

Passage Charter School



Passage Charter School

Student Handbook

Revised February 2011

Our Vision:

Passage Charter School is a community investment in quality education that results in healthy, responsible and rewarding lives for young parents and their children.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

Passage Charter School admits students of any race, color and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to its students. PCS does not discriminate on the basis of race in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and any school administered programs.

➤ *Please be advised that, by law, Passage Charter School is obligated to report any physical or sexual abuse or any serious threats to self or others to authorities. If you have any questions, please discuss this with a staff member.*

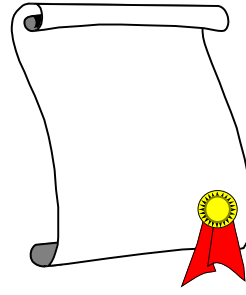
➤ Asbestos Notification:

Passage Charter School is an asbestos free school. However, to comply with state asbestos standards, we have an asbestos management plan.

If you have any further questions or would like to request a copy of our plan, please contact me, Erin Fields at 970-249-8066.

** The words "he" and "she" in the text shall be construed as including both males and females.*

Revised January 2008



I. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

Passage Charter School (PCS) is an extended year school designed specifically to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting teens (male and female) in West Central Colorado. Students graduating from PCS will earn a high school diploma, and will also benefit from the following unique components:

- Flexible scheduling
- On-site infant and toddler child care center
- Self-paced courses with individual and small-group instruction
- Established networks with community agencies that allow teens to access useful and necessary services such as prenatal care, WIC, infant immunizations, job training, nutrition, consumer training, etc.
- Personalized Learning Plans developed for each student
- Credit for life and job experience
- Excellent access to parenting, vocational and career information and training
- A student-directed approach to learning
- Small, caring, learning community

Our instructional program includes Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Prenatal, Parenting and Job Preparation courses. Methods of instruction used in the teaching of these classes will be a combination of teacher-directed programs, self-paced course work, computer assisted instruction, community resource programs, and independent study.

It is the philosophy of PCS that by responding to their educational needs in the ways listed above, we are sending the following messages to our students:

**"We care about you."
"We care about your child."
"We know you can succeed"
"We will help you attain success."**

II. TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

The teachers at PCS serve as resources, facilitators, advisors and instructors rather than as dispensers of information. The teachers conduct classes in various areas, but their primary role is to direct and guide students to materials and experiences that students may use to achieve their individual goals. To assist students in achieving their educational goals, the teachers will:

- Be available to each of her advisees in the development and refinement of their short-term and long-term goals
- Help students identify, locate or create courses that will lead to the completion of credits required to achieve their diploma
- Create and/or teach courses that will lead to the completion of credits
- Identify services within the community that can help students achieve their goals
- Encourage each of her advisees to become capable, self-confident parents, students, and citizens of the community
- Maintain an environment which is conducive to learning and which benefits all students
- Exercise final authority over questions of discipline, academics, and other school related issues



III. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

All students attending PCS are here, and only remain here, by choice. By choosing this school, you are agreeing to take responsibility for your own education. The individual student is the one who learns and, therefore, must be willing to commit to a program that is directed by his/her own interests, needs and motivation. The teaching style at PCS, coupled with our academic expectations, promote self-discipline and accountability in our students. These are both valuable personal assets. To achieve the objectives of the school, students will:

- Determine their personal and academic goals (teachers will assist in this)
- Demonstrate commitment through regular attendance (see attendance section)

Student Responsibilities (cont'd)

- Demonstrate consistent progress towards their goals (see academic progress section)
- Display respectful behaviors toward self and others
- Seek assistance when needed
- Help to create and promote a safe and secure learning environment that is tobacco, drug, alcohol, and weapon free
- Be responsible for their own neatness and appropriate dress, and for that of their child(ren)

IV. ADMISSION POLICY / INTAKE PROCEDURES

PCS will accept students on a 'first-come, first-served' basis until the school capacity of 24 full-time students is attained, at which point any interested students will be placed on a waiting list for admission. As seniors complete their requirements for graduation, vacancies are created and persons will be drawn from the waiting list by a lottery system as required by federal law.

TO APPLY FOR ADMISSION, A STUDENT MUST:

- Complete the PCS Enrollment Packet
- Provide the school with immunization records
- Fill out a 'Request/Authorization for Release of Transcript and Other Information' form
- Meet with one of the PCS teachers to discuss the program and its appropriateness

ONCE ENROLLED, A STUDENT MUST:

- Follow PCS Child Care Center's enrollment policies if child is to be enrolled
- Complete a series of standardized placement tests in Reading, Math, and Language Arts
- Meet with a PCS advisor to evaluate the student's transcript from his/her previous school, and any job and life skill experiences to determine how much credit may be awarded for previous work and experiences
- With an advisor, begin developing a "Personalized Learning Plan"
- Begin assembling an Individual Graduation Committee, if the student is within 4 credits of graduation



V. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Passage Charter School students must have a **minimum of 24 credits** in order to graduate. Credits may be transferred from other institutions, but **at least four** of the 24 total credits must be earned at PCS. This includes a minimum of one credit in Life Skills: Parenting and one in Life Skills: Vocational.

The 25 credits necessary for graduation are as follows:

English	3.5 credits
Oral Communications	0.5 credits
Math	3.0 credits
Science	3.0 credits
Social Studies	3.0 credits (must include 1/2 credit in American Government)
Life Skills: Parenting	2.0 credits (includes Childcare Lab requirement)
Life Skills: Vocational	2.0 credits (includes PCS Careers & Work Experience)
Person of Quality	0.5 credits
Health	0.5 credits (students are required to take one semester of Health at Passage Charter School)
Physical Education	1.0 credits
Electives	5.0 credits (2 credits maximum for previous work/life experience)

Program Structure

Together, students, parents and PCS staff draws up personal learning plans with individualized schedules according to the student's needs.

Students earn credit at PCS through a combination of teacher-directed classes, independent study, language and math labs, technology-based instruction, work experience, experience in our childcare and using the resources of the community as and extended classroom.

Learning at PCS is divided into three "Passages." These are the Entry Passage, Middle Passage and Graduation Passage. Once a student completes the tasks and achieves the competencies set forth by each passage, they progress to the next level. Students document what they have completed and are able to do through portfolios, tests and presentations of learning.

Passage Charter School also has developed four "Learning Goals." These goals represent the essential skills and bodies of knowledge that we want our students to possess by the time they graduate from Passage Charter School.

Each learning goal consists of three to five benchmarks. Our instruction, curriculum and assessment are designed help students meet these learning goals and benchmarks.

Learning Goals:

Passage Charter School students are:

- Capable and Reflective Parents who display a wide range of strategies, knowledge and approaches that help them respond to the daily challenges of parenting, ranging from issues of health and safety to the emotional, physical and intellectual development of their child.
- Responsible Workers who have the experience, knowledge and skills that will enable them to be successful and responsible participants in the work force.
- Proficient Students who possess essential academic knowledge, skills and habits of mind that will enable them to achieve their educational goals and motivate them to be lifelong learners.
- Persons of Quality who have the skills and attributes that support continuous education and self-improvement. They are people with integrity who are proud of who they are or of who they are becoming.

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VI. ATTENDANCE POLICY

All students at PCS will be full-time students unless a compelling reason exists to grant part-time status. Full time students must attend school or a school-related activity for a minimum of 28 hours per week or an average of 5.7 hours per day. (17 yrs and under) Attendance is defined as time spent in the classrooms or engaged in an academic activity. Simply being on the school grounds or in the childcare center (when not required for credit purposes) will not count towards attendance requirements. Specific hours of attendance are flexible as long as the minimum requirement is met. (The school will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. Childcare hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

We understand that special circumstances surrounding pregnant and parenting teens may result in unanticipated absences, and we are committed to accommodating the needs of our students. However, we do not believe that pregnancy and parenting are valid excuses for unexplained absences, absences for reasons that can not be verified, or poor attendance. Failure to meet attendance requirements may result in a student being placed on probationary status (see Section VIII, "Student Status," of this handbook for more information).



VII. ACADEMIC PROGRESS

In order to ensure that students at PCS spend their time wisely, there will be minimum credit expectations placed on all students for the semesters that they are enrolled. Students will be expected to earn a minimum of 2 credits per semester that she/he is enrolled.

Failure to meet minimum credit requirements may result in a student being placed on probationary status (see Section VIII, "Student Status," of this handbook for more information).

VIII. STUDENT STATUS

Student in Good Standing

A student will be considered a “PCS Student in Good Standing” if she meets all of the following requirements:

- (1) Has turned in completed PCS enrollment forms
- (2) Has completed a Class Schedule for the quarter
- (3) Is attending school on a regular basis either full-time (28 hours per week) or part-time (15 hours per week) as defined by the schedule she has committed to in her Personal Learning Plan
- (4) Completes work at a rate that will result in the student earning a minimum of 2 credits per semester. If, during the quarter, the teacher makes the assessment that the student is not working at this rate, the student may be placed on probation and a plan developed to remedy the situation (see "Probationary Student").
- (5) Is fulfilling her other responsibilities as set forth in the PCS Student Handbook
- (6) Notifies the school before 10:00 a.m. when circumstances force her to be absent from the school for the day and by 9:00 a.m. if her child is enrolled in the infant toddler center.

Probationary Student

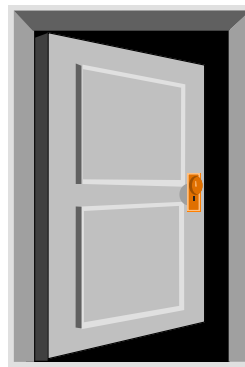
A student may be placed on probation if she fails to fulfill any of the requirements outlined above. Being placed on probation may result in the loss of certain PCS privileges and benefits. When this happens, the following steps will take place:

- (1) Written notice of the probationary status will be given to the student and, when appropriate, to her parents.
- (2) Within one week of receiving written notice, the student will meet with the teacher and/or her advisor to draw up a plan for returning the student to Good Standing status.
- (3) If the situation that led to probationary status has been corrected or reasonable progress towards correction is being made, the student will be returned to Good Standing. If the situation has not been corrected, the student will be suspended for a period of three days.
- (4) After a 3-day suspension, the student will have the opportunity to return to school under the terms of a contract designed to return the student to Good Standing status. Failure to live up to the terms of the contract may result in additional loss of privileges and benefits, or in suspension or expulsion.

IX. PASSAGE CHARTER SCHOOL FACILITY RULES

The staff of PCS values the dignity of each student, and we will rely upon each student's maturity to ensure a pleasant learning environment. We have a minimum number of school rules, and we will observe strict enforcement of the following:

- Smoking is not permitted at PCS, or on the school grounds.
- Possession and/or being under the influence of alcohol while on school grounds or at school related activities is strictly prohibited, and will result in suspension.
- Fighting while on school grounds or at school-related activities will result in suspension.
- Colorado State Law mandates that any student who brings any weapon or who possess and/or are under the influence of any illegal drugs shall be expelled for at least one year.
- Children are not allowed in the classrooms, except when the presence of a child is required as part of classroom instruction and only then with teacher permission.
- Students will be required to sign into the school when they arrive for instruction, and are required to sign out upon completing instruction.
- Any student leaving the campus for purposes other than scheduled breaks, lunches or work will be required to take their child(ren) with them, or risk losing child care privileges.
- Students will be required to clean up after themselves in any classroom, bathroom and kitchen areas.
- Fire drills are held periodically. During a drill or actual fire, **DO NOT GO TO THE NURSERIES**. Your child will be evacuated from the building by staff and lab students.



Passage Charter School – Student Government

Mission Statement

The mission of the Passage Charter School Student Government is to improve our school by: participating in our community through service; making our school more visible; setting a positive example both within the school and in the community; helping the student body realize the importance of leadership, teamwork, and communication in the life of a teen parent.

We believe that even though we are teen parents we can still achieve our goals through hard work and dedication.