
GRANTS & SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION.....	41
ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY (ASB).....	41-42
SUGGESTIONS & GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS.....	42-44
ON-SITE CLASS OPTIONS.....	45
TUTORING.....	45
ASSESSMENT & TESTING.....	45-46
PHYSICAL EDUCATION.....	46
COURSE DESIGN.....	46
ONLINE COURSES.....	46
COLLEGE CLASS OPTION.....	46-47
STUDENT RECORDS.....	47
TRANSFERS.....	47

## GLACIER'S EXPECTED SCHOOL WIDE LEARNING RESULTS

To define who we are as a school and what we want to accomplish with students, Glacier High School Charter has adopted clearly defined E.S.L.R.'s (Expected Student Learning Results). E.S.L.R.'s by definition are broad based educational goals for all students. We use the acronym "ACTS" to demonstrate what students will seek to achieve.

### ACTS – "Glacier High School students will be equipped to become:"

#### **Academic Achievers who...**

- Plan for their educational future by setting goals and establishing priorities.
- Show proficiency in essential literacy, writing, and mathematical skills.

#### **Communicators who...**

- Communicate effectively by using appropriate verbal and written skills.
- Process information critically and respond appropriately.

#### **Thinkers who...**

- Evaluate, discriminate, and deduce knowledge with accuracy and logic.
- Utilize a historical and informed understanding to develop their perspectives.

#### **Self Sufficient Individuals who...**

- Learn independently and act as self motivated responsible learners.
- Take individual responsibility for their lives and actions.

## **GLACIER'S VISION STATEMENT** \_\_\_\_\_

The vision of Glacier is to create a rigorous, dynamic and accountable learning community that is built upon voluntary association, personalized student learning, high academic standards for all students and parent leadership. Glacier will accomplish these four complementary goals by providing all students and parents with: personal, experienced teacher guidance and support; powerful and proven instruction; ongoing, multiple modality assessments; and a large and growing inventory of high quality, standards aligned instructional resources that offer both breadth and depth in curriculum and auxiliary materials. As a result, students will develop the skills necessary to become responsible lifelong learners who understand personal dedication and desire as the keys for success.

## **GLACIER'S MISSION STATEMENT** \_\_\_\_\_

Inspire students to learn and grow to their potential and become responsible, contributing community members.

Assist parents in the education of their students.

Provide the community with an exciting and powerful educational alternative.

Equip students age 14-18 with the ability to read, write, speak, and calculate with clarity and precision and the ability to participate purposefully and responsibly in the life of the community. Glacier High School Charter will enable students to become literate, self-motivated, lifelong learners by providing a dynamic, student-centered environment, in which all students will be held to high academic and behavioral standards, will work in collaborative relationships, both within and outside the school site/calendar, and will perform service to the greater community.

## **GLACIER PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

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The Glacier program is home-based. Students and parents meet with Advising Teachers at a minimum of every 20 school days. During these meetings the teacher, student and parent work together planning the next learning activities as well as reviewing the work recently accomplished by the student.

### **PARENT-LED INSTRUCTION**

Glacier exists to support parents in their leading role in their student's education. Parents are involved with their student in the entire educational process. Parental involvement is not only important, it is essential. Parent-led instruction is vital as the home-based foundation of the Glacier program requires it.

Because parents are integrally involved with their student's learning, it is important that they learn school processes and assessments. With this information and ongoing education, students will benefit greatly from continual educational leadership whether on campus or at home.

### **SITE-BASED INSTRUCTION**

Glacier is committed to providing the best academic program possible. We understand that there are some courses that require more instruction; sometimes instructional expertise outside of a parent's knowledge. Therefore, we offer certain on-site classes to compliment the home-based foundation.

These classes have included Mathematics, Science, English Language Arts, Leadership, and Fine Arts. These classes are run much like college courses. Classes are scheduled to take place once or twice a week and run for an extended time.

These classes are led by credentialed teachers in the subject areas they teach. Teachers are fully responsible for all aspects of these classes (i.e. attendance, instruction, evaluation, etc.)

## GHS GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

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	<u>YEARS</u>	<u>UNITS</u>
ENGLISH	4	40
MATHEMATICS (Including completion of Integrated 1 or Algebra 1)	3	30
SCIENCE (Including 1 year Life & 1 year Physical)	2	20
SOCIAL SCIENCE (Including World History, U.S. History, U.S. Government)	3	30
FINE ARTS (Visual, Performing Arts, & Foreign Language)	1	10
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	2	20
HEALTH	1/2	5
ELECTIVES		<u>105</u>
	TOTAL UNITS	260

## COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

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For the student planning on attending college, all core courses should be College Preparatory A-G; Mathematics should include Integrated 1, Integrated 2, Integrated 3 or Algebra 2/Pre-Calculus; Science should include the laboratory sciences of Biology & Chemistry; one year of Fine Arts & two years of the same foreign language; and 30 units of elective from core course selections.

## A-G 4 Year College *Minimum* Requirements

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English	4 years
Mathematics	3 years
Social Science	2 years
Science with Lab	2 years
Foreign Language (or 1 semester College) (same language, prefer 3 years)	2 years
Visual/Performing Arts	1 year
Electives (advanced math, science, foreign language, psychology)	1 year

\*REQUIRED TEST MAY INCLUDE ACT OR SAT

## **POLICIES & PRACTICES**

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### **ATTENDANCE**

Since a large part of the Glacier program is home-based, our attendance collection is based upon two things: the daily record keeping on attendance sheets and the student work accomplished during that work period. It is important for students to keep up with their work, and for parents to keep daily records of their learning and return those records to their Advising Teacher before the due date on each attendance sheet.

Attendance sheets are to reflect the amount of work accomplished during each work period. We know that schooling may happen on weekends, or that days may be switched around for your convenience. However, attendance sheets only reflect calendared school days. We suggest that you fill in each day according to the work value being fulfilled for that day.

### **COLLEGE PREPARATORY CLASSES**

“College Preparatory,” is a recognition given to high school courses that have been reviewed and are recognized by the University of California. This recognition allows a student to submit a transcript to Universities and State Colleges with classes that have already been approved as adequately preparatory for their programs.

Some college prep courses require additional work which will be identified by your Advising Teachers during your course selection and planning.

College prep courses are not required for graduation, but are suggested to any student who has college in their future. Even if students aren't able to fulfill all of the college entrance requirements, fulfilling what you are able is beneficial because community colleges will take these into account.



## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

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Glacier desires to help all students become responsible learners who value their education and the process through which they learn. We understand that at times there may be a temptation to take the easy route, and sometimes the easy route may include cheating or plagiarism.

Because much of a Glacier student's work happens at home, we know that cheating is easy. In fact, cheating is always easy for those who are willing to take the dishonest, easy way out. We are always monitoring student work. Since teacher manuals and answer keys go home with parents, we look for copying or re-wording. We also use plagiarism software to search the internet for copying.

A student caught cheating will receive a failing grade on that assignment and further disciplinary action as deemed appropriate. Parents are encouraged to be diligent and pay close attention while assessing work.

## **NON-COMPLIANCE**

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Should a student and/or parent fail to complete the work assigned or attend meetings as scheduled, a non-compliance notice will be given. If this problem is not corrected and continues, a second non-compliance will be given. Upon the third non-compliance notice the student is dismissed from the program.

If the student fails to respond in a reasonably timely manner to either the first or the second non-compliance, the student will be dismissed prior to receiving a third notice.

## STUDENT CONDUCT

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Glacier High School takes pride in the professional and positive learning environment provided for our students. This quality learning environment is everyone's responsibility. In addition to the rigorous curriculum, excellent staff, and proper facilities, we have high expectations for our students.

We are confident that all students will treat other students, staff, and campus visitors with courtesy and respect. Reports of verbal or physical abuse will be reported to and dealt with by the Principal. (Any Ed Code 48900 offense). Any student who feels another participant is disrupting the student's learning environment is strongly encouraged to report that misconduct to the Principal as soon as possible.

*{WSCS has a **Student Behavioral Expectations Policy** that every student and their parent/guardian must agree to and sign. This is part of the enrollment packet.}*

**Glacier High School is an open campus** and does not prevent students from coming or going. Furthermore, consistent with California Ed Code 44808, Western Sierra Charter Schools and Glacier High School does not assume responsibility for any student who is off the school grounds. While students are on campus they are to remain in the normal areas of campus usage.

## SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

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Assembly Bill (AB) 2246 requires all county offices of education, school districts, state special schools and charter schools serving pupils in grades 7-12 to adopt pupil suicide prevention policies. AB 2246 represents an effort to address rising youth suicide rates.

Protecting the health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance to the school district. The WSCS Board has adopted a suicide prevention policy which will help to protect all students through the following steps:

1. Students will learn about recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, using support systems, and seeking help for themselves and friends. This will occur in all health classes.

2. Each school will designate a suicide prevention coordinator to serve as a point of contact for students in crisis and to refer students to appropriate resources.

3. When a student is identified as being at risk, they will be assessed by a school employed mental health professional who will work with the student and help connect them to appropriate local resources.

4. Students will have access to national resources which they can contact for additional support, such as:

- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline –  
1.800.273.8255 (TALK),  
[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)
- The Trevor Lifeline – 1.866.488.7386,  
[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)

5. All students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they, or a friend, are feeling suicidal or in need of help.

6. Students should also know that because of the life or death nature of these matters, confidentiality or privacy concerns are secondary to seeking help for students in crisis.

7. For a more detailed review of policy changes, please see the district's full suicide prevention policy.

## **TRANSCRIPTS & CREDIT**

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Students will receive updated transcripts each semester based on a semester grading period. Report cards include the student's entire transcript to date and will be mailed to parents. Report cards can be expected to be mailed shortly after the close of each semester.

In general, Glacier does not give partial credit but there are a few exceptions).

A student who has not completed a course by the end of a semester,

may take a mark of “incomplete” (I) if he has at least 70% of the course already completed. This mark means that the student is not receiving credit, but will complete the course in the following semester. The student will receive a letter grade reduction for their incomplete.

For transcript purposes, credit for that course will be assigned in the semester in which the course is originally listed on the Master Agreement. If the incomplete course is not finished in the following semester the student’s incomplete will be calculated for GPA as an “F”.

## **GRADES, GRADING & GPA**

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Students typically take seven 5-credit classes per semester. In this scenario a student would receive 70 units per year. The following table demonstrates the units necessary to move from one grade level to another.

0-54 credits	grade 9	55-124 credits	grade 10
125-189 credits	grade 11	190-260 credits	grade 12

Students can receive the grades of A, B, C, D, F, or P. Each grade has a point value which effects a student’s overall GPA. The following table demonstrates the Grade Point Average value for each letter grade.

A 4 points	B 3 points	C 2 points
D 1 point	F 0 points	

Daily assignment grading is the responsibility of parents. These grades are then reviewed by the Advising Teachers who will either approve and finalize the grade or adjust as necessary. Grades from parents are due at the end of each semester. Due dates and a grading guide will be provided by your Advising Teacher.

Grading rubrics will be provided to assist you with your grading responsibility. For your convenience, these rubrics will be provided either blank or partially filled out for Oak Meadow courses.

The partially filled out rubrics will pre-determine the values and

weights of the various assignments in each course. This provides fair but simple assistance for your assignment evaluation. We provide these course rubrics for English 9-12, Health, U.S. History, World History, Government, Spanish and Biology.

## **MINIMUM - MAXIMUM CLASS LOAD & UNITS PER SEMESTER**

A minimum class load in any given semester is four classes (20 units). The minimum load must be taken at Glacier. Exceptions to this apply if a student is enrolled in a community college. The maximum number of classes that can be taken in a semester is eight (40 units). Some of the units beyond the minimum load may be taken through another school's program.

These class-load guidelines are intended to help pace a student and maintain reasonable work expectations. Students who wish to accelerate may do so by finishing a class they are currently enrolled in and petition to increase class load.

## **REPEATED COURSES\_\_\_\_\_**

Students who repeat courses due to request or recommendation will be able to use the former course credit they earned as elective credit. All credits earned by retaking classes will be applied to the student's overall transcript, but will not replace the former classes.

## **PARTIAL CREDIT, DROPS, & WITHDRAWS\_\_\_\_\_**

Glacier will offer partial credit only in these cases:

- The student moves away mid semester
- The student completes an elective that is designed to be worth less than 5 credits
- The student comes to Glacier mid-semester and Glacier has no class to match a class from the former school.

All classes that are dropped will receive no credit.

A student's transcript will reflect the following notations for classes

dropped. The notations reflect time in the class. The drop time line is as follows:

- ◆ First 20 days in semester or upon enrolling  
If the student drops class, that class isn't recorded on transcript. (This is considered a trial/courtesy window)
- ◆ 21-40 days into semester  
If the student drops class, he receives a "Withdraw" (W) mark on his transcript
- ◆ 41 days to the end of the semester  
The student will receive a grade for the class. (This means, get busy! Now you have to get that class done!)

## SUCCESSFUL CLASS COMPLETION \_\_\_\_\_

For a student to pass a core class successfully and not have to repeat the course the student must pass with a minimum of 70% (or C-). Completing the course with a grade of less than 70% (C-) requires the student to re-take the class.

A student taking a course that is a **prerequisite** must pass that class with a minimum of 75% or (C) in order to go on to the next higher class. Instructor permission required if 70%-74%. This would apply to:

- ◆ Biology to Chemistry
- ◆ Algebra/Integrated 1 to Chemistry
- ◆ Integrated 1 to Integrated 2
- ◆ Integrated 2 to Integrated 3 or Pre-Calculus

## ON-SITE COURSES \_\_\_\_\_ ATTENDANCE

A student enrolled in a class may miss up to two weeks of class per

semester without penalty. This means two absences in Chemistry, Biology OR four absences in math classes (as they meet twice weekly.) Upon the third or fifth absence (depending on which class they are enrolled in), the student will be dropped.

Students who are successfully completing the class with a grade of 85% or better may be granted further absences. For these students, the parent must submit to the principal a written request/explanation at least one week in advance of proposed absence.

## **CLASS BEHAVIOR**

Classes at Glacier are offered to students for their benefit. They are not mandatory. This means that students are not required to participate in Glacier on-site courses nor is Glacier required to offer the classes. Only students who complete assignments and conduct themselves with maturity and respect will be allowed to continue in a class. Should a student fail to complete assignments or conduct themselves with maturity and respect, that student will be permanently removed from class.

## **CLASS PRE-REQUISITES**

*Chemistry* - To enroll in Chemistry a student needs to have successfully completed Algebra 1 or Integrated 1. Also the student must already have successfully completed Biology.

*Biology* - To enroll in Biology a student needs to have successfully completed or be currently enrolled in Algebra 1/Integrated 1.

*Integrated I* - This full year course is offered to students who have completed a pre-algebra mathematics equivalent and demonstrate readiness by completing an appropriate placement test.

*Integrated 2* - This full year course is offered to students who have completed Integrated 1 and demonstrate readiness by completing an appropriate placement test.

*Integrated 3* - This course is offered to students who have completed Integrated 2 with a "C" or better, and demonstrated an ability to achieve well in advanced course work.

*Physics*—This course is offered to students who have completed Biology and Chemistry courses with a "C" or better, and demonstrated an ability to achieve well in advanced course work.

Composition 2—This course is offered to students who demonstrate readiness by attaining a score of 3.5 out of 5 on an essay.

## **GRANT & SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION** \_\_\_\_\_

Students enrolled in the College and Career Readiness Course will learn about all the various ways they can pursue financial-aid, scholarships and grants. Local scholarship information is continually made available through our College and Career Readiness Course and collected for students to access. Workshops and field trips are periodically made available for students and/or family to attend. Families are encouraged to search for resources using any and all agencies available to gain maximum benefit.

## **COMMUNITY AWARDS** \_\_\_\_\_

Graduating seniors have the opportunity to apply for a variety of local scholarships. Please see your Advising Teachers for more information!

## **ASSOCIATED STUDENT BODY ~ ASB/LEADERSHIP** \_\_\_\_\_

Glacier's leadership course plans and prepares student activities. To date, we have been able to include all students who have a



desire to participate. This class receives credit and a grade.

We encourage all students to participate in the events that our ASB/Leadership students plan. Students who come to our program have some shared interests and can make some lasting friendships with other students who come to Glacier for the same reasons. We are striving to provide fun events and hope that you will join us.

## **SUGGESTIONS & GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS\_\_\_\_\_**

### **Grading→**

We have provided each family with a grading guide that will play an important role in your assessment of your students. Within this guide are instructions and parameters that need to be followed in order to ensure consistency in grading students and presenting them with meaningful transcripts.

Below are some helpful tips to remember while assessing students:

- ◆ At a minimum, provide weekly feedback and explanation of assessment made so students can understand deficiencies and build on strengths.
- ◆ Follow the rubrics provided to demonstrate how and why a particular grade was given. This practice will help both you and your Advising Teachers see areas of needed growth and improvement.
- ◆ Using these tools will also help our school maintain a high level of consistency while serving individually and will help eliminate unnecessary subjectivity in the grading process.

### **Attendance→**

While we are not a classroom-based program, we are still responsible to insure that students are receiving both appropriate oversight and instruction during the school day. One way that we

are required to account for our students is through the paper attendance logs that you receive. It is important that these are filled out entirely, accurately, and returned on time.

### **On-Site Courses–**

We strive to provide as much assistance for your student’s educational program as possible. Our experience has taught us that while parents can do a good job in home education, there are certain academic areas that go beyond the typical comfort level of home educators. To address this issue we offer on-site courses that provide instruction and assessment in those difficult instructional areas.

## **SUGGESTION & GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS CONTINUED\_\_\_\_\_**

### **On-Site Courses–**

These classes do require some guidelines:

- ◆ Students are required to make every effort to attend every class. Keep in mind that weekly or bi-weekly classes are actually several class times combined to give a maximum amount of instruction in a compact time.
- ◆ Even though parents do not give the instruction or assessment for these classes, parents still need to provide ongoing oversight of their student’s progress. Much of the work will still happen in the home and Advising Teachers will keep close contact with parents about their student’s progress.
- ◆ Classes at Glacier are offered to students for their benefit. They are not mandatory. This means the students are not required to participate in Glacier on-site classes nor is Glacier required to offer the classes. Only students who complete assignments and conduct themselves with maturity and respect will be allowed to continue in a class. Should a student fail to complete assignments or conduct themselves with maturity and respect, that student will be permanently removed from class.
- ◆ During class days, we ask that students do not merely “hang-out” on the school campus. If students are in between classes or waiting to be picked up, they need to be engaged in school

work or an appropriate activity.

### **Achievement–**

There are two main elements for success in our program:

- ◆ Students who are responsible to be engaged in their work with independence and self-motivation, while listening and responding positively to parental instruction.
- ◆ Parents who are vigilant to see that their students are making daily gains, who are involved in the process of their learning, and who are actively seeking the best methods for learning.

### **Expectations–**

- ◆ Students – it is easy to set expectations for yourself that are either too high or too low. You are extremely capable, more than you probably give yourself credit for. We know this and one of our aims is to help you realize it. To help you have expectations that are beneficial, we invite you to speak freely with your parents and Advising Teachers about both your struggles and successes. You may do much of your work independently, but you are not alone!
- ◆ Parents – it is easy to have expectations that are either too high or too low regarding your student's progress. The grading rubric was designed to help eliminate some of this, yet it is still quite typical to struggle with knowing what to expect from your students. Simply recognizing this and keeping watch over your expectations will help greatly. Communicating your concerns to your Advising Teachers will provide another viewpoint.
- ◆ Glacier High School Charter – we strive to have high standards and provide an excellent program, and we know that we will always be challenging limitations to increase our effectiveness. There are expectations that we have for ourselves as a program to provide students and parents with the educational experience and means to clearly identify their own academic desires and to set high goals to attain them.

We believe that all these expectations reflect not only our

desires as a school, but your desire as students, and the type of program we should be.

## **ON-SITE OPTIONS**\_\_\_\_\_

All classes taught on-site will be graded by the classroom teacher. Teachers will provide clear homework assignments and work expectations for students who elect to participate in these classes. It is the responsibility of students to communicate with teachers regarding any difficulties. The nature of these intensive classes requires that students make every effort to attend each session. Students and parents should not hesitate to schedule an appointment with teachers regarding scheduling, advanced work submissions, missed assignments, or any other concerns you may have.

## **TUTORING**\_\_\_\_\_

Glacier is committed to helping each and every student succeed. We know that there are occasions where further help and instruction is required. We provide this primarily through our on-site courses, however, if there is further need do not hesitate to ask your Advising Teachers who may be able to facilitate further instruction.

## **ASSESSMENTS AND TESTING**\_\_\_\_\_

Students will be assessed in math and English at the beginning and at the end of the year. Students may also be assessed in the middle of the year. Advising Teachers will work with the students and parents to use the assessment results to help plan coursework. We also use this information to record student progress.

Students in grades 9-11 are required to participate in certain State Tests which occur every year during the spring semester.

All 9<sup>th</sup> graders take a physical fitness test; 10th graders are required to take a Life Science test; 11th graders are required to take a

Mathematics and English Language Arts Test. This standards-aligned testing establishes 11th grade scores which are useful for students regarding the standardized expectations of college entrance assessments.

### **Physical Education**

This is a credit/no-credit course. Students must work out on some form of focused cardiovascular exercise for at least 40 minutes per day or an average of 400 minutes every ten school days. Students keep a log of their times and activities on the attendance form which is signed by the parent/guardian.

### **COURSE DESIGN** \_\_\_\_\_

Glacier High School offers the ability for students and parents to design their own classes. If there is a course which we do not offer, you may be able to design a formalized curriculum with your Advising Teachers. Please speak with your Advising Teachers for more information.

### **ONLINE COURSES** \_\_\_\_\_

Glacier offers the entire curriculum in an on-line format. Please contact your Advising Teachers for more information and updates.

### **COLLEGE CLASS OPTION** \_\_\_\_\_

Students at Glacier have the option and opportunity to take classes at the local community college (Oakhurst Community College; Fresno City College; Willow International; etc). Beginning the summer after a student's sophomore year, students can start taking two classes per term (summer, fall, spring). Each 3-4 unit college class receives 10 high school credits. Students must have a GPA of 2.5 or higher to participate and must be current in all Glacier work.

Procedure: Visit the community college office to determine what local procedures are. Pick up a course catalogue and the "15 percent" program application. Fill out the application and bring to

your Advising Teachers and principal for signatures of approval. Return to college with paperwork & requirements for specific courses you wish to take.

(Note: Community colleges may require proficiency testing prior to the placement of students in certain courses. You may have to attend the first class to see if there is room available for high school students.)

## **STUDENT RECORDS** \_\_\_\_\_

Student transcript records are available upon request. Please give a 2 day notice. Parents/Legal Guardians may request copies of any portion of their student's cumulative folders. Allow 5-7 business days.

## **TRANSFERS** \_\_\_\_\_

Students who transfer from Glacier will need to request a drop form from the secretary. All checked out materials will need to be returned. A transcript will be issued upon departure. Cumulative files will be forwarded to your next school after we receive a cumulative file request from said school. Allow 5-7 business days.