Sojourn Mennonite Church
Community DACA Fund Discernment Board Governing Principles

In accordance with the “Statement on Sanctuary and Accompaniment” (see Appendix A), Sojourn Mennonite Church has approved a dedicated fund (Community DACA Fund at Sojourn) that will be used to meet the approved needs of DACA recipients in Larimer County. This fund was approved with the formation of a Discernment Board that would review and approve applications and disburse funds.

Article 1: Discernment Board Structure

Section 1.1: Board Membership and Appointment

The Community DACA Fund at Sojourn (CDFS) Board will be comprised of at least 5 individuals and will include at least 2 representatives from the DACA community and at least 2 members of Sojourn Mennonite Church. Other members may include representatives from Front Range Community College (FRCC), Colorado State University, Poudre School District, Interfaith Sanctuary and Accompaniment Churches (ISAAC), other faith communities, or community members. Board members are initially appointed by the Leadership of Sojourn Mennonite Church with input from the organizations previously named. The Board will maintain a record of its membership, and, in the event of a Board member resigning from the Board for any reason, may replace that member in a voting process. A quorum is at least 3 members, one of which must be the Chair.

Section 1.2: Board Offices

The Chair is appointed by the Leadership of Sojourn Mennonite Church and will be one of the Sojourn members. The Chair calls all meetings. The Chair shall set meeting agendas and collect applications for organized review. The Board will also appoint a secretary on a permanent or rotating basis.

Article 2: Discernment Board Processes

Section 2.1: Board Meetings

The Board shall determine a meeting schedule (either virtual or in-person) for reviewing applications (see Appendix C) for funds.

Section 2.2: Board Recordkeeping

The Board shall maintain an open record of votes and meeting decisions that can be provided to community members, other faith communities, or Sojourn Mennonite upon request. In Board minutes, the names of applicants may be redacted to protect vulnerable individuals. The Board will maintain a record of its membership and a record of all applications and decisions.
Section 2.3: Board Decisions

At meetings (physical) or via electronic communication (virtual), the Board shall make a determination based on the application(s) received to approve or deny funds. All members of the Board will have the same voting rights with no extra weight given to the vote of the Chair or any other member. Board decision shall require a two-thirds majority, which if possible must include both representation from the DACA community and representation from Sojourn Mennonite to ensure mutuality of decision-making. In the event of a tie, the Chair casts the deciding vote.

Section 2.4: Disbursal of Funds

Funds will be disbursed only to current or former DACA recipients who provide documentation of DACA status. The Board’s disbursal of funds will not exceed the amount available in the Community DACA Fund at Sojourn. Funds will be distributed according to a Standard of Practice developed and voted on by the Board (see Appendix B). Sojourn Mennonite will provide an account signatory who will disburse funds only in accordance with Board Decisions as outlined in Section 2.2 above. In the event of legislative changes to DACA (i.e. Congress passing something like a DREAM Act), the Board affirms that DACA-eligible persons are still a vulnerable group who can benefit from funds to assist with future application process requirements or school- and living-related expenses. If there are legislative changes, monies in the account will continue to be distributed to DACA-eligible people until the account is at a zero balance. As the account holder, Sojourn will keep the Community DACA Fund at Sojourn monies separate from all other church accounts in its accounting system, will not use the money for any other purpose, and will not distribute it independently of Board approval. Interest accrued on the Community DACA Fund at Sojourn, if any, which exceeds $10.00 per month shall be deposited into the Fund by Sojourn Mennonite Church.

Section 2.5: Financial Records and Accounting

In addition to the record of Board votes and decisions as outlined in Article 4 above, the Board will keep an exact accounting of the name of the recipient, the amount of each request, the amount of each disbursal approved, and a summary of the purposes for which the monies were requested. Sojourn Mennonite will keep an accounting of all donors and donation amounts and will distribute tax letters to all donors at the end of the fiscal year. Sojourn Mennonite will conduct a quarterly audit of the fund during the first year of its existence with the details of that audit available to any community member or donor upon request. In releasing audit details, Sojourn Mennonite reserves the right to redact the names and other details of applicants to protect a vulnerable population.

Section 2.6: Board Member Removal
The Board shall have discretion to remove a Board member who misses more than 3 consecutive meetings without communication or cause, who consistently fails to communicate by phone or email to conduct Board business, or who is convicted of a felony. Removal must be conducted by a two-thirds majority vote with the Chair acting as tie-breaker if necessary, with the intent to remove provided in writing (electronic or paper) to all Board members at least 7 days ahead of the scheduled meeting.

Section 2.7: Board Dissolution

If either Sojourn Mennonite or the Board determines that the fund is no longer sustainable, or effective, or necessary, the Board may be dissolved by a three-quarters majority Board vote or decision by Leadership at Sojourn Mennonite. Prior to dissolution, the Board must disburse all monies in the Community DACA Fund at Sojourn down to a zero balance. If no applications for the funds exist at the time when a decision to dissolve the Board is made, the Board may choose to distribute funds to a DACA scholarship or a DACA-supporting organization.

Section 2.8: Amendments to Governing Principles

These Governing Principles are adopted by Sojourn Leadership and must be amended by Leadership. The Board may ask Leadership for a change, supported by two-thirds majority vote, and Leadership will respond by changing the Governing Principles or providing a written explanation of why Leadership cannot support propose changes.
A Statement on Sanctuary and Accompaniment and Our Commitment to our Immigrant Neighbors

In order to stand in solidarity with our immigrant neighbors Sojourn Mennonite Church adopted the following statement on sanctuary and accompaniment on August 27th, 2017.

Statement:

Given that Sojourn Mennonite Church is a community of faith, committed to following Christ’s teaching by loving God – acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God (Micah 6), by loving people without precondition – in particular the weak, the hungry, and the stranger in our midst (Matthew 25), and by speaking the voice of peace – across the street and across the globe, we, the members of Sojourn Mennonite Church, affirm the following Statement:

From the 16th through the 20th centuries Anabaptists and Mennonites, fled religious persecution, wars, and economic oppression, and were welcomed and found safety and freedom in the United States, Canada, Catherine the Great’s Russia, Paraguay, Mexico, and other places. The experience of refugee status and transnational migrations is found in our stories, songs, food ways, and Christian beliefs. As a member congregation of Mennonite Church USA, Sojourn Mennonite Church is committed to following Christ by growing as a community of grace, joy and peace, so that God’s healing and hope can flow through us to the world.

As a member congregation in Mountain States Mennonite Conference, Sojourn Mennonite is committed to pursuing God’s dreams for reconciliation by the power of the Holy Spirit in the Way of Jesus Christ.

Since its founding, Sojourn Mennonite has been called by Christ to be inclusive, caring and peace minded, welcoming all who come our way regardless of age, gender, marital status, economic or social circumstances, race or ethnic background, sexual orientation, physical ability, faith tradition, or life situation.

Therefore, we build on these commitments as we walk today with refugees, migrants and those undocumented, Christian, Muslim, Jewish and those of other faiths, believers and non-believers, and affirm our commitment to be an immigrant welcoming community of faith and to be an Accompanying and Sanctuary Church.
Appendix B

**Standard of Practice for Fund Distribution:**

1. Funds will be distributed according to prioritization as agreed upon by the Board.
2. In order to ensure fairness, limits will be set on the amount that can be distributed for particular expenses.
3. In order to maintain transparency, documentation will be required for expenses (with personal information, other than name, redacted).

The Board’s current priorities for fund distribution, limits on distribution, and required documentation include the following:

- **Top Priorities for Fund Distribution and Documentation Required:**
  1. unexpected health expenses (at Board discretion—bill or quote required prior to distribution)
  2. rent (will fund up to half a month’s rent—bill and number of roommates required prior to distribution)
  3. groceries (up to $50 per request)
  4. other legal or emergency expenses (at Board discretion—bill or expense documentation required prior to distribution)
Appendix C

Community Dreamer Emergency Fund Application for Undocumented Students

*To apply, please email this to sojournmennonite@gmail.com

Name:___________________________________________________________

Email:___________________________________________________________

Cell:___________________________________________________________

Top Priorities for Fund Distribution and Documentation Required:

1) unexpected health expenses (please include medical bill or quote)
2) rent (will fund up to half a month’s rent—please include bill and number of roommates)
3) groceries (will distribute up to $50 per request)
4) other legal or emergency expenses (funded at board’s discretion—please include bill)

*****PLEASE remove all personal information on bill or quote EXCEPT name*****

_____________________________________________________________________________________

Please select the name of the institution you currently attend:

__Colorado State University       __high school in Poudre School District
__Front Range Community College, Larimer           __high school in Thompson Valley School District

Fund recipients will be required to show proof of student enrollment when they pick up their check. Distribution of funds may take up to 1 week. Though we make every effort to accommodate your full request, approval of funds will depend on the number of requests we receive and the amount of money in the account.

______________________________________________________________________________

Please describe the emergency situation for which you need funds, the specific purpose(s) for which the funds will be used, and the amount needed for each item:
Please Indicate the **Total** Amount You Are Requesting (USD):________________

* By signing this, I affirm that I am an undocumented student and that all information on this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge.   **Signature:**  

__________________________________________

Date:______________________________