



**FLEX ACADEMY**

ESTD. 2018

Southern California Flex Academy  
Parent/Guardian and Student  
Handbook 2026-2027

# Contents

Welcome to Southern California Flex Academy .....	3
Calendar .....	4
SCFA Faculty .....	5
Enrollment in Southern California Flex Academy .....	6
Attendance Policies .....	6
<b>Parent/Guardian Expectations and Responsibilities to Student and SCFA .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Independent Study Master Agreement (ISMA) .....	8
Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) .....	8
Change of Contact Information .....	8
Harassment/Bullying Policy.....	9
Harassment Reporting .....	10
Internet Safety and Network Etiquette .....	10
Student Computer Use Policy.....	11
Materials and Computer Equipment .....	11
Uniform Complaint Procedures .....	12
McKinney-Vento .....	12
Students in Foster Care .....	12
Special Education Services.....	13
Student Records .....	13
Testing & Assessment .....	14
State Standardized Tests.....	14
Academic Integrity (Dishonesty & Plagiarism) .....	15
Live Instruction .....	15
Student Achievement .....	16
Student Work Portfolios .....	16
Independent Study Policy .....	17
Master Agreement Policy .....	19
Academic Integrity Policy.....	21
Missed Assignments Policy .....	22
AI Use and Academic Integrity Policy.....	24
English Language Learner (ELL) Policy.....	25
Technology Policy .....	27
Technology Loaner Agreement.....	30
Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy .....	31
AP/Honors Placement Policy .....	33
Concurrent Enrollment Policy .....	35
Release of Liability .....	38

## Welcome to Southern California Flex Academy

Welcome!

We are happy you have chosen Southern California Flex Academy as your school of choice. We understand that as a parent/guardian and learning coach, you want the best for your child's education. At Southern California Flex Academy, we strive to inspire learning, engage students and families, and support a personalized learning experience throughout your student's educational career.

We believe that student success is best achieved when a team of caring and committed adults at school and at home share an educational vision and work together. Our teachers and advisors are committed to helping your student start strong, stay strong, and succeed throughout their school experience. Adapting to online schooling takes time and you may face challenges, but we are here to help you and your student during this transition. We offer support through live instructional sessions, teacher office hours, and regular communication to ensure you have a successful school year.

Regards,

Kristen Mandell, Principal

## Southern California Flex Academy 2026-2027

July 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

January 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

March 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

April 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

June 2027						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

- First Day & Last Day of School
- Holiday (no students)
- Federal Holiday (no school)
- Teacher Work Day/Professional Development (no students)
- Semester end/semester start
- Minimum Days

## SCFA Faculty

We believe that a collaborative relationship between you and your teacher is a vital component to the overall success of every student. Your teacher has a wealth of knowledge and thus, should be your first point of contact for all questions. The SCFA staff are committed to establishing a team effort to ensure that students are making progress and demonstrating compliancy in all areas.

### Teacher Responsibilities

- Provide support in all areas of successful student learning and achievement
- Guide and direct students through the Learning Management System (LMS)
- Facilitate academic conferences
- Review student submitted work and provide constructive feedback on a regular basis
- Maintain school work day Monday through Friday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm
- Respond within 24 school day hours to all communications, including email and phone
- Inform you of school updates/information
- Administer state required assessments
- Provide instructional support
- Meet students in an online classroom for individual or small group instruction
- Administer academic assessments for ongoing evaluation of progress and mastery
- Model specific practices that will support instruction
- Provide interventions, recommendations, and individualized support for students who may be struggling

## Communication

Ongoing and consistent communication is required between student, parent/guardian (learning coach), and teacher for school compliancy. School communication includes, email, telephone (leaving a voicemail when necessary), and school announcements.

## Questions or Concerns

SCFA staff recognizes life at school does not always run smoothly. As problems arise, school personnel and parents/guardians must collaborate to solve them. Please follow these procedures for general information or for assistance in resolving a concern.

**Step 1:** All student educational concerns and issues should be directed to the student's teacher to resolve the issue (e.g. materials, courses). The SCFA teacher will monitor the concern to ensure resolution. Parents/guardians should directly contact Technical Support for problems with school computers.

**Step 2:** If the issue or concern is about the SCFA teacher, parents/guardian coaches are advised to contact the Academic Administrator.

**Step 3:** If the concern is not resolved at the teacher or Academic Administrator level, parents/guardian are advised to contact the Head of School.

## Enrollment in Southern California Flex Academy

There is no discrimination in the admission of students to the school on the basis of race, creed, color, handicapping condition, or gender. SCFA provides a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to all its students. All students, however, need to be able to meet the enrollment requirements.

Students who have received services under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) must provide this information at time of enrollment. A member of the Special Education department will contact you to ensure proper placement of your student in our program.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act requires school to remove all barriers to enrollment, attendance, and school success for homeless students. Students and families identified as homeless are provided with enrollment assistance, supplementary academic supports, case management, and referrals to outside agencies.

Concurrent enrollment in another public or private school is prohibited at SCFA and will cause the student to be withdrawn. Our school is a full-time, general education, independent study program, not a supplemental program or a part-time program. Students must also reside within SCFA counties to maintain enrollment.

## Attendance Policies

Attendance is an integral part of academic success and is expected of all Southern California Flex Academy students.

- Students are required to login and attend school Monday through Friday.
- Parent/guardian must be available by phone and/or Internet for communication.
- Students must attend school and complete coursework during travel time.

## Consequences of Unexcused Absences and Tardiness

Education Code 48260 states that any pupil subject to compulsory full-time education or to compulsory continuing education who is absent from school without a valid excuse three full days in one school year without a valid excuse on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof, is truant and shall be reported to the attendance supervisor or to the superintendent of the school district. Signing the Master Agreement assures your accord to comply with Southern California Flex Academy attendance policies to include unexcused absences.

Failure to comply with the school's attendance policies will result in a meeting with the school Principal.

## **Parent/Guardian Expectations and Responsibilities to Student and SCFA:**

The following expectations are created to support student success in their academic career.

- I understand that I am enrolling my student in a public school with attendance requirements that I am expected to meet.
- I understand that my students must participate in all assessments
- I accept the responsibility to supervise my student in using the assigned curriculum.
- I expect to have the guidance and support of a professional teacher in implementing the assigned curriculum with my student.
- I understand that both my student and I need to check email and phone messages daily and respond within 48 hours.
- I understand that I must keep all contact information, including phone, email, and address up to date. If we move, I will provide the school with an updated proof of residency within ten (10) days of move.
- I understand that adequate and continuing student progress is an expected part of the SCFA assigned program in addition to the required attendance hours logged.
- I understand that I am to participate in regular phone, online classroom, and conferences with my student's teacher.
- I understand that the teacher may conduct academic assessments to evaluate mastery and assist my student instructionally.
- I understand that the teacher may provide research-based instructional interventions, as needed.
- I understand that sessions can be recorded however, the first and last names of students are not present in the recordings.
- I will treat all SCFA staff with respect and professionalism. This includes but is not limited to:
  - o Abstaining from the use of rude language (including profanity, yelling, or badgering) on phone, email, coursework, Live Sessions or in person
  - o Refraining from threatening teachers and/or SCFA staff on phone, email, course work, Live Sessions and/or in person

## Independent Study Written Agreement

California Independent Study regulations require that any student enrolled in the Southern California Flex Academy have a signed Independent Study Written Agreement on file for each year they are enrolled. The Written Agreement will be sent to the family electronically for a digital signature. The student, the parent/guardian, and the SCFA teacher must sign the Written Agreement. Additionally, should a Learning Coach other than the parent/guardian be responsible for instruction, he/she must also sign the Master Agreement.

The Independent Study Written Agreement must be signed or the student can be withdrawn. Please work with your teacher to ensure that your child's Written Agreement is signed within a timely manner. All attempts to contact the family are documented in our Student Information System.

Should a student have an update to their schedule or grade level they are required to complete a Written Agreement addendum within 5 school days.

## Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Every effort is made in maintaining the confidentiality of students attending SCFA in accordance with FERPA guidelines. Parents must give permission before a student's name or picture can be displayed in a public manner. Before confidential student information is transferred over the Internet, it is encrypted and can only be decrypted by another party employed or assigned by SCFA. Student files are accessible only to employees of SCFA who have an interest in the education of its students. Learning Coaches and students should be careful not to share their username and password with any unauthorized individuals. In any case, where a parent/guardian or teacher believes the security of the LMS has been compromised, the parent/guardian should change their password and notify their assigned Teacher. In addition, parents are advised to avoid using personal information in e-mails. For example, using a student's first initial is preferred to using a student's first name.

## Change of Contact Information

Please notify your teacher should your contact information change and provide a proof of residence for your new address to be submitted to SCFA. Your teacher will notify the SCFA administrative office and we will update our records accordingly. Correct contact information ensures that curriculum materials and important school notices are mailed to the correct student address.

Parents are requested to update their account information in the Learning Management System (LMS) should their email address change. Communication is often sent via email to the email address listed in the LMS and information needs to remain current.

## Harassment/Bullying Policy

SCFA strives to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all students to learn. Harassment and bullying based on sex, race, color, national origin, or disability is unlawful and will not be tolerated.

- Harassment or bullying based on sex includes sexual harassment or bullying and gender-based harassment or bullying. Sexual harassment or bullying is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Gender-based harassment or bullying is nonsexual intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on the student's actual or perceived sex, including harassment based on gender identity, gender expression, and nonconformity with gender stereotypes. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic or written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating. The conduct can be carried out by school employees, other students, and non-employee third parties. Both male and female students can be victims of harassment or bullying based on sex, and the harasser or bully and the victim can be of the same sex. Bullying based on sex constitutes sexual harassment.
- Harassment or bullying based on race, color, or national origin refers to intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on actual or perceived race, color, or national origin. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. The conduct can be carried out by school employees, other students, and non-employee third parties. Bullying based on race, color, or national origin constitutes racial harassment.
- Harassment or bullying based on disability refers to intimidation or abusive behavior towards a student based on actual or perceived disability. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating. The conduct can be carried out by school employees, other students, and non-employee third parties. Bullying based on disability constitutes disability harassment.

## Harassment Reporting

If you are being harassed in the school environment, it is important to report it immediately to the appropriate school administrator. Harassment comes in many forms including:

- Spam (unsolicited emails not about the course)
- Threatening communications
- Offensive communications or any other kind of communication that makes the student, parent, legal guardian, and learning coach feel comfortable.

## Internet Safety and Network Etiquette

It is the policy of Southern California Flex Academy to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

As an SCFA student, you are expected to follow the rules of network etiquette or netiquette. The word "netiquette" refers to common-sense guidelines for conversing with others online. Please abide by these standards:

- Avoid sarcasm, jargon, and slang
- Swear words are unacceptable
- Do not harass or threaten others
- Do not use all capital letters (this is considered yelling)
- Never use derogatory comments, including those regarding race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, political persuasion, body type, physical or mental health
- Focus your responses on the questions or issues being discussed, not on the individuals involved
- Be constructive with your criticism, not hurtful
- Review your messages before sending them. Remove easily misinterpreted language and proofread for typos
- Respect other people's privacy
- Do not broadcast online discussions, and never reveal other people's email addresses
- Do not post personal information, (personal information, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, email address etc.

## Student Computer Use Policy

### Permitted Use

- SCFA shall permit the student and the responsible teaching adult to use the equipment and materials of SCFA solely for the education of the student while enrolled at SCFA and for no other purpose.
- Students and the responsible teaching adult are only permitted to visit websites for the purpose of SCFA related educational research.

Prohibited Use - Only software that is required by SCFA will be allowed on the SCFA computer. All other software will be prohibited.

- Users shall not use the equipment, software, online classrooms, and other materials of SCFA to view, download, save, receive, or send material related to or including any of the following:
- Illegal activities
- Offensive content of any kind, including pornographic material
- Content that promotes discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, or disability
- Threatening or violent behavior
- Gambling or wagering
- Commercial messages.
- Religious, political, or racial messages
- Messages that misrepresent yourself
- Download of any software on the SCFA computer
- Websites or chat rooms that are not for the purpose of SCFA related education.

## Materials and Computer Equipment

All instructional materials, including computer equipment and related hardware, are loaned to the student by the SCFA. Students are expected to return all materials using the free shipping labels provided by SCFA should they withdraw from the program.

Families should handle SCFA property with care and should ensure an accurate inventory of these materials is maintained in the home. It is recommended that families save the boxes in which the materials arrived. School computers are only to be used for educational purposes, not for entertainment or other personal purposes. The SCFA shall not provide any funds or other thing of value to the pupil's parent or guardian that a school district could not legally provide to a similarly situated pupil of the school district, or to his or her parent or guardian.

## Uniform Complaint Procedures

SCFA has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations and has established procedures to address allegations of unlawful discrimination and complaints alleging a violation of state or federal laws governing educational programs. SCFA shall investigate and see to resolve complaints using policies and procedures known as the Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) adopted by our local board.

Under Education Code Section 35186, SCFA complies with the procedure for the filing of complaints concerning deficiencies related to instructional materials, conditions of facilities, and teacher vacancy or misassignment.

A copy of the Board-approved Uniform Complaint Procedure and a complaint form may be obtained, free of charge, by contacting the school. You may also download a copy of the California Department of Education complaint form, along with a copy of the fully policy and procedures from the following Web site: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cp/uc/index.asp>

## McKinney-Vento

SCFA is committed to supporting school success for all students including those experiencing homelessness. Unhoused students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular nighttime residence. Unhoused students are provided with enrollment assistance, supplementary academic support, school-related transportation assistance, case management, and referrals to community agencies. Referrals for support can be made by teachers, school staff, and parents/guardians by contacting the school. Disputes should be addressed using the board adopted grievance policy and uniform complaint procedures outlined in this handbook.

## Students in Foster Care

In effort to provide educational stability SCFA strives to assist any student who is currently placed or newly placed in foster care (either temporary or permanent custody of the state) with the enrollment and registration process, as well as other educational services throughout the student's enrollment in the district. A student who is currently in the conservatorship (custody) of the state and who enroll in the district after the beginning of the school year will be allowed credit by examination opportunities outside the school's established testing windows. A student who is placed in foster care and who is moved outside of the school's attendance boundaries is entitled to continue in enrollment at the school.

## Special Education Services

SCFA offers a full continuum of special education supports and services per all applicable federal and state laws. SCFA delivers services based on the students' Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### Section 504 Accommodation Plans

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a federal statute that prohibits discrimination against persons on the basis of their disability by institutions that receive financial federal assistance. It states:

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Section 504's purpose is to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to non-disabled students. An eligible student under Section 504 is a student who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. If a student is covered by Section 504, schools must provide such accommodations as are necessary to ensure that the student has equal access to services, programs, and activities offered by the school. Section 504 protects students from discrimination on the basis of disability to a similar extent as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

## Student Records

Your student's records may be viewed at any time pursuant to the Notification of Rights under FERPA. Please provide our school with five (5) days' notice so that the record may be pulled. The record must be viewed in the presence of a SCFA administrative staff member.

Students who transfer into the SCFA will complete the Release of Student Records form included in the student enrollment process. The school will send this form to your student's previous school upon receipt to obtain your student's records. It is the responsibility of your previous school to mail the records to the SCFA offices at that time.

Should you decide to withdraw from the SCFA and transfer to a new school, your new school will contact the SCFA Registrar to request your student's records and we will mail the records to them.

Should you decide to withdraw from the SCFA and teach in the home, please contact the School Registrar and we will mail a copy of your student records to you.

## Testing & Assessment

All students enrolled will be required to take NWEA assessments. This tool is utilized by teachers to align curriculum to the support academic achievement and

NWEA can be used for diagnostic and benchmark assessments. Additionally, this diagnostic assessment identifies which students are experiencing difficulties with specific skills and provides actionable data and reports to guide teachers in adjusting and aligning instruction and supports. NWEA automatically updates data reports every time a student completes a diagnostic assessment in the system so teachers can keep track of each student's skills progression, adjust instruction if needed, and gauge each student's growth towards their target and projected estimates for the year.

## State Standardized Tests

SCFA administers all standardized testing required by the State of California for public schools. The results of testing help to guide individual and school-wide instruction. State Testing is used to track and evaluate student mastery of grade-level academic content standards (the standards detail what students in each grade level are expected to know) in English Language Arts, Math, and as they advance in grade levels, Science and Social science.

Qualifying students with special needs are offered alternative standardized tests.

Participation rates are critical to the success of our school. A public school is required to achieve a participation rate of 95% on any state testing. If a school has less than 95% of its students participate in any assessment, the school runs the risk of receiving a serious penalty by the state of California. SCFA utilizes all assessment data to further drive instruction and support academic achievement.

The SCFA faculty administers all state standardized test at facilities located within driving distance of your home. Individual student performance results on statewide achievement testing will be distributed to both parents and teachers in a timely manner.

## Academic Integrity (Dishonesty & Plagiarism)

### **Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism:**

• This includes cheating, plagiarism, and any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means.

### **Some examples of this include:**

- Using another's work and claim as your own
- Submitting the same assignment to more than one course
- Copying from text, web site or other course material
- Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise
- Hiring someone to write a paper
- Buying a paper or project
- Sharing files
- Copying from another person's work
- Turning in another person's work
- Letting a partner do all the work and putting your name on it
- Letting a parent or mentor complete your assignments
- Asking for answers in a chat room
- Asking for answers in a threaded discussion
- Using an online translator or foreign language dictionary during examinations
- Allowing someone else to log into your account to complete your work
- Logging into someone else's account to complete their work

### **Consequences of Plagiarism Include\*:**

Infractions of this policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with individually. The penalties for plagiarism and cheating are as follows:

- **First Offense:** Student receives a warning, and the assignment is reset
- **Second Offense:** Student automatically fails the assignment with no chance to retake
- **Third Offense:** Student automatically fails the course

After each offense, the parent/guardian will be notified via email. A follow-up phone call to discuss any questions or concerns may take place. Each offense is per course, and each student will receive only two warnings before failing the course.

\*See Academic Integrity Policy for more details

## Live Instruction

Live instruction is assigned to students in all grade levels and is provided by a credentialed SCFA teacher. This is in conjunction with the instructional support that is being provided by the student's Learning Coach. Each student's individual schedule may vary depending on grade, assessment scores, teacher assignment, etc. SCFA adheres to the minimum daily instructional time requirements recommended by the state of California. However, increase daily instructional time may be necessary to meet the individual needs of each student.

## Student Achievement

The goal of SCFA is to educate your student. We cannot be successful if your student does not participate in school.

Attending an independent student program requires that students be able to complete their work as outlined in the enrollment requirements. If students are unable to complete their assignments as assigned, it may be an indication that independent study is not an appropriate placement.

To have successful progress in each class:

- Student will complete and/or submit all lessons in each course
- Student will attend required live sessions
- Student will make continuous progress (actively engaged, completing assignments, and submitting assignments) in each course
- Student must submit coursework at the direction of the teacher
- During travel time student must be progressing (activity engaged and completing assignments) in the curriculum.

If a student is not actively participating in SCFA, then the student can be withdrawn for not meeting enrollment requirements.

## Student Work Portfolios

To measure student achievement and growth, as well as meet state independent study guidelines, student work portfolios will be created and maintained by your student's teacher. Your teacher will collect and evaluate your student's assignments on a frequent and regular basis during each learning period. Your teacher may request to receive student's coursework by file sharing, email and at conferences. It is imperative that you work closely with your teacher to submit all requested coursework for evaluation on a regular, on-going basis. A portion of the collected coursework is stored as part of your student's cumulative file and is maintained in the SCFA's office, as required by the state of California.

Below are the qualifications of acceptable student coursework:

- Original student work, in the student's own handwriting
- Student work is neat and organized (age-appropriate)
- Includes the student's name, date, unit and lesson or assignment description
- Is reflective of work as assigned on the quarterly assignment plan and completed within the appropriate learning period/quarter
- Student work is evaluated and scored by the parent/guardian/learning coach using the answer keys, which can be found within the lesson content or as supplied by your student's teacher.
- Is submitted according to the deadlines established by the SCFA teacher

Failure to provide student work regularly as requested by SCFA staff may indicate that independent study is not the appropriate placement for your student.

## Independent Study Policy

Southern California Flex Academy (“Charter School”) shall offer independent study to meet the educational needs of pupils enrolled in the charter school. Independent study is an alternative education program designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum. Southern California Flex Academy shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable pupils to complete their independent study successfully.

The Charter School will provide content to students aligned to grade level standards that is provided at a level of quality and intellectual challenge substantially equivalent to in-person instruction. For high school students, this includes access to all courses offered by the Charter School for graduation and approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the A–G admissions criteria.

The following written policies have been adopted by the Board for implementation at the Charter School:

1. A school district or county office of education (or charter school) may not be eligible to receive apportionments for independent study by pupils unless it has adopted policies that include the following:

a. For pupils in all grade levels offered by the Charter School, the maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the pupil must complete the assigned work shall be 3 - 5 school days.

The level of satisfactory educational progress and/or the number of missed assignments that will result in an evaluation being conducted to determine whether it is in the best interest of the student to remain in Independent Study shall be 3 assignments failing to meet the defined satisfactory educational progress, as detailed below, and/or 3 missed assignments respectively. A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted pursuant to this policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim pupil record. This record shall be maintained for a period of three years from the date of the evaluation and if the pupil transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.

2. A level of satisfactory educational progress that will be allowed before an evaluation is conducted to determine whether it is in the best interest of the pupil to remain in independent study.

a. The pupil’s achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by the pupil’s performance on applicable pupil level measures of pupil achievement and pupil engagement set forth in paragraphs (4) and (5) of subdivision (d) of Section 52060.

b. The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the pupil is working on assignments.

c. Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher.

d. Progressing toward successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher.

3. The provision of content aligned to grade level standards, quality and intellectual challenge substantially equivalent to in-person instruction. For high schools, this shall include access to all courses offered by the local educational agency for graduation and approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the A–G admissions criteria.

4. Procedures for tiered reengagement strategies for all pupils who are not generating attendance for more than 3

school days or 60 percent of the instructional days in a school week, or who are in violation of the written agreement. These procedures shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, all of the following:

- a. Verification of current contact information for each enrolled pupil.
- b. Notification to parents or guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the absence or lack of participation.
- c. A plan for outreach from the school to determine pupil needs, including connection with health and social services as necessary.
- d. If the student has failed to complete assignments during any period of 10 school days or is failing to make satisfactory educational progress as defined herein, the Charter School will schedule a student-parent-educator conference (a meeting involving all individuals who signed the student's written independent study agreement) to review the student's agreement and reconsider the independent study program's impact on the student's achievement and well-being.

5. Based on each student's grade level, their assigned teacher of record will offer opportunities for synchronous instruction and/or daily live interaction at least as frequently as set forth below. "Live interaction" means interaction between the student and Charter School staff, and may include peers, to maintain school connectedness. Examples of live interaction include check-ins, progress monitoring, provision of services, and instruction, and live interaction can be in-person or in the form of internet or telephonic communication.

- a. For pupils in transitional kindergarten through grade 3, inclusive, the school will offer students opportunities for daily synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year.
- b. For pupils in grades 4 through 8, inclusive, the school will provide opportunities for both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year.
- c. For pupils in grades 9 through 12, inclusive, the school will provide opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year.

The Charter School will document each student's participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction on each school day, as applicable, in whole or in part. A student who does not participate in independent study on a school day will be documented as non-participatory for that school day.

6. In the event a family decides to return to in-person instruction, within 5 instructional days, the school will provide the family with a transitional plan with including, but not limited, resources such as contact information for their school of residence, other classroom based educational opportunities, and wellness support.

7. A requirement that a current written agreement for each independent study pupil shall be maintained on file including all legal requirements (see Master Agreement below).

## Master Agreement Policy

A current written agreement for each independent study pupil shall be maintained on file including, but not limited to, all of the following:

1. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a pupil's assignments, for reporting the pupil's academic progress, and for communicating with a pupil's parent or guardian regarding a pupil's academic progress.
2. The objectives and methods of study for the pupil's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work.
3. The specific resources, including materials and personnel, that will be made available to the pupil. These resources shall include: confirming or providing access to all pupils to the connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work.
4. A statement of the policies adopted pursuant to subdivisions (a) and (b) regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of a pupil's assigned work, the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments allowed before an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in independent study.
5. The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the pupil's participation in independent study under the agreement. No independent study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one school year.
6. A statement of the number of course credits or, for the elementary grades, other measures of academic accomplishment appropriate to the agreement, to be earned by the pupil upon completion.
7. A statement detailing the academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of pupils who are not performing at grade level, or need support in other areas, such as English learners, individuals with exceptional needs in order to be consistent with the pupil's individualized education program (IEP) or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794), pupils in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and pupils requiring mental health support.
8. The inclusion of a statement in each independent study agreement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate. In the case of a pupil who is referred or assigned to any school, class, or program pursuant to Section 48915 or 48917, the agreement also shall include the statement that instruction may be provided to the pupil through independent study only if the pupil is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.
9. Each independent study agreement shall be signed, before the commencement of independent study, by the pupil, the pupil's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the pupil is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil. For purposes of this paragraph "caregiver" means a person who has met the requirements of Part 1.5 (commencing with Section 6550) of Division 11 of the Family Code.
10. Each signature required for an independent study agreement shall be dated as required by Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11702. An agreement is not in effect until it is complete as to all terms, signed and dated.

Before signing an independent study agreement, and upon the request of the parent or guardian of a student, the Charter School shall conduct a phone, videoconference, or in- person student-parent-educator conference or other

school meeting during which the student, parent or guardian may ask questions about the educational options, including which curriculum offerings and nonacademic supports will be available to the student in independent study, before making the decision about enrollment or disenrollment.

The Head of School shall establish regulations to implement these policies in accordance with the law.

## **Southern California Flex Academy Academic Integrity Policy**

Academic integrity is expected in all courses, assignments, and activities. Violations of academic integrity include plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, or falsification of information submitted on projects, assignments, papers, or exams.

Infractions of this policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with individually. The penalties for plagiarism and cheating are as follows:

- **First Offense: Student receives a warning, and the assignment is reset**
- **Second Offense: Student automatically fails the assignment with no chance to retake**
- **Third Offense: Student automatically fails the course**

After each offense, the parent/guardian will be notified via email. A follow-up phone call to discuss any questions or concerns may take place. Each offense is per course, and each student will receive only two warnings before failing the course.

Students may not claim another person's work as his or her own or use unauthorized materials to gain an advantage during assignments or testing. Assessments and assignments are only constructive when based on a student's original work. Only original work is useful to both the student and the educators. Avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms.

**Southern California Flex Academy**  
**Missed Assignments Policy**

Per California Education Code Section 51747, Southern California Flex Academy (“School”) maintains a board policy establishing three (3) assignments during any period of five (5) school days as the number of missed assignments that will be allowed before an evaluation is conducted to determine whether it is in the best interest of the pupil to remain in independent study.

**Evaluation After Missed Assignments**

After three missed (3) assignments during any period of five (5) school days an evaluation will be conducted by the Principal and/or designee and supervising teacher to determine whether it is in the best interests of the pupil to remain enrolled in independent study. The evaluation may include but is not limited to the review of the following:

- 1) Attendance based on completion of assignments as quantified by the assigned supervising teacher;
- 2) Demonstration of skills on assignments;
- 3) Standardized test scores;
- 4) Written tests and reports if appropriate;
- 5) Oral or written presentations;
- 6) Pupil’s attitude toward learning and achievement;
- 7) Punctual attendance at scheduled appointments;
- 8) Ability to meet scheduled appointments;
- 9) Preparedness for scheduled appointments;
- 10) Pupil demonstration of adequate and appropriate progress toward academic goals;
- 11) Common Core State Standards;
- 12) Appropriate learning environment;
- 13) Parent(s) ability to support pupil learning in the home.

As part of the evaluation process, the pupil, parent(s), guardian(s) or if the pupil is a foster child or youth or a homeless child or youth, the pupil’s educational rights holder (all generally referred throughout as “Parent(s)”) will be invited to present evidence to the individual or individuals conducting the evaluation. During this meeting, the School will determine whether it is in the best interest of the pupil to remain in independent study. A written record of the findings of any evaluation made pursuant to this subdivision shall be maintained in the pupil’s mandatory interim record.

**Additional Consideration for Pupils with a Section 504 Plan or IEP**

If the School recommends removal from independent study as a result of the Evaluation After Missed Assignments and the pupil has a Section 504 Plan or IEP, the School shall schedule an IEP meeting or Section 504 meeting (as applicable) following applicable legal timelines, to determine the following:

- 1) Whether the missed assignments were caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the pupil’s disability;  
or
- 2) Whether the missed assignments were the direct result of the School’s failure to implement the IEP or Section 504 Plan, as applicable.

If the answer to either (1) or (2), above, is yes, then the missed assignments are a manifestation of the pupil’s disability and the School will follow applicable state and federal laws to ensure that the pupil is offered a free appropriate public

education.

If the answer to both (1) and (2), above, is no, then the pupil may be removed from independent study consistent with this policy.

This meeting may be combined with the Evaluation After Missed Assignments at the discretion of the School.

**Notice of Decision and Opportunity to Request a Hearing Prior to Removal**

Once the evaluation is complete, if it is determined that it is not in the best interest of the pupil to remain enrolled in the independent study program, the Parent(s) shall be notified in writing of the School's intent to remove the pupil as it is not in their best interest to remain in independent study. The Notice shall be in the native language of the Parent(s) and provided no less than five (5) schooldays before the effective date of pupil's removal. The Notice shall include the following:

- 1) The School's intent to remove the pupil as it is not in their best interest to remain in independent study.
- 2) The opportunity of the Parent(s) to request a hearing that follows the same procedures as the School's disciplinary hearing. Parent(s) (or the pupil if over 18) must submit the request for hearing writing within five (5) calendar days from the date of the Notice.
- 3) If Parent(s) or pupil over 18 requests a hearing:
  - a. It will be scheduled following the School's expulsion hearing procedures as outlined in the School's approved charter.
  - b. The pupil shall remain enrolled and shall not be removed until the School issues a final decision.
- 4) If no hearing is requested, the pupil shall be removed from the school on the date listed on the notice.

## **Southern California Flex Academy AI Use and Academic Integrity Policy**

Southern California Flex Academy is committed to fostering academic honesty and the development of critical thinking skills. As artificial intelligence (AI) technologies such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and other generative tools become more common in educational settings, this policy establishes clear expectations for their appropriate and ethical use.

### **Definition of AI Tools**

AI tools refer to any software or platform that can generate, edit, translate, summarize, or otherwise produce academic content. This includes, but is not limited to, writing assistants, code generators, content translators, and data analysis tools.

### **Acceptable Use of AI**

Students may use AI tools in a supporting role, provided that their use does not replace original student work and is clearly acknowledged. Acceptable uses include:

- Correcting grammar and syntax
- Checking citations or formatting help

### **Prohibited Use of AI**

Using AI in the following ways is a violation of academic integrity:

- Submitting AI-generated responses, essays, or projects as one's own work
- Copying AI-generated text without citation
- Using AI to complete assessments or tests unless specifically allowed by an instructor
- Falsifying or fabricating data, research, or sources using AI
- Relying on AI to bypass learning objectives or critical thinking assignments

### **Disclosure and Citation**

If a student uses an AI tool for approved academic support, the use must be disclosed clearly in the assignment. Example citation:

"This assignment includes brainstorming assistance from ChatGPT by OpenAI."

Failure to disclose AI usage when required will be considered academic dishonesty.

### **Consequences for Misuse**

Violations of this policy will result in the following disciplinary actions, in alignment with the school's Academic Integrity Policy:

- **First Offense:** Warning issued and assignment reset
- **Second Offense:** Automatic failure of the assignment
- **Third Offense:** Automatic failure of the course

Parents or guardians will be notified after each offense. Each student is granted only two warnings per course.

## **Southern California Flex Academy English Language Learner (ELL) Policy**

Southern California Flex Academy is committed to ensuring equitable access to education for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs). This policy outlines our commitment to identifying, supporting, and monitoring ELL students in accordance with California state and federal laws and guidelines.

### **Legal Compliance**

This policy complies with all applicable federal and California state laws and regulations, including Title III of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), California Education Code (EC) Sections 313 and 60810, and guidelines provided by the California Department of Education (CDE).

### **Identification and Assessment**

All students enrolling at Southern California Flex Academy will complete a Home Language Survey (HLS). Students who indicate a language other than English on the HLS will be assessed using the Initial ELPAC (English Language Proficiency Assessments for California) to determine their English proficiency level. Students identified as English learners will receive targeted support services. Students who pass the Initial ELPAC are identified as Initially Fluent English Proficient (IFEP) and do not require further ELL services.

### **Program Services**

ELL students will be provided with appropriate language development instruction and academic support. Instruction will include designated and integrated English Language Development (ELD) in alignment with California ELD standards. Students will have access to core academic subjects and will be supported in attaining English proficiency and academic achievement.

### **Reclassification Criteria**

In accordance with California's standardized reclassification procedures, all English learners must meet the following four criteria to be considered for reclassification:

1. English Language Proficiency: Achieve an Overall Performance Level (PL) of 4 on the Summative ELPAC.

- Students with PL 4 should be considered for reclassification.
- Students scoring at PL 3 or lower should not be reclassified but should be the focus of collaborative planning including parents and educators to support continued progress.

2. Teacher Evaluation: Demonstration of grade-level proficiency in core academic subjects, as assessed by classroom performance and teacher judgment.

3. Parent or Guardian Opinion and Consultation: Parents/guardians must be involved in the reclassification process.

4. Comparison of Performance in Basic Skills: Performance equal to that of English proficient students in standardized assessments of basic skills.

### **For students with disabilities**

- Dually identified students (EL and with disabilities) must meet all reclassification criteria. If a student's disability precludes assessment in one or more ELPAC domains, reclassification may proceed based on an Overall PL 4 in the domains assessed.
- For students assessed with the Summative Alternate ELPAC, an Overall PL 3 is the criterion. These students may be reclassified in conjunction with the other locally determined criteria.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents and guardians are key partners in the educational success of ELL students. The school will actively engage families in the ELL process, including identification, placement, progress monitoring, and reclassification decisions. The District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC) will meet four times per academic year to review and provide input on programs and services for English learners.

### **Monitoring and Support Post-Reclassification**

Students who have been reclassified as fluent English proficient (RFEP) will be monitored for four years to ensure continued academic success. Intervention services will be provided as needed.

## **Southern California Flex Academy Technology Policy**

The Southern California Flex Academy (SCFA) provides technology resources, including school-issued devices and access to the SCFA Program Platform, to support its film and media-focused curriculum. This policy outlines the responsibilities of students and parents/guardians for the use, care, and return of SCFA-issued devices, requirements for personal devices, internet safety, and network etiquette to ensure equitable access, data privacy, and compliance with California Education Code and federal laws, including the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA, Pub. L. No. 106-554, 47 USC 254(h)).

### **Ownership and Responsibility**

All instructional materials, including laptops, tablets, hotspot, and related hardware, are the property of SCFA and are loaned to students solely for educational purposes. Students and parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Daily care and maintenance of SCFA-issued devices.
- Taking reasonable precautions against damage, theft, or loss.
- Immediately notifying the SCFA homeroom teacher of any damage, theft, or loss.
- Filing a police report within 48 hours for theft and providing a copy to SCFA.

If damage or loss results from negligence (e.g., leaving devices unattended, liquid damage, unauthorized modifications), the student/parent is responsible for the full replacement cost, as determined by the SCFA IT department. A transparent assessment process will be followed, with written notification of findings and an opportunity to appeal within 14 days.

### **Device Return**

Upon withdrawal or graduation, students must return all SCFA-issued devices (e.g., laptops, tablets) in good working condition, free of physical damage and with functional software, within two weeks using SCFA-provided shipping labels.

Non-compliance may result in:

- Written notice from SCFA detailing the debt.
- An invoice for reasonable replacement costs.
- Temporary withholding of academic records (e.g., transcripts) until resolved, per California Education Code § 48904.

Families will receive written notification of any debt and an opportunity to return the device, pay the invoice, or appeal within 14 days. Low-income families may request a payment plan or waiver. Unofficial records may be provided for enrollment purposes, per FERPA.

### **Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and Internet Safety**

SCFA-issued devices and the SCFA Program Platform are for educational purposes only, aligned with SCFA’s film and media curriculum. Students and responsible teaching adults (e.g., parents/guardians) may use SCFA equipment and materials solely for the education of the student while enrolled at SCFA.

Use is restricted to SCFA-related educational research and activities. SCFA complies with CIPA by preventing:

- Access to or transmission of inappropriate material via the internet, email, or other electronic communications.
- Unauthorized access or unlawful online activity (e.g., hacking).
- Unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of minors' personal identification information.

Permitted Use:

- Accessing SCFA-approved websites and resources for coursework.
- Using SCFA-required software and the SCFA Program Platform for educational activities.

Prohibited Use:

- Installing non-SCFA-required software on SCFA devices.
- Viewing, downloading, saving, receiving, or sending material related to:
- Illegal activities.
- Offensive content, including pornography.
- Content promoting discrimination based on race, gender, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, or disability.
- Threatening or violent behavior.
- Gambling or wagering.
- Commercial, religious, political, or racial messages.
- Messages misrepresenting the user.
- Accessing non-educational websites, chat rooms, or platforms (e.g., social media, gaming).
- Bypassing SCFA's content filters or security measures.

Violations may result in disciplinary action (e.g., loss of device privileges, suspension of platform access), financial liability for damages, or other consequences per SCFA's code of conduct. SCFA-issued devices include content filters and monitoring software to ensure compliance with CIPA and safe use.

### **Network Etiquette (Netiquette)**

Students must follow SCFA's network etiquette guidelines when using the SCFA Program Platform or other online tools:

- Avoid sarcasm, jargon, slang, or swear words.
- Do not harass, threaten, or use derogatory comments regarding race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, political persuasion, body type, or physical/mental health.

- Use standard capitalization (avoid all capital letters, which is considered yelling).
- Focus responses on discussion topics, not individuals.
- Provide constructive, not hurtful, criticism.
- Proofread messages for clarity and typos before sending.
- Respect others' privacy; do not broadcast discussions or reveal email addresses.
- Do not post personal information (e.g., Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, email addresses).

Violations of netiquette may result in disciplinary action, including restricted access to the SCFA Program Platform.

### **Data Privacy**

SCFA complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the California Student Online Personal Information Protection Act (SOPIPA, EDC § 49073.1), and other applicable laws to protect student data. SCFA-issued devices include content filters and monitoring software to ensure safe use, per Title IV requirements. Personal information collected via the SCFA Program Platform is used solely for educational purposes and is not shared with third parties without consent, except as required by law.

Parents/guardians may request access to their student's education records per FERPA guidelines.

### **Equitable Access**

SCFA is committed to ensuring all students have access to necessary technology, per EDC § 47605. Students without personal devices or reliable internet may request loaner devices or Wi-Fi hotspots from the school. Accommodation for students with disabilities (e.g., screen readers, adaptive peripherals) is provided per Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans.

### **Non-School Devices**

Students using personal devices to access the SCFA Program Platform must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Hardware: Processor speed of 2.0 GHz or higher, 4 GB RAM or higher, 10 GB free storage, compatible graphics card.
- Operating System: chrome OS
- Browsers: Latest versions of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari (iOS 14.0+, Android 8.0+ for mobile).
- Internet: 2.0 Mbps upload, 4.0 Mbps download (home); 5G LTE recommended for mobile data.
- Audio: Headset with a built-in microphone to reduce background noise.

SCFA provides technical support for non-school devices but does not cover repair costs for personal equipment. Compatibility issues should be reported to the SCFA IT department for assistance.

## Southern California Flex Academy Technology Loaner Agreement

We, the undersigned student and parent/guardian, acknowledge and agree to the following terms for using Southern California Flex Academy (SCFA)-issued devices and the SCFA Program Platform, as detailed in the SCFA Student Handbook Technology Policy.

- **Ownership and Care:** SCFA-issued devices (e.g., laptops, tablets, hotspots) are school property and for educational use only. We are responsible for their care, maintenance, and protection
- against damage, theft, or loss. We will report any issues to the homeroom teacher and SCFA IT department (helpdesk@scfa.org) immediately and file a police report for theft within 48 hours. If damage or loss is due to negligence (e.g., leaving devices unattended, liquid damage), we are responsible for the full replacement cost.
- **Device Return:** Upon withdrawal or graduation, we will return all SCFA-issued devices in good working condition within two weeks using SCFA-provided shipping labels. Non-compliance may result in an invoice for replacement costs and withholding of academic records (e.g., transcripts).
- **Acceptable Use:** We will use SCFA-issued devices and the SCFA Program Platform only for educational purposes, avoiding unauthorized software, personal entertainment, or actions that violate SCFA's anti-bullying or digital citizenship policies. Violations may lead to disciplinary action or loss of device privileges.
- **Data Privacy:** We understand SCFA complies with FERPA, SOPIPA, and other laws to protect student data. SCFA-issued devices include content filters, and data collected via the SCFA Program Platform is used solely for educational purposes.
- **Equitable Access:** We acknowledge SCFA provides loaner devices or Wi-Fi hotspots for students without personal devices or internet. Accommodations for students with disabilities are
- available per IEPs or 504 plans.
- **Non-School Devices:** Personal devices used to access the SCFA Program Platform must meet minimum requirements (e.g., 2.0 GHz processor, 4 GB RAM, 10 GB storage, compatible browsers). SCFA offers technical support ([IT contact info]) but is not responsible for personal device repairs.

We have read and agree to abide by the SCFA Student Handbook Technology Policy. We understand that failure to comply may result in disciplinary or financial consequences.

## **Southern California Flex Academy Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy**

The Board of Directors of Southern California Flex Academy (“SCFA”) acknowledges the benefits and growing role of artificial intelligence (“AI”) in education. When used effectively and ethically, AI tools can enhance student learning and reduce administrative burden. However, AI also has the potential to erode academic achievement, privacy, equity, and the student-educator relationship. The Board of Directors adopts this Artificial Intelligence Policy to establish guidelines for the responsible use of AI at SCFA that prioritizes the student-educator relationship, privacy, equity, accountability, academic integrity, and legal compliance. AI at SCFA shall serve to enhance learning and supplement, not supplant, the human aspects of education.

### **Definitions**

AI means an engineered or machine-based system that varies in its level of autonomy and that can, for explicit or implicit objectives, infer, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs that can influence physical or virtual environments. AI includes generative AI and agentic AI. Generative AI creates new content such as text, images, audio, code, or video, by learning from large datasets and generating original outputs. Agentic AI is AI that operates autonomously when deployed by humans, makes decisions, analyzes situations, adapts to changes, and continuously improves.

### **Approval of AI Tools**

No AI tool shall be used within or purchased for SCFA’s program by any SCFA employee or volunteer without being vetted and approved by the Chief Executive Officer or designee in advance. The vetting process shall ensure that the tool: 1) complies with all SCFA policies and applicable laws and regulations, 2) is appropriate for the educational setting, and 3) is backed by evidence showing the tool enhances learning outcomes for students or efficiency for SCFA employees. The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall regularly audit the AI tools approved for use within SCFA’s program to assess their efficacy, appropriateness, and compliance with SCFA policies and applicable laws and regulations.

### **Data Privacy and Security**

Privileged, confidential, or personal information including, but not limited to, attorney-client communications, personnel records, student information, videos, photos, and voice recordings, shall not be disclosed when using or communicating with any AI system. No personally identifiable information shall be input into any open AI system.

### **Equity and Access**

The Chief Executive Officer or designee shall regularly assess AI tools used within SCFA’s program to identify and minimize biased output by the AI tools. Students and employees are encouraged to report any concerns that arise regarding biased output of any AI tool used within SCFA’s program.

No student or employee shall be denied access to any AI tool on the basis of the student or employee’s disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, immigration status, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Penal Code section 422.55.

## **Academic Integrity**

AI is not a substitute for critical thinking or professional judgment. Teachers will inform students and parents/guardians of which AI tools, if any, will be permitted in their class and on which assignments. Teachers who authorize a student to use any AI tool to complete an assignment must educate the student on how to use the AI tool in accordance with this policy and how to assess the quality of the AI output, particularly with respect to identifying inaccuracies and biases. Students and employees using AI tools must properly cite such use and review and independently verify the accuracy of the AI output.

## **Unacceptable Uses of AI**

1. The following is a non-exhaustive list of unacceptable uses of AI within SCFA's program:
2. Submitting AI-generated work as your own;
3. An employee or volunteer using AI without advance approval from the Chief Executive Officer or designee;
4. A student using AI on any assessment or assignment without advance approval for the specific use from the teacher of the class;
5. A student using AI on a test or assignment without properly citing such use;
6. Using AI to impersonate, mislead, threaten, harm, defame, bully or harass another person;
7. Using AI in a way that violates the law, SCFA policy, or another's rights;
8. Using AI to create, display, or access sexually explicit or obscene material;
9. Entering any confidential, proprietary or copyrighted material or information into any AI system; and
10. Using AI to grade student work.

## **Accountability and Transparency**

SCFA will inform students, parents/guardians, and employees of the AI tools used within SCFA's program and obtain parent/guardian signed consent for the use of specific AI tools, as required.

## **AI Literacy and Professional Development**

AI literacy refers to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to how AI works and its applications, limitations, implications, and ethical considerations. AI literacy helps students, parents/guardians, and employees understand the AI decision-making process so they are more equipped to use it safely, effectively, and ethically.

SCFA shall take steps to build AI literacy within the SCFA community and offer ongoing, role-specific professional development to SCFA employees regarding the responsible use of AI within the SCFA program.

## **Policy Review and Enforcement**

This policy shall be evaluated by the Board of Directors periodically and updated as appropriate to align with best practices and address developing technologies.

SCFA shall provide this policy to students, parents/guardians, and teachers at the beginning of each school year. Students and employees are required to read and comply with this policy. Violation of this policy may result in discipline up to and including termination or expulsion from SCFA, as applicable.

## **Southern California Flex Academy AP/Honors Placement Process**

SCFA participates in the nationwide Advanced Placement (AP) program of college-level instruction in high school by offering Advanced Placement courses. Students who complete these classes can choose to take examinations prepared by the College Board in May. Success in the examination may earn the student college credit, advanced placement in college, or both. SCFA does not offer testing; therefore, students will need to seek this opportunity from other educational institutions. Please ask the SCFA Academic Counselor for help.

### **Requirements for Honors and Advanced Placement Courses**

SCFA encourages students to take demanding and advanced academic courses in all fields, although SCFA only offers certain courses, and they vary from year to year.

The following entrance requirements apply to honors and AP-level courses. These are the minimum requirements to be considered for entrance into these classes. An SCFA administrator will have the final say regarding exceptions or special circumstances.

### **Entrance requirements for honors and advanced placement courses include:**

1. Cumulative overall 3.0 GPA or higher as of the most recent completed term
2. Cumulative 3.0 GPA or higher in the subject as of the most recently completed term

### **A student may be dropped from an honors or AP course if any of the following occur:**

1. Cumulative weighted GPA drops below 3.0
2. The grade in the course (as listed on the transcript) falls below a C once the 1st semester is completed.
  - a. For example, if the student is taking AP US History and earns a D in the Fall term, they will not be able to continue taking the class for the Spring term.
3. The teacher recommends that the student be dropped from the course roster
4. The counselor recommends that the student be dropped from the course roster

### **Course Load Limit**

To support student well-being and success in a virtual environment:

- 9th grade: Maximum 0 AP courses
- 10th grade: Maximum 0 AP courses
- 11th grade: Maximum 2 AP courses
- 12th grade: Maximum 3 AP courses

Students requesting additional AP courses must demonstrate strong academic performance and time-management skills.

To maintain equitable access, students who do not meet the GPA requirement may submit a petition for AP/Honors enrollment. The petition may include:

1. A brief statement of interest
2. Evidence of improvement or recent academic growth, or information on other factors that prevented the student from achieving the GPA requirements, but demonstrate the student's preparation for enrollment in the course
3. Teacher/Counselor recommendation/considerations
4. Parent/guardian acknowledgement of course rigor

The AP committee will evaluate petitions using multiple measures. In all cases, decisions shall be nondiscriminatory and in alignment with Education Code Section 220. Students with IEPs and 504 plans shall be provided with all appropriate accommodations for them to access and participate in AP courses.

## **Southern California Flex Academy Concurrent Enrollment Policy**

Concurrent enrollment allows high school students to enroll in courses at a local community college. This program is intended to offer enrichment and academic acceleration opportunities to eligible students.

The Intent - The intent of the Education Code in allowing dual enrollment is to provide high school students the opportunity to complete college courses while still in high school, helping them prepare for post-secondary education. Dual enrollment also offers financial benefits, as high school students do not pay tuition.

The Profile - Students who may benefit from accelerating their academic or vocational pathways are eligible and encouraged to participate. Students seeking to complete remedial coursework or make up credits for previously failed high school or middle school classes may be considered for approval on an individual basis, provided they meet the general eligibility requirements.

### **Policies and Requirements for Concurrent Enrollment**

High school students interested in enrolling in community college courses must complete all required forms in coordination with their guidance counselor, who will assist in selecting courses aligned with the student's educational goals. Students may enroll in any course except Physical Education, Math, Science, or English, unless an exception is approved by the administrative team. It is also recommended that students consult with a community college counselor to ensure their selected courses align with their academic or career objectives and to verify any campus-specific restrictions.

Academic/Attendance requirements:

- Students must be in good academic standing at SCFA and may not be considered truant
  - Students must earn a minimum of a 2.5 GPA at SCFA. The following GPAs will be used to determine eligibility:
    - The most recently completed SCFA semester GPA will be used
    - Current SCFA GPA will also be used in order to determine if a college permission slip can be signed.
      - This means that when a student submits the college permission slip to the SCFA Academic Counselor, the counselor will look at the grades the student is currently earning that day to see if they are at a minimum 2.5 GPA.
    - Overall cumulative GPA earned
    - College GPA will also be used if you have already completed college courses.
  - Truancy is defined as 5 or more absences
- The student must be in compliance with all terms of their independent study master agreement
- The student must have completed all testing needed at SCFA
- The SCFA Academic Counselor will also consult with the student's homeroom teacher and SAI teacher (if applicable) to ensure there are no additional concerns
- The college may have a different set of requirements for HS admissions eligibility and/or course prerequisites (such as age, GPA, etc). In such a case, the student must be able to meet requirements for both SCFA and the college to be approved for college courses
- Only courses approved by SCFA staff will be added to the SCFA transcript

Students under the age of 18 must obtain a parent or guardian's signature to authorize participation in the concurrent enrollment program. This consent is given on a form provided by the college that requires a parent/guardian signature.

Students are limited to enrolling in no more than two courses per semester, regardless of unit value, provided their total enrollment does not exceed 11 units. Students seeking to take additional courses or exceed the 11-unit limit must obtain prior approval from both the Principal and the Dual Enrollment Specialist. If it is the student's first time taking a college class, the enrollment limit for the first such semester is one college course.

All completed coursework will appear on the student's community college transcript. If the course was preapproved, high school credit will be added to their high school transcript upon receipt of an official college transcript verifying the grade and credits earned.

Community colleges are not responsible for supervising minor students outside of the classroom environment. The college faculty and staff are not expected to remain with students after class or ensure that the student is released to their parent/guardian, or that transportation arrangements have been made. Additionally, students should be aware that classes may occasionally be dismissed early and may be unsupervised.

Parents/guardians of students are responsible at all times for ensuring that arrangements are made for their student to safely attend the community college and, as a condition of participation in dual enrollment, shall hold SCFA harmless from any and all liability related to any injuries or losses of any kind that a student sustains as a consequence of participation in college courses. As a prerequisite to participation in college courses, parents/guardians are required to sign a waiver confirming the same.

Students are also responsible for any fees associated with taking a college class.

Students are required to follow all college policies, including those related to course requirements, attendance, deadlines, and the college's code of conduct. Specific policies can be found in the college's catalog or class schedule.

*Please note: Some community colleges impose additional restrictions on the types of courses available to high school students through concurrent enrollment. Guidance counselors must adhere to each college's specific policies and, as a result, may not be able to approve certain course requests.*

### **Steps for High School Concurrent Enrollment**

1. Research the Community Colleges in your area to decide which college you would like to attend.
2. Review the community college class schedule and identify one or two courses that align with your academic or career goals.
3. Find the portion of the college website that covers Concurrent Enrollment. On most college websites, you can find this by typing in "high school enrollment" or just "high school" in the search box. (Colleges may also refer to concurrent enrollment as "special admission" or "dual enrollment.")
4. Complete an admissions application for the community college.
5. Follow the steps to fill out the High School Concurrent Enrollment Form (available on the college website). Be sure to include all student information and the name of the class you plan to take. Have your parents sign the form (if you are under 18).
6. Send the High School Concurrent Enrollment form to your guidance counselor via email to obtain a signature and discuss your course selection. Send it in PDF format if possible.
7. Follow the steps outlined by the college for submitting this form, completing the admissions process, and registering for courses.
8. To have credits from the community college course applied to your high school transcript, you must send a copy of your college transcript to SCFA staff at [records@scfa.org](mailto:records@scfa.org)

### Additional Notes

- Placement assessments may be required for enrollment in English, math, or ESL courses. Students must also meet any prerequisite requirements established by the community college.
- A separate high school concurrent enrollment form must be completed and submitted for each semester of participation.
- To receive dual credit, an official transcript from the community college must be sent to SCFA, showing the completed course, grade, and credits earned.
- Students who intend to apply community college courses toward high school graduation requirements must obtain prior approval from their guidance counselor.
- If you are using the community college course to meet a University of California (UC) or Cal State University (CSU) A-G freshman admission requirement, then the course must be listed on the community college's A-G Course List: <https://hs-articulation.ucop.edu/agcourselist#/list/search/institution>

College Credit Earned	High School Credits Awarded
1 unit/credit	3 credits
2 units/credits	6 credits
3 units/credits	10 credits
4 units/credits	13 credits
5 units/credits	16 credits

To maintain equitable access, students who do not meet the GPA requirement may submit a petition to the Principal for college course enrollment. The petition may include:

1. A brief statement of interest
2. Evidence of improvement or recent academic growth
3. Teacher/Counselor recommendation and/or considerations

In all cases, decisions shall be nondiscriminatory and in alignment with Education Code Section 220. Students with IEPs and 504 plans may be required to apply for accommodations from the college in which they are dually enrolled.

As SCFA does not operate the colleges in which students are dually enrolled, SCFA is not responsible for the implementation of IEPs and 504 Plans at community colleges and in community college courses. Students are responsible for seeking accommodations directly from the college in which they are enrolled.

## Release of Liability

Through acknowledgement and receipt of the Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook, you are hereby providing permission for your student to participate in state testing.

The undersigned parent or guardian assumes all risks in connection with the student's participation in any and all of the Southern California Flex Academy activities. I, the undersigned, intending to be legally bound, do hereby for myself and heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, forever waive release and discharge the Southern California Flex Academy, it's officers, employees and agents from all liability, claims or demands for any damage, loss or injury to the student, the student's property, or parent's property or to myself in connection with participation in these activities, unless caused by the negligence of the Southern California Flex Academy. I do hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief said minor is in good health. In case of illness or accident, permission is granted for emergency treatment to be administered. It is further understood and agreed that the undersigned will assume full responsibility for any such action, including payment of costs. If the student has or has had any of the following allergies, medicine reactions or unusual physical condition which should be made known to a treating physician or which could limit participation please notify the school in writing so it can be maintained in the student's file.

## Handbook Acknowledgement

By signing below, you are agreeing to the policies and procedures of the Parent/Guardian- Student Handbook. Including (but not limited to):

- Attendance & Engagement Policy
- Academic Progress
- Academic Integrity
- Appropriate behavior
- State testing requirements
- Release of Liability

Student Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Parent Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

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

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