

Employee Handbook

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Disclaimer

This employee handbook (“handbook”) provides general information about School’s (“the School,” “School” or “SCHOOL”) human resources policies, practices, and benefits. It does not address every situation that may arise and, therefore, is not intended to serve as an exhaustive set of rules. This employee handbook supersedes all previous employee handbooks.

The School, at its sole option, may change, modify, alter, delete, suspend, or discontinue any part or parts of the policies, practices, and benefits in this handbook at any time with or without prior notice. Any changes made to this handbook will be distributed, either in hard copy or email to all School employees. This handbook, in its entirety is available electronically on the School’s website. No oral statements or representations, whether in writing, by anyone at the School can in any way change, modify, or alter the policies, practices, or benefits in this handbook. The policies, practices, and benefits in this handbook may only be changed, modified, or altered in writing by the Executive Director, with formal approval of the Board of Directors in accordance with the School’s bylaws, policies and state law, or Board of Directors. This Employee Handbook also describes the current benefit plans maintained by the School. Please refer to the actual plan documents and summary plan descriptions if you have specific questions regarding the benefit plan. Those documents are controlling.

This handbook and its related policies, practices and procedures are not intended and do not create an employment contract between the School and its employees. No one is authorized to provide any employee with an employment contract or special arrangement concerning terms or conditions of employment unless the contract or arrangement is in writing and signed by the Executive Director of the School and approved by the School Board of Directors. This handbook does not limit an employee’s right or the School’s right to terminate employment at any time for any reason. The at-will relationship exists for all employees and the School or the employee may terminate the employment relationship at any time for any reason, other than those prohibited by law.

Should any provision of this handbook be found to be unenforceable or invalid, such a finding does not invalidate the entire handbook, but only the subject provision. If there is a discrepancy between the material in this employee handbook and the terms of official documents, the official documents will govern. Should any portion of this handbook conflict with local, state, or federal law, the appropriate law will govern. Any questions about the handbook or the School’s policies, practices or benefits should be directed to the Executive Director.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide K-8 students with a global perspective so they are prepared to compete in the college market. Ridgeview Charter School will create an environment that values and appreciates differences and prepares our students to participate and thrive in an increasingly integrated world.

School Governance

Board of Directors

School is a non-profit organization. As a non-profit, School is governed by the Board of Directors. In accordance with the bylaws, the Board of Directors has between seven and twelve members and the purpose of the board is to ensure that the school is achieving its mission, create and follow board policies, oversee the strategic plan for the school, and approve and follow the annual budget. The board is also responsible for the hiring and evaluation of the Executive Director. The Board approves all hires and terminations of school employees based on the Executive Director's recommendations. The board usually meets on the third Thursday of each month. All board meetings are open to the public and the agenda for each meeting is posted on the School website seven days in advance of all regularly scheduled meetings.

Daily Operations

Teaching Practices at School

The teachers at School will follow the best practices below, which are a part of the educational philosophy at our school.

Our teachers will:

- Be on time every day for every class.
- Show respect to all students and staff.
- Set high expectations for themselves and their students and strive for excellence in all that they do.
- Teach their students in a developmentally appropriate way.
- Use a variety of teaching techniques to teach to all the learning styles of their students.
- Use positive reinforcement and encouragement as the main way of managing classroom behavior, addressing issues on a one-on-one basis to get to the root of the issue. Students shall be developed in a way they become intrinsically motivated.
- Use brain-based learning strategies in their classroom daily.
- Encourage creativity in their classroom by using hands-on learning and project-based learning.
- Encourage students to do their best at all times.
- Integrate the competencies of the ENRICH program throughout the instructional day.
- Strive after constant professional growth by keeping up with the latest educational research by participating in all the professional development opportunities offered through the school.
- Cultivate personal and appropriate relationships with their students and co-workers.
- Collaborate with their co-workers to create and develop the best possible educational program for the students at School
- Maintain a detailed portfolio for each student so that they can share examples of the student's strengths and areas for improvement with the parents and the student at portfolio conferences
- Hold each student personally accountable for their education and their actions.
- Include students in their quarterly conferences and take time to explain their academic progress to each student in a developmentally appropriate way.
- Develop the skills of classroom management: organization, time management and setting clear expectations to establish a positive working/learning environment in teacher-directed lessons.
- Model integrity, responsibility, creativity, and respect for all persons as well as an appreciation for racial, cultural and gender diversity.
- Communicate in a meaningful way with each parent on a consistent basis.

Duties of Teachers

1. To plan, prepare and implement ENRICH groups and curriculum as requested by the Director of Academics and/or the Executive Director.
2. To supervise students and at all times when at school unless scheduled for planning time or are otherwise directed by an administrator.
3. To supervise students at all times when on field trips or overnight trips unless otherwise directed by an administrator.
4. To plan, prepare and implement daily lesson plans as directed by the Director of Academics, their Principal and/or the Executive Director.
5. To chaperone, and be actively involved in, special events for the students and the

community.

6. Take and enter accurate attendance records daily by 9:00AM.
7. To share the responsibilities of keeping rooms and halls tidy, supervising activities such as recess, carpool, lunch, and supporting any community service programs established by the school.
8. Teacher classroom cleanliness is the responsibility of each classroom teacher. Floors with carpet should be spot cleaned immediately following a spill or as soon as possible. Windows, windowsills, countertops, and sinks should be wiped down weekly. Walls should be spot cleaned weekly. Tables should be wiped down twice daily, Once in the morning prior to school starting for the day and once after lunch or before new students enter the room. The condition of the classroom is the sole responsibility of each teacher. Floors will be vacuumed daily by the cleaning crew.
9. To document parent emails, phone calls and parent conferences or meetings. To provide written copies of conference notes, parent meetings, phone conversations and copies of emails to the Executive Director as requested.
10. To attend open houses, screening days and professional programs as requested by the Executive Director.
11. To help in developing an agenda for unit meetings and recording decisions made.
12. To write letters of recommendation when requested and give them to the appropriate administrator.
13. Respond to parents within 72 hours.

Employee Parking

Parking facilities are limited. Employees are required to park in the specified employee parking areas. Please lock your car doors as the School is not responsible for loss, damage or theft of your vehicle or any personal property left inside.

Staff Dress Code

School expects all staff members to follow the dress code during the school year or when the office is open in the summer.

Responsible teachers dress appropriately as a professional educator to model success for his or her students. Our students will learn from our staff as they model professionalism in the workplace. Research shows that the clothing worn by educators affects the work, attitude, and discipline of the students. Staff should dress in a way that commands respect, credibility, acceptance, and authority. The administration and Board will treat the staff with professionalism and respect and in turn it is the expectation that our staff dresses professionally and acts in a way that deserves respect from their peers and students.

All employees must dress professionally and modestly, keeping in mind that our students wear uniforms and/or have a dress code. All employees are asked to dress in business casual attire on a daily basis. Additionally, the following policies have been established:

- Shirts must cover the waistband or be tucked into the waistband of pants/skirt with no midriff or lower back exposed at any time.
- No leggings, stretchy pants, pajama pants or tight pants may be worn unless they are under a dress, skirt or shirt that is no shorter than 4" above the knee. They may not be worn with just a shirt or sweater.
- Shirts or blouses should not have low necklines or low backs, no underclothing may show.
- Only plain t-shirts, plain hoodies or School spirit wear and School hoodies can be worn. No other t-shirts or hoodies are allowed.

- Spaghetti strap and strapless tops are not allowed, unless worn under a shirt or sweater that is not removed.
- Shorts are not permitted for staff members except for the PE staff and K-1 Teachers
- Jeans of any color are not permitted for staff members unless otherwise designated by the Executive Director. Dressy jeans may be worn on Fridays.
- No jeans or pants with holes in them.
- Absolutely no underclothing may show. Front office staff and admin should be dressed professionally on a daily basis, always prepared for parent interactions. The bottom hem of dresses and skirts must be at minimum no more than 4" above the knee whether standing or sitting.
- Spaghetti strap dresses or sundress style dresses are not permitted.
- Shoes: Sandals and slides are allowed. Casual flip-flops, house slippers or any foot covering that is not of a business casual type of shoe should not be worn. Dressy flip flops are acceptable.
- Jewelry: Pierced jewelry may be seen only in the earlobes and nose. Nose piercings must be only the size of a stud or small hoop. Ear jewelry (cuffs, earrings, etc.) may be worn only on the earlobe. Earrings and all other jewelry should be moderate in size and in amount so as not to be a distraction.
- Staff must wear business casual dress during all parent conferences and school events.

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings will be announced by the Executive Director. Emergency staff meetings may be called by the Executive Director, Director of Academics or Principals.

Staff children enrolled at SCHOOL

As a staff member it is a benefit to have your children attend School. All children must be supervised by you prior to your workday beginning and after your workday ends unless they are in before or after care. Staff children may not be in their parent's classroom after 7:40am. All staff children K-8 who are not picked up in carpool must go to their parent for supervision. During staff meetings, all staff children K-8 must be attended by an adult, students are not permitted to go to their parent's classroom alone during work hours.

Parent and Student Communication

Teachers are expected to communicate with parents on a regular basis through Canvas, and email. Teachers will also be expected to meet with parents once a quarter. At the parent conferences, teachers should review the academic progress of the student. Students will be included in each parent conference starting in 3rd grade. School believes it is important for the student to take personal responsibility for his or her own education. Students should be encouraged to tell their parents about their own educational progress. At the conferences, teachers should take the time to explain all academic data to the parents and answer any questions the parents might have about their child. We expect that all staff will respond to parent emails or phone calls within 72 hours. Any electronic communication to groups of parents shall be done using the blind-copy function to protect the email addresses of parents. All email communications sent to parents or other staff must be done from your school email address.

It is not appropriate for any School employee to communicate with students or parents regarding personnel matters at the School. Employees are prohibited from using class time to discuss personnel matters at the School unless expressly authorized to do so by the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee. Employees are also prohibited from emailing parents regarding

non- instructional or personnel matters unless expressly authorized to do so by the Executive Director or the Executive Director's designee. Employees may not discuss any confidential student information with anyone except the legal parents/guardians. Employees should not text any parent. If you choose to text parents from your personal cell phone, your phone may be subject to legal search if there is an investigation. If an employee has any question regarding this policy, the employee should contact the Executive Director. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. This policy is not intended and should not be construed to prohibit or interfere with an employee/s exercise of any rights had under state or federal law, including the NLRA.

Maintenance and Cleaning Responsibilities

We believe that children learn best in an orderly environment.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Ensure that students have orderly places to work.
2. Supervise students in taking care of their classrooms, cubby areas and outdoor spaces.
3. Supervise children in cleaning of all items that cannot be vacuumed in all areas that you use.
4. Clean up equipment at the end of recess.
5. Wash tables down every morning with provided cleansers and paper towels.
6. Wash tables down after lunch every day.
7. Pick up visible trash off the floor.
8. Clean whiteboard on a nightly basis.
9. Place chairs on tables every night.
10. Lock doors and windows each night.
11. Hang lost and found up on the lost and found racks.
12. Turn off lights.
13. Straighten areas outside your room daily. If there has been a spill on the concrete or the siding near your room or in your courtyard, please clean it up as soon as possible as spots are harder to clean once they are baked in by the sun.
14. Request repair and cleaning requests through the website.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Stack chairs on tables at night.
2. Clean-up project and art areas.
3. Pick up trash on floor including small pieces of paper, staples, paper clips and thumb tacks.
4. Put away books and supplies.
5. Attend to plants and animals in the classroom.
6. Pick up trash when eating or playing outside or in the courtyards.

MAINTENANCE SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

Daily: Mopping, vacuuming, emptying trash, washing bathroom floors, sinks and toilets, restocking soap, paper towels and toilet paper.

In addition, the Maintenance staff will be responsible for:

1. General Maintenance of the school
2. Any tasks assigned by the Director of Operations.

Building Access

The school offices will remain locked during all non-school times. Administrative staff members will be issued keys for building entry during non-school hours. The building will be closed from

Friday at 5:00 PM to Monday at 7:00 AM. For extenuating circumstances an administrator can be contacted to open the building during closed hours. All external doors will remain locked at all times. **Teachers should lock their classroom door when they are not in their classroom.** All staff must follow the Visitor Policy. Staff shall not allow any visitor into any building without a proper visitor badge. Any visitor that is on campus and does not have a yellow or red lanyard shall be escorted to the front office. If any staff member has a concern about an unauthorized person on campus, they should contact an administrator immediately. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that all visitors are following the Visitor Policy, therefore all staff MUST report any unauthorized visitors to an administrator.

At no time should the exterior doors on the building be propped open. They must be left locked at all times with the exception of the front door. – isn't this locked now with new system?

Key and Access Cards

Keys and access cards to School's property or premises are issued to eligible employees for official School business only and remain the property of School only. Employees are not to copy, loan or make keys available to any other person. Lost or stolen keys and access cards should be reported immediately to the Executive Director.

Personal Items Brought on Campus

Employees are responsible for any personal items brought on campus. School will not be held responsible for any personal items belonging to employees that get damaged, lost or stolen. Valuable personal items, such as purses and all other valuables should not be left in areas where theft might occur.

Child Abuse Reporting

All school personnel are required to report any suspected abuse of any child as per the School's Child Abuse Reporting Policy consistent with N.C.G.S. 7B-301. These reports should be made directly to the Department of Social Services in which the child resides. Reports can be made by calling 704-920-1400 (Cabarrus County) or 704-336-3000 (Mecklenburg County). If a report is made, it must be reported to the Executive Director immediately. All school personnel will receive training on how to report child abuse. If any staff member has a question or concern, they should see the School Counselor and Executive Director.

In addition to cases of abuse, neglect, dependency, and maltreatment, under N.C.G.S. §14-318.6, any person 18 years of age or older who knows or should have reasonably known that a juvenile has been or is the victim of a violent offense, sexual offense, or misdemeanor child abuse under N.C.G.S. §14-318.2 shall immediately report the case of that juvenile to the appropriate local law enforcement agency in the county where the juvenile resides or is found. If a report is made, it must be reported to the Head of School immediately. All school personnel will receive training on how to report child abuse. If any staff member has a question or concern, they should see the School Counselor and Executive Director.

Child Sexual Abuse and Sex Trafficking Training Policy

It is the intent of this policy to comply with North Carolina law with respect to child abuse and sex trafficking, including N.C.G.S. 115C-218.75(g). Those laws require that School adopt and implement a

child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program in accordance with N.C.G.S. 115C-375.20. Specifically, N.C.G.S. 115C-375.20, states as follows:

(1) School personnel. – Teachers, instructional support personnel, principals, and assistant principals. This term may also include, in the discretion of the employing entity, other school employees who work directly with students in grades kindergarten through 12.

(a) Each employing entity shall adopt and implement a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program for school personnel who work directly with students in grades kindergarten through 12 that provides education and awareness training related to child sexual abuse and sex trafficking, including, but not limited to, best practices from the field of prevention, the grooming process of sexual predators, the warning signs of sexual abuse and sex trafficking, how to intervene when sexual abuse or sex trafficking is suspected or disclosed, legal responsibilities for reporting sexual abuse or sex trafficking, and available resources for assistance. This training may be provided by local nongovernmental organizations with expertise in these areas, local law enforcement officers, or other officers of the court. All school personnel who work with students in grades kindergarten through 12 shall receive two hours of training consistent with this section in even-numbered years beginning in 2020.

(b) No entity required to adopt a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program by N.C.G.S. 115C-47(64), 115C-218.75(g), 115C-238.66(14), or 116-239.8(b)(17), or its members, employees, designees, agents, or volunteers, shall be liable in civil damages to any party for any loss or damage caused by any act or omission relating to the provision of, participation in, or implementation of any component of a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program required by this section, unless that act or omission amounts to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing. Nothing in this section shall be construed to impose any specific duty of care or standard of care on an entity required to adopt a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program by G.S. 115C-47(64), 115C-218.75(g), 115C-238.66(14), or 116-239.8(b)(17)."

Such program shall be adopted and implemented by January 1, 2020, and training shall be required for school personnel beginning with the 2020-2021 school year. School's program under this policy shall be conducted in accordance with North Carolina law and supervised by the Executive Director.

Care of School Equipment

All employees, volunteers and students are expected to demonstrate proper care when using the School's property and equipment. No property may be removed from the premises without the proper authorization of the administration. If you lose, break, or damage any property, report it to the Director of Operations at once. School copy machines and/or printers shall not be used for non-School related printing or copying. Teaching staff are responsible for the condition of their classroom and are expected to keep it clean, organized and decluttered at all times.

School Issued Technology

Staff are responsible for the care and condition of any school issued technology issued to them or their classroom. Staff must account for and return all technology issued to them at the end of the year.

Care of Staff Laptops

Staff are expected to purchase a laptop sleeve or protective carrying case to transport their laptop. Staff are offered the opportunity to purchase laptop insurance through an outside firm. Staff are expected to manage laptop repairs if/when they happen. Laptops broken by staff members whether by accident or due to negligence will be repaired at the expense of the employee. If the employee has purchased insurance, the school will pay \$50 toward their deductible the first time the laptop is broken. If staff has not purchased insurance, the school will pay \$50 toward their repairs, the first time the laptop is broken. The employee will be accountable for 100% of repairs for any breakage beyond the first time.

Personal Technology & Furniture/Supplies

The school is not responsible for any personal items brought in by staff. Technology purchased and brought in by staff will not be supported by the school technology team.

School Email Accounts

School email accounts should be used for official school business only.

Classroom and School Supplies

The School maintains a stock of basic office and classroom supplies such as pens, paper clips, staples, note pads, etc. used on a day-to-day basis by employees. If a staff member needs additional supplies, they must request them from their supervisor at least two weeks in advance of the date that the supplies are needed. Staff members may be reimbursed for expenses if the reimbursement has been approved by their supervisor in advance. Check requests that did not receive prior approval will not be accepted.

Teachers may create wish lists for their classroom parents. **These lists must be preapproved by their Principal.**

All office and classroom supplies are for School use only and should not be removed from the School for non-business use. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge/termination.

Holiday Celebration Policy

Definition of Holiday Activities

Holiday activities can be as simple as reading a book about a holiday and as elaborate as having a party in the classroom. Activities often involve a group discussion, art, or music related projects.

Why teach and celebrate holidays?

Some of the reasons we teach and celebrate holidays are:

- To validate the cultures and experiences of their homes
- To teach about time and cycles of life
- To have fun
- To teach diversity and tolerance by learning about other cultures, traditions, and religions
- To teach the virtues associated with particular holidays- peace, friendship, love, etc.
- To create a sense of family or community within classrooms and within our school

Time spent on holidays

The amount of time spent on holidays will vary according to the age, interests, and needs of the children and be determined by the grade level teams to best fit their curriculum and classes. Teachers may recognize or teach holidays in a brief manner, such as simply reading a book on Presidents' Day or in a more in-depth manner such as teaching about civil rights around Martin Luther King Day.

Deciding Which Holidays to Include

As SCHOOL decides on which holidays to include, we will want to think about our actual students. In addition, teachers can reflect on holidays that have importance to them as individuals. For example, if a teacher has a passion for American history, her class can only benefit from experiencing that passion around Patriots Day. Teachers may also want to consider including holidays that are outside of the knowledge-base or experiences of her class and herself to include those that are important to our larger community and city. Teachers may want to teach one "unfamiliar" holiday on occasion. Teachers are encouraged to discuss with their grade-level team, the list of holidays they are considering.

Guidelines for Holiday Activities and Celebrations

- Be inclusive and strive to validate all of our students. Pay attention to the balance and the importance put on particular cultures.
- In addition to not over-focusing on particular cultures, do not over-focus on a particular holiday *within* one culture. In this way, SCHOOL is not defining an entire culture or faith through one holiday.
- Do research. Teachers should learn about a family's holiday that is unfamiliar before asking that family to supply information. A child or his or her family is not solely responsible for teaching a holiday.
- Provide activities and lessons that are age- and developmentally appropriate and fun and engaging for each grade-level. Recognize that teacher-directed art and reproducible arts and crafts foster creativity or facilitate a deeper understanding of a holiday concept.
- Be careful to avoid stereotypes when presenting holiday information, putting up decorations and implementing activities.
- Do not teach the religious aspect of one holiday as the correct one. Explain religious aspects in a matter-of-fact simple manner.
- Involve families as much as possible and as is age-appropriate in the implementation of holiday activities. Keep families informed of upcoming holiday activities and events.

Plan for Working with Children and Families Who Don't Celebrate Holidays

If a child in a classroom does not celebrate a particular holiday, the teacher(s) will work with an administrator and the family to devise a plan so that the child does not feel left out or uncomfortable during the holiday teaching or celebration. Families should contact their child's teacher in advance to let them know of any issues.

Evaluating our Holiday Guidelines

The BOD and administration will discuss the teaching and celebrating of holidays during each July BOD meeting and will make recommendations as needed.

General Personnel Policies

Employee Code of Conduct

School's reputation for integrity is its most valuable asset and is directly related to the conduct of its administration, Board and teaching staff. Therefore, employees must never use their positions with the School, or any of its students, for private gain, to advance personal interests or to obtain favors or benefits for themselves, members of their families or any other individuals, corporations, or business entities. To that end, the School has adopted a Conflict of Interest policy for staff, board members, committee members and administration, which is available upon request from the Executive Director. A summary of that policy is as follows:

Tutoring Students

Staff can tutor outside of school hours if they follow the protocols below:

- All teaching staff are required to provide one day after school of Office Hours/Tutoring for free. Available hours must be provided to your Principal and posted on your website.
- As a benefit of working at The School, staff may offer to tutor students one-on-one for \$40/hour after school at the school. All payments and arrangements should be made directly to the staff member. Staff wishing to tutor shall provide their available days to their Supervisor and the school will publish them on the website as well along with the staff member's contact information.
- Staff must enter any scheduled tutoring on the Tutoring google calendar so that the front office can access the information when looking for a child. The school is open from 7AM – 5PM and staff may tutor during that time outside of their work hours.

Staff that are tutoring students on campus before 5PM will be covered under the school's insurance but they will not be paid by the school for those hours. All payments made are directly from the parent/student to the teacher.

Staff Evaluations

The purpose of the employee formal evaluation is to improve job performance. All staff will be evaluated throughout the year. Your performance evaluations may review factors such as the quality and quantity of the work you perform, your knowledge of the job, your initiative, your work attitude, and your attitude toward others. The performance evaluations are intended to make you aware of your progress, areas for improvement and objectives or goals for future work performance. Favorable performance evaluations do not guarantee increases in salary or promotions or retention of your job.

Licensure

The Executive Director of the School or Designee is responsible for the renewal of teaching license. Licensed staff need to take an active role in the renewal process. The School is not responsible for the cost of license renewal.

Personnel Files/Address or Personal Status Changes

It is important that the Executive Director and Director of Finance have your correct home address and telephone number at all times. You should report any changes to the Executive Director and Director of Finance immediately.

If your personal status, such as your marital status, should change or if you have an addition to your

family, you should notify the Director of Finance. Because your benefits may be affected, you may need to change your insurance and/or tax records.

School maintains personnel files on each employee. These files contain documentation regarding all aspects of your employment with the School, such as performance appraisals, beneficiary designation forms, disciplinary warning notices, and letters of commendation. Current employees may review their personnel file on an annual basis. As such, personnel files contain confidential information. You may review and/or make photocopies of documents contained in your file with the permission of the Executive Director. Please see the Executive Director if you are interested in reviewing your file or making copies. All requests for personnel files, whether to view or copy, will be responded to within a reasonable time and in accordance with any applicable laws.

Relationships with Students

All School employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and appropriate manner at all times. Relationships between staff and students that include “dating,” “courtship,” or “romantic involvement” are strictly prohibited. We strongly encourage staff members to set social media profiles, including Facebook and Instagram, to private and should not allow students to follow them or friend them on social media. Employees should never initiate contact on with students or families on social media or text. The School strongly discourages engaging individual students and parents via non-school platforms. Engaging with students or families via personal email, personal phone, social media or text may result in disciplinary action. See also, the School’s social media policy.

Driving

Employees may not drive their own personal vehicles while conducting School business except for in the case of emergency on an overnight trip, without approval from the Executive Director. Employees must maintain adequate personal automobile liability insurance and should be aware that their personal liability insurance is the primary policy. Employees shall not use their personal vehicles to transport students at any time, unless approved or directed by the Executive Director or his/her designee in writing (text or email accepted).

Employment Reference, Verification, and Inquiries

All references, inquires, or verifications of employment regarding any current or former employee of the School shall be directed to the Executive Director or the employee’s supervisor while they were employed at School. If there is a concern about the employee, the direct supervisor should have the Executive Director handle the reference. All employment verification requests should go to the Director of Finance. It is the School’s policy to provide only the following information for a reference for any current or former employee: dates of employment, position, salary, and whether the individual would be rehired.

Communication Policies

Cell Phone Use during School Hours

Personal staff cell phone use should be limited to non-instructional time. It is our intention to provide multiple times during the day when calls can be placed to allow teachers to handle personal matters outside of classroom time. In the same way that we are asking our students to abstain from

cell phone use during the school day so that they are completely present, we ask the staff to do the same. Unless it is an emergency staff may not use their personal cell phone to call parents. Teachers may NOT be on their cell phones during instructional time.

Contact with the Media and Outside Agencies

All inquiries by the media and outside agencies regarding the School and its operations must be referred to the Executive Director and/or Chair of the Board of Directors. Only the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors or a person designated by the Head of School, is authorized to make, or approve public statements pertaining to the School or its operations. No employees, unless specifically designated by the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors, are authorized to make those statements. Any employee wishing to write and/or publish an article, paper, or other publication on behalf of the School must first obtain approval from the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors before publication.

Employees may not contract with an outside agency for field trips, presentations, or other school business without the written permission of the Executive Director. All media utilizing the School name or brand (e.g., Logo, mascot, etc.) must have approval by the School Board of Directors and shall be linked to the School's official websites.

Solicitation and Distribution of Literature on School Premises

To maintain efficient and safe operations and to encourage employees to give their full attention to their jobs, School does not allow the solicitation and distribution of literature on School premises. Please help us to insure this by refraining from the following:

- Distribution of literature by employees in work areas on School property
- Distribution of literature by employees during working time in non-work areas on School property, which in any way interferes with work
- Solicitation by employees on School property during working time, which in any way interferes with work
- Solicitation and/or distribution of literature by non-employees on School property

Electronic Communications

The School provides computers, electronic data storage, Internet services, electronic mail ("e-mail") and voice mail communications systems (referred to throughout this policy as "the School's communication systems") as important tools to support the School's business and assist employees in performing their job responsibilities. It is the responsibility of every employee to ensure the School's communication systems are used for authorized school purposes only and in a fashion that does not improperly disclose confidential, sensitive, or proprietary information to unauthorized individuals.

Any communications, in which the School's communications systems are used, including correspondence such as e-mail, constitute School property. The School's communication systems are to be used for business-related purposes only during all working hours. Personal use is permissible on a reasonable basis provided it occurs during non-working hours and does not violate any School policy or local, state, or federal law. Any unauthorized use of the School's communication systems is strictly prohibited. Unauthorized use includes, but is not limited to:

- Any communications or use which violates the School's non-solicitation, equal employment

opportunity, harassment, or non-retaliation policies or any other School policy or procedure.

- Utilizing or accessing the School’s communication systems without proper authorization.
- Utilizing, accessing, or sharing school information including parent and/or student email address for any purpose other than communicating academic or safety information about the School or the specific student.
- Disabling or otherwise interfering with the School’s communication security or data protections systems.
- Using the School’s communication system to disclose confidential, sensitive, proprietary information, or personnel information to unauthorized individuals.
- Using the school’s student lists to communicate personal matters to parents or students.
- Using the school’s student lists, student information or family information to communicate to parents/guardians or students about non-school matters.
- Using Voyager’s electronic communication system in violation of any other school policy including those in this handbook.
- Communicating with or sending emails to parents or student regarding personnel or personal matters without the express written consent of the Director or the Chair of the Board of Directors.
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The School expressly prohibits the use of the School’s communication system for communicating with or sending emails to parents or student regarding personnel matters without the express written consent of the Executive Director or the Chair of the Board of Directors. The School reserves the right to monitor, audit, access, disclose and/or review any use of its communication system in its sole discretion, in the ordinary course of business. Employees should not consider the School’s communications systems as private. Please note, the use of a password or delete function does not restrict or in any way alter the School’s right and ability to monitor, audit, access, disclose and/or review the use of its communication systems in the School’s discretion in the ordinary course of business. Employees should also be aware that the School may, under certain circumstances, be compelled to monitor, audit, access, disclose and/or review the use of its communication systems. During employment with the School, employees may be provided with passwords, entry codes and/or access to the School’s communication systems. Employees are strictly prohibited from disclosing these passwords, or entry codes to any person without prior written authorization.

Employees are also prohibited from providing any unauthorized individuals with access to the School’s communication systems. Additionally, employees are prohibited from accessing the School’s communication systems without proper authorization. Employees are also prohibited from establishing intranet, Internet, or other data connections without prior written authorization. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including discharge/termination.

Social Media Policy

At School, we understand that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends, and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist you in making responsible decisions about your use of social media, we have established these guidelines for appropriate use of social media.

This policy applies to all persons who work or volunteer for School. Guidelines

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal, or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity Web site, Web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with the School, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

The same principles and guidelines found in the School policies and these basic beliefs apply to your activities online. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job performance, the performance of fellow workers or otherwise adversely affects students, parents, suppliers, volunteers, people who work on behalf of School or School's legitimate business/education interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Know and follow the rules

Carefully read these guidelines, the School's Employee Handbook, including the communications policy, confidentiality policy, the School's non-discrimination, and anti-harassment policies, and ensure your postings are consistent with these policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Be respectful

Always be fair and courteous to fellow teachers or staff, volunteers, students, parents, suppliers, or people who work on behalf of School. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or by utilizing our Open-Door Policy than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video, or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage students, parents, volunteers, staff, or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law or School policy.

Be honest and accurate

Make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous posts you have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about the School, fellow workers, students, parents, volunteers, suppliers, and people working on behalf of School.

Post only appropriate and respectful content

Maintain the confidentiality of School private or confidential information. Such information may include information regarding the development of systems, processes, know-how and technology. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures, or other internal business/school-related confidential communications. Do not post information about individual students or families and be sure to maintain the confidentiality, as is protected and required under state or federal law.

Do not create a link from your blog, website, or other social networking site to a School website without identifying yourself as an employee or volunteer of the School.

Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for School. If the School is a subject of the content you are creating, be clear and open about the fact that you are an employee or volunteer and make it clear that your views do not represent those of the School, fellow workers, parents, students, suppliers, or people working on behalf of the School. If you do publish a blog or post online related to the work you do, or subjects associated with the School, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of the School. It is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the School."

Using social media at work

Refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment we provide unless it is work-related as authorized by your supervisor or consistent with School Communication's Policy. Do not use School email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Student Pictures and Information

The School reserves the right to post pictures and images of current and former students on its website, official Facebook page, or any other forms of media. Parents who do not wish to allow School to use their child's picture or image must submit in writing a letter requesting that their student's image not be used.

Retaliation is prohibited

The School prohibits taking negative action against any employee or volunteer for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee or volunteer who retaliates against another employee or volunteer for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Media contacts

Employees and volunteers should not speak to the media on the School's behalf without contacting the School's Board, Executive Director, or Director of Operations. All media inquiries should be directed to them.

For more information

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact the Executive Director or the School's Board of Directors.

Safety

Smoking Policy

School is a smoke free school. In keeping with School's intent to provide a safe and healthy work environment, smoking is prohibited on School property at all times. Smoking is also prohibited by any employee or volunteer while working in any capacity for the school or with any student at School. This policy applies equally to all employees, parents, students, volunteers, and visitors. This policy also includes the use of e-cigarettes.

Drug and Alcohol Use

School is dedicated to maintaining a safe educational environment. Thus, School has implemented a drug and alcohol-free work environment policy. Alcoholic beverages are never to be consumed on school grounds except at events approved by the Executive Director or the Board Chair, during

field trips or School events (whether on or off campus). Alcoholic beverages are never to be consumed in vehicles of transportation owned or operated on behalf of the school, or by their drivers while they are responsible for the operation of such vehicles.

No employee shall report to work while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The use, sale, transfer or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, hallucinogens, stimulants, sedatives, controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia on School property or at any School event is prohibited. This includes the misuse of prescription drugs, including medical marijuana, Delta 8, any product containing any amount of THC, or any mood-altering substances while on School property, School paid time (i.e., conferences, training sessions), at any School event or in circumstances the school believes will adversely affect School's operation or safety.

If of the school has a reasonable suspicion of abuse or impairment, School can and will take immediate action, up to and including drug testing, suspension of the employee, with or without pay, termination of employment, or other adverse employment actions. "Impairment" means symptoms that a prospective employee or employee while working may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol that may decrease or lessen the employee's performance of the duties or tasks of the employee's job position, including symptoms of the employee's speech, walking, standing, physical dexterity, agility, coordination, actions, movement, demeanor, appearance, clothing, odor, irrational or unusual behavior, negligence or carelessness in operating equipment, disregard for the safety of the employee or others, involvement in an accident that results in serious damage to property, any injury to the employee or others or other symptoms causing a reasonable suspicion of the use of drugs or alcohol. Employees who refuse to submit to a drug/ alcohol test will be terminated. Likewise, employees who try to alter the results of a test will be terminated. Employees who have a positive drug test will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and/or notification of law enforcement authorities. The transferring, offering, selling, or arranging for sale of any alcohol, narcotic, hallucinogen, stimulant, sedative, drug or prescription drug or any other mood-altering substance while on School property, at a School event, or during School's time will lead to immediate termination.

This Policy shall apply to School employees, volunteers and contractors.

Weapons

School prohibits weapons (or replicas of weapons) on School property, in school vehicles and at school-sponsored activities on or off school property. Weapons and replicas of weapons constitute any item (regardless of its nature) used to threaten or cause actual harm, including but not limited to firearms, knives, metal knuckles, chains, razors, explosives, poisonous or noxious gases or any other tool or instrument capable of inflicting bodily injury as determined by school administration. On-duty Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) or School Resource Officers (SRO) are the only approved individuals to carry weapons on school property or at other school-sponsored activities on or off school property.

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. The Executive Director will review each alleged violation of this policy and will exercise discretion for disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis.

Visitors or volunteers who violate this policy will be subject to local law enforcement action.

Any employee who is aware that a student, volunteer, parent, or employee is carrying a weapon must report the infraction to their supervisor or an administrator immediately.

All acts of violence and possession of weapons as defined in this policy shall be reported to parents of the violator, appropriate law enforcement agency and any other government agency as required by law.

The Executive Director is required to report immediately to the appropriate local law enforcement agency whenever the Executive Director has personal knowledge or actual notice from school personnel that any of the following acts has occurred on school property:

- assault involving the use of a weapon
- unlawful possession of a firearm
- unlawful possession of a weapon

This reporting requirement applies regardless of the age or status of the person thought to have committed the act. The report to law enforcement is only required if the act occurs on School property, which includes any public-school building, bus, campus, grounds, recreational area, or athletic field.

Threats and Violence Policy

School strives to maintain a work environment that is free from intimidation, threats, or violent acts. This includes, but is not limited to, intimidating, threatening or hostile behaviors, physical abuse, vandalism, arson, sabotage, use of weapons, carrying weapons of any kind onto school property, or any other act, which, in management's opinion, is inappropriate to the workplace. In addition, jokes or offensive comments regarding violent events will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary measures, up to and including termination.

Employees who feel they have been subjected to any of the behaviors listed above are requested to immediately report the incident to the Executive Director. Complaints will be promptly investigated. Based upon the results, disciplinary action will be taken against the offender, if appropriate.

Reporting of Unlawful Activity

Any employee who is arrested for, charged with, convicted of or pleads guilty to any offense other than a non-moving traffic violation must self-report that offense to the Director or Principal within 24 hours. Failure to report an offense may lead to disciplinary action.

Internal Investigation and Search Policy

From time to time, the School may conduct internal investigations pertaining to security, auditing, or work-related matters. Employees are required to cooperate fully with and assist in these investigations if requested to do so.

Whenever necessary, School reserves the right to search without notice work areas (i.e., desks, file cabinets, computers, etc.) and personal belongings (i.e., backpacks, purses, vehicles, etc.) if there is a reasonable suspicion to believe that any School policy or law is being or has been violated. The School may provide desks, computers, lockers, and other items for the use by the School's employees. At all times, these items remain the property of the School. Employees are expected to

cooperate with the School's workplace searches. While the School will generally try to obtain an employee's consent before conducting a search of work areas or personal belongings, it may not always do so.

Any employee who refuses to submit to a search or is found in possession of prohibited articles will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Employees with questions regarding this policy should contact the Executive Director.

Allergy Policy

All staff at School (SCHOOL) will adhere to the following allergy policy.

Snack and Lunch

All students at SCHOOL will be given the time for two snacks a day on a full day and one snack on a half- day. Snacks will be eaten in the classroom. All classroom snacks at School must be nut free. Parents and students are encouraged to pack a healthy snack.

Lunch will be eaten in the classroom or outside. There will be space designated for life-threatening allergies for lunch as needed. **After lunch all teachers must wipe down all tables and counters with the Basic-H spray provided by the school.** Students may not be responsible for wiping down the tables after lunch.

Teachers and staff must ensure that all students wash their hands before and after lunch. All trash from lunch must be disposed of in the designated classroom or outdoor trashcans.

Outside Food

All food sent in or brought in by parents for a class activity must be purchased at the store and nut free. Consideration for any additional classroom allergies must be given if outside food is to be used or eaten in the classroom by the whole class.

Training

The Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring that all staff, parent volunteers and substitute teachers have the information needed regarding students with specific allergies. All staff will be trained in food allergy awareness and the use of Epi-Pens.

School Safety Policy

School has a Crisis Management Team that creates and manages the following procedures by outlining the actions and responsibilities of staff and administration in addressing the following issues:

- Evacuation Fire
- Evacuation Non-Fire
- Hazardous Materials
- Lockdown-Perimeter
- Lockdown-Full
- Serious Medical Emergency
- Severe Weather (tornado; hurricane; etc.)
- Public Health Emergency
- Student in Crisis

The Executive Director oversees the Crisis Management Team and it is the responsibility of the

Executive Director to ensure that the procedures are current and applicable and that all applicable parties are aware of the procedures.

The Executive Director is also responsible for ensuring drills occur on a regular basis. These procedures will be reviewed annually by the Crisis Management Team and any changes or revisions will be made by the Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for communicating these procedures to the Board of Directors.

Staff Criminal Background Check Policy

According to NC Charter School law GS_115C-238.29F (e) (1), all NC Charter Schools shall adopt a background check policy mirroring the local board of education policy that requires an applicant for employment to be checked for a criminal history, as defined in G.S. 115C-332. School is required to apply its policy uniformly in requiring applicants for employment to be checked for a criminal history before the applicant is given an unconditional job offer.

According to NC charter school law, a charter school may employ an applicant conditionally while the board is checking the person's criminal history. The board can then make the decision based on the results of the check.

SCHOOL is required by the state of North Carolina to conduct criminal background checks for all staff including full-time, part-time and substitutes, which will be done upon the acceptance of a conditional employment offer. A criminal records check may also be conducted on a selective, random, or rotating basis for any current employees, annually rehired employees, and employees whose contracts are scheduled to be renewed.

The Executive Director, Director of Academics, Director of Operations, Director of Finance will be required to also undergo a credit history check and civil records check in addition to the criminal background check and a Social Security Search.

To conduct an accurate check of criminal records, all applicants for employment and any current employee may be required to submit to fingerprinting as part of the background check process. The refusal to consent to criminal records check or fingerprinting will result in the applicant not being offered employment, or if a conditional offer has been made, the offer will be withdrawn or the employee's employment will be terminated, as applicable.

If a person omits information or gives false information concerning his or her criminal history on his or her employment application, background check form, resume or any other required or submitted application-related document, that person may not be offered employment. If the person has been: (a) hired, or (b) offered employment conditioned on the results of a criminal history check, the person will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or the offer of employment will be withdrawn, as applicable.

The Executive Director will review all criminal background checks. If a criminal history presents itself in a review, the SCHOOL Board of Directors shall review the criminal history it receives on a person. The Board shall determine whether the results of the review indicate that the applicant or employee (i) poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel, or (ii) has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his or her duties as public school personnel and shall use the information when making employment decisions and decisions with regard to independent contractors. The Board shall make written findings with regard to how it used the information when making employment decisions and decisions with regard to independent contractors.

The Executive Director will notify applicants if any adverse results are found and the applicant will be given a chance to respond with any relevant explanation. School shall apply its policy uniformly in requiring applicants for school personnel positions to be checked for a criminal history.

Each employee is required to notify his or her immediate supervisor within five calendar days after any felony or misdemeanor criminal conviction, guilty plea, or plea of no contest. Any employee who is aware of any criminal conviction, guilty plea, or plea of no contest of another employee should notify their supervisor or an administrator.

There shall be no liability for negligence on the part of the School Board of Directors, or its employees, or the State Board of Education, or its employees, arising from any act taken or omission by any of them in carrying out the provisions of this section. The immunity established by this subsection shall not extend to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing that would otherwise be actionable. The immunity established by this subsection shall be deemed to have been waived to the extent of indemnification by insurance, indemnification under Articles 31A and 31B of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, and to the extent sovereign immunity is waived under the Tort Claims Act, as set forth in Chapter 31 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.

Any applicant for employment who willfully furnishes, supplies, or otherwise gives false information on an employment application that is the basis for a criminal history record check shall be guilty of a Class A1 misdemeanor. (1995, c. 373, s. 1; 2001-376, s. 1; 2012-12, s. 2(rr).)

Any staff members or coaches that will be driving students for school related purposes will be required to have a Motor Vehicles Check performed in addition to the criminal background check stated above.

The Executive Director's background check will be requested and reviewed by the Board's Governance Committee.

Information obtained through the implementation of this policy shall be kept confidential as provided in Article 21A of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes, and NC GS §115C-332(e). However, the criminal history received on any person who is certificated, certified, or licensed by the State Board of Education will be provided to the State Board as required by NC GS §115C-332(e).

Health Certificates

Under North Carolina Law, N.C.G.S. § 115C-323, every new School employee and any employee returning after separation of more than one year shall be required to furnish an approved health certificate on the prescribed forms before assuming his/her duties.

Any employee who has been absent for more than 40 successive school days because of a communicable disease must, before returning to work, provide a physician' certificate on the prescribed form certifying that the employee is free of any communicable disease.

The Health Certificate Form can be obtained from the Finance Office. Information on an employee's medical condition or history will be kept separate from other employee information and maintained confidentially.

Communicable Diseases

The School attempts to provide a safe and secure environment for all students and employees.

Therefore, any employee who has been diagnosed with or displays the symptoms of having a communicable disease must immediately notify the Executive Director so that appropriate decisions can be made on a case-by-case basis. Executive Director shall maintain an appropriate balance between the rights of students and employees and the control of the potential spread of a communicable disease.

Blood Borne Pathogens Exposure Control

It is the policy of the School to comply with Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act (29 U.S.C. 651) and with the Occupational Safety and Health Act of North Carolina (N.C. Gen. Stat. 95-126) and all rules and regulations promulgated there under. Specifically, it is the policy of the school to minimize and to prevent, when possible, the exposure of its employees to blood borne pathogens i.e., disease-causing microorganisms transmitted through human blood.

Staff Hours, Attendance, Pay, Holidays, and Leave

School Hours

Because of the nature of our School, your work schedule may vary depending on your job. Staff meetings are on Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30pm. Unless otherwise directed by their direct supervisor or the Executive Director, on campus hours for all full-time staff are:

Grades K-8

Monday – Friday from 7:35AM until 3:30PM on all school days and workdays

Teachers will be expected to spend the time before and after school and all scheduled planning time during the day to plan and gather all necessary supplies for the day so that all classroom time can be efficiently used. If employees need to leave the campus at any time during their scheduled work times, the employee must clock out and back in, so we have an accurate record in the case of an emergency.

Attendance and Punctuality

Attendance and punctuality are important factors for your success within our school. We work as a team and this requires that each person be in the right place at the right time.

If you are going to be late for work or absent, notify your direct supervisor as far in advance as is feasible under the circumstances, but no later than 7:00 AM on the day of your absence. Under no circumstances should you leave a message on the School's answering machine to report an absence or tardiness. Personal issues requiring time away from your work, such as doctor's appointments or other matters, should be scheduled during your non-working hours if possible.

If you are absent for three days without notifying the School, it is assumed that you have voluntarily abandoned your position with the School, your employment with the School is terminated and you will be removed from the payroll.

All staff are required to clock in and clock out daily. Notwithstanding unexpected or personal emergencies, every teacher and staff member are expected to arrive on time for work and leave on or after their scheduled end of workday. Punctuality demonstrates personal commitment, organization, work ethic, and discipline.

Tardiness or Early Departures

All staff are required to review their weekly time sheet to ensure all hours are accurate and correct. It is the employee's responsibility to review their weekly time sheet and take the required leave for any tardies or early departures. Employees not following this procedure will be written up by their supervisor after their first warning.

Time clock in/out reports will be reviewed monthly by the administrative team. Punctuality is crucial at a school and will be treated as such.

Inclement Weather

The Executive Director will follow the School Inclement Weather Policy in the event of inclement weather. Except when school is closed for inclement weather, all employees will be expected to work their regular hours. Hourly employees are not paid when school is cancelled due to

inclement weather. Time taken off due to poor weather conditions while the School remains open will come out of an employee's personal time. The Executive Director of School will make all decisions regarding school delays or closures due to inclement weather. School cancellation or a delayed opening will be communicated through an email to all parents and staff. The information will also be posted on our website And on the parent platform. Employees will not be required to work on days when the school is closed for inclement weather and will only be required to make them up if the school is required to make up the school day. Exempt employees will not be required to take leave when the school is closed for inclement weather.

Return to Work During COVID-19 or Other Event

At School, in person, on campus teaching is essential to our mission and the students and families we serve. As such, employees are expected to be on campus working or teaching unless instructed by the Executive Director or board of directors otherwise. Subject to local, state, and federal law, regulation and orders, this provision governs return to work following a school closure, or any other significant interruption cause by an act of god, illness, weather event or pandemic. This policy may be modified at any time for any reason.

Following a school closure for COVID-19 or any other unusual event, employees are expected to return to the workplace when directed to by the Executive Director or board of directors. If an employee has exhausted PTO and is not eligible for or has exhausted FMLA then the employee is expected to return to work on campus. If an employee has a underlying health conditions that puts them at high risk as defined by the CDC, then the employee should speak with the Executive Director, who will review the employee's situation consistent with the ADA. If an employee lives with someone who has an underlying health condition that puts them at high risk as defined by the CDC, the employee is expected to return to work on campus. Failure to return to work on campus when instructed to by the School, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. This policy is intended to comply with all applicable laws.

Employee Status

Regular, Full-Time Employee - An employee who is employed to work 30 hours or more a week. These employees are eligible for benefits as outlined in the benefits sections and benefits plans

Part-Time Employee - An employee regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week. This person will only receive those benefits mandated by state or federal law.

Temporary Employee - An employee who has been hired for a limited period of time, which usually does not exceed three to six months. This person will only receive those benefits mandated by state or federal law.

In addition, all employees are classified, according to the Fair Labor Standards Act as "Exempt" or "Non-Exempt."

- Non-exempt employees must maintain an accurate record of all hours worked and will be paid overtime for all hours worked more than forty (40) in the pay week. Non-exempt employees may be full-time, part-time, or temporary and are paid on an hourly basis. All overtime must be authorized in advance by the Executive Director. All non-exempt employees are required to obtain prior written permission to work overtime. Overtime worked without prior written permission may result in the employee being disciplined up to and including termination.
- Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime pay and are paid a predetermined salary. Exempt employees may be full-time, part-time, or temporary. ***The predetermined salary***

may only be reduced for specific, lawfully permitted reasons.

- If you believe that an improper deduction has been made from your predetermined salary, you must notify the Director of Finance. The reason for the deduction will be thoroughly investigated and if it is determined that an error was made, you will be reimbursed.

10-Month, 11-month and 12-month Employees—Whether an employee is considered a 10 month, 11-month or 12-month employee will depend on their work schedule for their position and will be set forth in their Letter of Agreement with the School.

Salaries

Paychecks will be paid via direct deposit on August 19th and then from there on out on the 15th of each month beginning on September 15. When our pay date is a holiday or weekend, you will be paid on the last weekday before the holiday or weekend.

Holidays

All employees will be paid for the Federal Holidays the School observes and that fall in their scheduled work calendar. Non-exempt employees will be paid for the hours they would have been scheduled for on the day the holiday falls. Non-exempt employees are not expected to work and will not be paid for other days when school is closed during the school year.

PTO

School does not accept leave from a previous employer. No leave can be transferred to SCHOOL.

- All 10-month employees will be given 10 hours of PTO
- All 11-month employees will be given 11 hours of PTO
- All 12-month employees will be given 12 hours of PTO

The number of hours is pro-rated for part-time employees and if an employee only works part of the year. Subject to the restrictions below, PTO can be used for any day an employee is scheduled to work. Unused PTO time will **NOT** roll over.

All PTO hours are available beginning the first day of employment. PTO must be approved a minimum of one month in advance with their Supervisor and should not fall on a previously schedule field trip or other school activity. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances and subject to the written approval of the Executive Director no employees can take PTO between May 10th and the last day of school. In addition, no PTO hours may be taken the week before and after winter and spring break. Any employee that takes PTO without written approval from the Executive Director between May 10th and the last day of school will be considered to have taken unpaid leave, will not be paid for such days and may be subject to discipline up to and including termination. All paid leave days, including PTO, must be used before the employee is eligible for short-term disability. Unused PTO will not be paid out for any reason, including resignation, terminations or separation.

Blackout Days: PTO/leave may not be used on the first day the employee is required to report for the school year, during the first month of the school year, on teacher workdays, on days scheduled for state testing, the week before or the day after a holiday, school breaks or other closures, or from May 10th through the end of the School year, unless extraordinary circumstances exist and the request is approved by the Executive Director. Further, an employee may not take unused PTO at the end of their employment with the School. Any employee who takes PTO/leave during these blackout periods will not be eligible for pay associate with any holiday, school break or closure. So, for example, if an employee does not work the entire week before spring break, that employee will not be paid for spring break, even if they were otherwise entitled to pay.

Leave Rule: Employees must work the week before and after a holiday or break in order to receive pay for the holiday or break unless they would normally not work the day before or after the holiday or break.

Bereavement Leave

The school provides up to 3 days of Bereavement leave for local (NC/SC) leave and 5 days of Bereavement leave for out of town leave for the death of an immediate family member. Employees may request PTO for the death of another family member or a close friend. Approval is at the discretion of the Executive Director. SCHOOL may require evidence for the Bereavement leave.

Partial Day Leave

Staff will take PTO leave by the hour. When entering time off in the payroll system, please enter the number of hours you will be away from work for. If you will be away for 2 hours or less, you will be required to get internal coverage lined up prior to taking the time for any classes or extra duties you are assigned.

A sub must be scheduled for any time taken off above 2 hours. Subs should be entered in your leave request and sub plans should be provided directly to the sub.

Leave Without Pay

Employees taking leave without pay will be docked their daily or hourly rate based on their individual salary.

Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

School fully complies with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (“FMLA”), and provides up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave of absence within any twelve month period to employees who have been employed by School for at least twelve months, (not necessarily consecutive) and have worked at least 1,250 hours within the previous twelve-month period. Because of the requirement to work a minimum of 1,250 hours in a twelve-month period to become eligible for FMLA, when an employee has used the twelve-week leave, s/he must work a 1,250 hours within the next twelve-month period to become eligible for FMLA again. Employees on leave under FMLA provisions must use all accrued Paid Time Off, and any other available paid time off during leave. When this time is exhausted, any remaining time off under FMLA will be unpaid.

This leave is available to eligible employees under the following circumstances:

- The birth of a child within the first twelve months of the birth
- The placement of a child for adoption or other legal placement within the first twelve months of the adoption or placement
- The employee’s own serious health condition, which means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee’s job.
- The need to care for a spouse, parent, son or daughter (or individual to whom employee is otherwise in loco parentis) who has a serious health condition.

Additional leave is available in special circumstances for family members of military members as set forth below. Where both spouses are employed by School, they are limited in the amount of family

leave they may take for the birth and care of a newborn child, placement of a child for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent who has a serious health condition to a combined total of 12 workweeks (or 26 workweeks if leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness is also used as set forth below). Leave for birth and care, or placement for adoption or foster care, must conclude within 12 months of the birth or placement.

Special School Rules

FMLA leave taken for a period that ends with the school year and begins the next semester is leave taken consecutively rather than intermittently. The period during the summer vacation when the employee would not have been required to report for duty is not counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. An instructional employee who is on FMLA leave at the end of the school year must be provided with any benefits over the summer vacation that employee would normally receive if they had been working at the end of the school year. Additional special rules governing instructional staff and use of FMLA applies. Please refer to **29 CFR § 825.600 et. seq.**

Military Caregiver Leave

Eligible employees may take up to 26 workweeks of unpaid leave during a single 12- month period to care for a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin who is a covered service member with a serious injury or illness. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status or on the temporary disability retired list. A serious injury or illness is one that was incurred by a service member in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of his or her office, grade, rank or rating.

Qualifying Exigency Leave

Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a single 12- month period for qualifying exigencies arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty, or has been notified of an impending call to active duty, in support of a contingency operation. Qualifying exigency leave is available to a family member of a military member in the National Guard or Reserves; it does not extend to family members of military members in the Regular Armed Forces. Qualifying exigencies include:

- Issues arising from a covered military member's short notice deployment (i.e., deployment on seven or less days of notice) for a period of seven days from the date of notification;
- Military events and related activities, such as official ceremonies, programs, or events sponsored by the military or family support or assistance programs and informational briefings sponsored or promoted by the military, military service organizations, or the American Red Cross that are related to the active duty or call to active duty status of a covered military member;
- Certain childcare and related activities arising from the active duty or call to active duty status of a covered military member, such as arranging for alternative childcare, providing childcare on a non-routine, urgent, immediate need basis, enrolling or transferring a child in a new school or day care facility, and attending certain meetings at a school or a day care facility if they are necessary due to circumstances arising from the active duty or call to active duty of the covered military member;
- Making or updating financial and legal arrangements to address a covered military member's absence;
- Attending counseling provided by someone other than a health care provider for oneself, the covered military member, or the child of the covered military member, the need for which arises from the active duty or call to active duty status of the covered military member;
- Taking up to five days of leave to spend time with a covered military member who is on short-term temporary, rest and recuperation leave during deployment;

- Attending to certain post-deployment activities, including attending arrival ceremonies, reintegration briefings and events, and other official ceremonies or programs sponsored by the military for a period of 90 days following the termination of the covered military member's active duty status, and addressing issues arising from the death of a covered military member;
- Any other event that the employee and employer agree is a qualifying exigency.

An eligible employee is limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave for any FMLA-qualifying reason, including military caregiver leave or leave for qualifying exigencies, during a single 12-month period, and only 12 of the 26 weeks total may be for a FMLA-qualifying reason other than to care for a covered service member.

Notice of Need for Leave and Certification

Employees must notify their building leader as well as Academic Dean to request leave under this policy. Employees must provide 30 days' advance notice of the need for leave if the need is foreseeable, and must otherwise provide notice as soon as practicable for emergency or unforeseeable needs. Employees must consult with School regarding scheduling of any planned medical treatment or supervision as to minimize disruption to the operation of School. Entitlement to FMLA coverage may not be invoked retroactively for previous absences from work.

In requesting leave, employees must provide sufficient information for School to reasonably determine whether the FMLA may apply to the leave request. Depending on the situation, such information may include that the employee is incapacitated due to pregnancy, has been hospitalized overnight, is unable to perform the functions of the job, and/or that the employee or employee's qualifying family member is under the continuing care of a health care provider.

Employees seeking leave for their own or their family members' serious health conditions will be provided a certification form, which must be completed by a qualified health care provider. Failure to submit the proper certification within fifteen (15) calendar days may revoke an employee's entitlement to continued leave. School has the right to require the opinion of a second health care provider to determine the validity of the initial certification. If the second opinion differs from the original certification, a third opinion from a health care provider who is approved jointly by School and the employee may be required. The third certification will be considered final. When an employee is on leave, subsequent recertification of a medical condition will be required.

In addition to providing the completed certification form, employees requesting FMLA Leave must fill out a Leave Request form.

Employees requesting leave for a qualifying exigency related to a service member must provide a copy of the covered military member's active duty orders and certification providing the appropriate facts related to the particular qualifying exigency for which leave is sought, including contact information if the leave involves meeting with a third party. Employees requesting leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury may provide certification by an authorized health care provider or a copy of an Invitational Travel Order (ITO) or Invitational Travel Authorization (ITA) issued to any member of the covered service member's family. During the leave, employees are required to notify their supervisor/manager at least monthly, more frequently if requested, of the status of the leave.

Intermittent Leave

Intermittent or reduced schedule leave may be taken when a serious health condition, either the employee's or that of a child, spouse, or parent or covered service member, or for qualifying exigencies, makes this schedule necessary. When medically necessary, an employee may take "intermittent" leave (two or more separate leave periods) or "reduced" leave (where an employee continues to work, but for fewer hours per day or per week). In such cases, the total number of hours

or days of leave by the employee is limited to the equivalent of twelve (12) workweeks. School may transfer the employee temporarily to an available alternative position if that position better accommodates recurring periods of leave. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule intermittent absences for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt School's operations. School may make deduction from an exempt employee's salary for any hours/time taken as intermittent or reduced FMLA leave within a pay period without affecting the employee's exempt status.

Reporting While on Leave.

If an employee takes FMLA leave because of their own serious health condition or to care for a covered relation, the employee must contact the Director of Finance with updates regarding the status of the condition, and their intent to return to work.

Return to Work

A certification from a health care provider may be required at the conclusion of any leave for the employee's own serious health condition that the employee is able to resume his or her duties. At the conclusion of leave covered by FMLA, employees will be reinstated to their former or an equivalent position with the same rights, benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment to the extent that they would be entitled to such continued employment without the FMLA leave. Benefits established on an accrual basis such as PTO will not accrue during unpaid FMLA leave. Benefits, which accrued prior to the leave, however, will not be lost.

School reserves the right to deny leave reinstatement to key employees, defined as salaried employees among the highest-paid 10 percent of all School employees, where such denial is necessary to prevent substantial and grievous injury to the School's operation. These employees will be notified of this decision as soon as it is determined such injury would occur, and will be given a reasonable opportunity to choose to return to work at that point. In the event the employee decides not to return to work when there is no guarantee of the same or equivalent position, s/he may remain on leave for the balance of the FMLA period and then may be terminated.

Benefits During FMLA or Other Approved Leave

Group medical, dental, vision, short term disability, and long term disability benefits as well as retirement plan contributions will continue for all qualifying employees during authorized leave on the same terms as if the employee continued to work. Employees whose group medical and/or dental insurance deductions are made through payroll on a pre-tax basis will continue to be responsible for payment of their premiums while on FMLA or unpaid leave, and employees must contact the _Director of Finance or her/his designee to make arrangements for premium payments.

School may discontinue the employee's benefits if and when an employee informs School of an intent not to return to work at the end of the leave period, or if the employee fails to return to work when the authorized leave is exhausted. School's obligation to maintain benefits will also stop if the employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late. School shall require reimbursement of the employer-paid share of any premiums if the employee fails to return to work at the expiration of approved leave. In the event that an employee provides at least 30 days' notice of his/her intent not to return to work at the end of FMLA leave, School may waive this repayment obligation in its sole discretion.

Other Leave Required by Law

The School provides employees with any other leave as required by state or federal law, including leave to exercise voting privileges, attend school conferences, or for jury duty.

JURY DUTY

School encourages you to accept and fulfill your civic duty in your community. Notify your supervisor as soon as you receive a notice of jury duty so that staffing provisions can be made. Your supervisor must also be provided a copy of your summons. Employees are encouraged to try and reschedule jury duty for months when school is not in session. Court leave for jury duty shall be granted to an eligible employee for absence during the employee's regularly scheduled hours including regularly scheduled overtime, to perform jury duty. An eligible employee who is under proper summons from a court to serve on a jury shall be granted court leave for the entire period of such service. The period of court leave extends from the date on which the employee is required to report to the court until the time he/she is discharged by the court. The employee must return to work for any reasonable time the court is closed during normal work hours. No adverse employment action will be taken against employees or applicants due to their service as a juror in state or federal courts. The school will pay the employee's regular salary for a maximum of 5 days of jury duty.

Witness Duty: An employee may be required by law to appear in court as a witness. The employee may be allowed to take unpaid time off for this purpose, but is expected to give THE SCHOOL reasonable advance notice of the absence and to provide evidence of the required appearance. Witness duty leave is available to all employees.

MILITARY LEAVE

School employees who serve in the National Guard or the Reserves will be granted flexibility to drill on the weekends. When mobilized on active duty with the military, they are afforded all rights and privileges pursuant to USERRA 38 USC 4301-4335, The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994. The employee will be given credit for the period of military service towards their employment with the school.

Parental Leave: In accordance with the North Carolina Parental Leave Law, School will grant up to four (4) hours of unpaid leave per year to any employee who is a parent, guardian, or person standing in loco parentis of any school age child so that the employee may attend or otherwise be

involved in activities at the child’s school, preschool or child care facility as defined by G.S. 110-86(3). This leave must be scheduled in advance at a mutually convenient time. The School reserves the right to request written verification from the school of the employee’s attendance.

Other Leave Required by Law: School complies with any other leave required by law.

Employee Resignation

Employees intending to resign from School are asked to let the Executive Director know with as much advance notification as possible. Employees who resign are required to provide a written letter of resignation. Submitting this letter two weeks in advance is considered acceptable. The letter should include the intended resignation date and be submitted to the Executive Director.

Health and Welfare Benefits

Staff Benefits

The School has developed a comprehensive set of employee benefit programs to supplement our employees' regular wages. Subject to the specific benefit plan, all employees working an average of 30 hours a week or more will be eligible for benefits. Full time employees will have the option to purchase additional health, dental, vision, and life insurance for their spouse, children, or family. The School reserves the right to modify or discontinue any of its benefits at any time, for any reason, with or without prior notice. In the event the School does modify or discontinue any benefit set forth herein, employees will be informed. Nothing in this handbook is intended to modify the terms and conditions of any benefits plan. Please refer to the plan document for specific information on benefits, eligibility, costs, and coverage.

Employee Benefits in the Summer

All benefits will carry through the summer if the employee has signed their letter of agreement stating they are returning for the fall by June 30th of each year.

In the event a staff member is not returning for the subsequent year either by school choice or employee choice, the following will occur:

- Health insurance benefits end in June with the exception of staff leaving to go to another school with the NC State Health Plan. The employee must have a contract stating such by June 30th to maintain their health benefits throughout the summer. This is tricky because we have to continue them through August even if the job is offered after June 30.
- Staff leaving may choose to roll over dental, vision and life to their own policy by contacting the provider.
- School sponsored life insurance, short and long-term disability insurance all end in June when an employee is not returning in the fall.
- All Benefits for employees who leave during the year, terminate the last day of the month the employee last worked.

Health Benefits

The State Health Plan is offered to employees scheduled to work 20 hours or more per week. Employees who work between 20-30 hours are responsible for the full cost of the premium. Employees who work at least 30 hours per week receive a portion of their premium paid by the

school. For information on employee health plan please refer to the plan document.

Flexible Spending Account

All full-time employees are eligible to participate in a medical and/or dependent care FSA.

Dental Benefits

Dental insurance is available to all full-time employees. The full cost of the premium is the responsibility of the employee. Please refer to the plan documents for the specific details on the dental insurance.

Vision

Vision insurance is available to all full-time employees. The full cost of the premium is the responsibility of the employee. Please refer to the plan documents for the specific details on vision insurance.

Group-Term Life Insurance

School provides an Employee Life Benefit Amount of \$20,000 at no cost to the employee. Employees will have the option to buy additional life insurance coverage for themselves and their dependents. Please refer to the plan documents for the specific details on the term life insurance.

Short-Term and Long-Term Disability

The school offers short-term and long-term disability. The premium is a post-tax deduction from the employee's paycheck. The employee's salary is grossed up to cover the cost of the premium only. The taxes are the responsibility of the employee. Please refer to the plan documents for the specific details on the short-term and long-term disability.

Retirement Plan

All employees who work a minimum of 1000 hours during the plan year, are-eligible to participate in our retirement plan. School has adopted a graduated retirement match program as follows for those employees that work a minimum of 1000 hours during the plan year (July 1- June 30) and are still employed on June 1st of the plan year.

1st year of service

The school matches 100% of the first 2% of eligible base pay an employee contributes per pay period.

2nd year of service

The school matches 100% of the first 3% of eligible base pay an employee contributes per pay period.

3rd year of service

The school matches 100% of the first 4% of eligible base pay an employee contributes per pay period.

4th year of service and beyond:

The school matches 100% of the first 5% of eligible base pay an employee contributes per pay period. Employees are eligible upon hire and become vested in School matching contributions, subject to an annual 1,000 hours worked requirement and continued employment on June 1st of the plan year.

Credit Union Membership

State Employee's Credit Union membership is available to all employees.

Tuition Reimbursement

The school offers tuition reimbursement for qualified programs that allow staff to further their education in an area approved by the school. Employees interested in tuition reimbursement should see the Executive Director for information regarding Tuition Reimbursement and to receive approval prior to starting a program. Not currently active.

Financial Policies

Employee Expense Reimbursement Policy

School/Classroom Supply Expense Reimbursement:

All school reimbursable expenses must be approved in writing by the Executive Director or their grade level Principal. Expenses must then be submitted along with the check request form, the receipt, and the documentation of prior approval to the Finance Director within 30 days of purchase for reimbursement. Expenses will usually be reimbursed within 15 calendar days of receipt of the request.

Travel Expenses:

Employees may be reimbursed for travel pre-approved in writing by the Executive Director for school related training or meetings as follows:

Per Diems (to cover cost of eating out)

- For travel requiring an overnight stay: \$40.00/day
- For day travel arriving home by 7PM: \$20.00/day

Mileage reimbursement: \$.65/mile*

*As required by the IRS, employees must subtract the number of miles they would normally travel to and from work from their mileage per day.

Hotels - Hotel rates should fall under the government rate whenever possible.

Parking - Reimbursable as needed.

Exceptions approved on a case-by-case basis by the Executive Director.

Fundraising Policy

Purpose: To provide parameters to ensure all fundraisers conducted at School are directly related to assisting the School and/or enhance learning opportunities.

In order to foster an environment that is focused on learning and student growth, School will only raise funds for purposes directly related to school improvement, school community development or learning enhancement. In order to streamline this process, School has created a subgroup of the Finance Committee specifically focused on fundraising with clearly outlined parameters and guidelines.

Approval: All fundraisers must be approved by either the school administration or the Board of Directors prior to implementation.

Purposes of Fundraising: The following are acceptable fundraising purposes:

- Fundraisers where proceeds go towards enhancing School facilities or other budget needs.
- Fundraisers where proceeds reduce field trip costs or other student costs as they pertain to educational opportunities.
- Fundraisers for charities or causes will only be conducted if there is a direct tie to a school service project in which School students are involved.

Restrictions:

- School marketing must be in compliance with the Community Partnership Plan
- Students and parents are prohibited from soliciting School staff and other families on school property.
- Students and staff will not be required to participate in selling any type of product in connection with school-approved fundraisers. All involvement in such selling activities by students and staff is voluntary (e.g., book fair, selling of School spirit ware, student artwork etc...)

Donors Choose and Internet/Social Media/Crowdsourcing Policy

All fundraising, grants and monies intended to be raised for School, or any classroom, activity, athletics or club or project, through organizations such as Donors Choose or any like organizations or other internet/social media/crowdsourcing must be pre-approved by either the School Administration or Board of Directors. If the project is for technology or equipment, the technology will remain with the School if and when the teacher leaves. If the project is for items that are not considered technology or equipment, the teacher may request approval prior to submitting the project for the items to go with him/her if they leave School to work at another public school.

Donors Choose Policy

All fundraising, grants and monies intended to be raised for School, or any classroom, activity, athletics or club or project, through organizations such as Donors Choose or any like organizations or other internet/social media/crowdsourcing must be pre-approved by the School. Please contact the Executive Director for such approval. Only the Executive Director or his/her designee has the authority to approve such requests. All supplies, materials, technology and books received through the project will remain with the School if the teacher leaves. If the project is for technology or school equipment or books, the technology will remain with the School if the teacher leaves.

Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Anti-Harassment Policies

Non-discrimination Policy

School complies with all Federal, State, and Local non-discrimination laws including but not limited to race, color, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, status, disability, veteran status, genetic information, natural hairstyle or as otherwise may be prohibited by federal and state law. We want to maintain an employee relations climate, which promotes maximum personal development and achievement. We are an equal opportunity employer and do not discriminate on the bases of age, race, color, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity religion, creed, natural hairstyle, veteran status, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic prohibited by law. We are dedicated to ensuring the fulfillment of this policy with respect to hiring, selection for training, promotion, transfer, layoff, termination, leaves of absence, rates of pay or any other term or condition of employment. When necessary, we will reasonably accommodate employees and applicants with disabilities and with religious

requirements necessitating accommodation. We expect everyone to show understanding and consideration to fellow employees and to respect and observe this policy.

Equal Opportunity Employment Policy

School is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate against any applicant, contractor, or employee on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, veteran status, disability, natural hair style, genetic information or other legally protected status, except where it is an occupational qualification. This policy extends to all terms, conditions, and privileges of employment as well as the use of the school's facilities and participation in all activities sponsored by the school. It is also School's policy to ensure that all employees are treated equally on the basis of merit and performance competence with regard to any and all terms of conditions of employment, including recruitment, hiring, compensation, promotions, demotions, assignments, trainings, layoffs, and terminations.

Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy

School is committed to having a community in which every individual is treated with sensitivity and respect, and in which each student and teacher has an equal opportunity to work, learn, and develop to his or her full potential in an atmosphere free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. To that end, the School prohibits any form of harassment or discrimination (including sexual harassment) on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation or other protected characteristic, whether by a supervisor, administrator, co-worker, volunteer, contractor, student, or non-employee. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate our employees' personal morality. It is to assure that in the workplace, each employee is able to accomplish his or her job without being subjected to harassment.

While it is not easy to define precisely what harassment or discrimination is, it certainly includes verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct that denigrates, belittles, or puts down an individual or shows hostility, distaste, or aversion toward that individual based on that individual's race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, any other protected class, or participation in a protected activity

Discrimination involves intentionally treating anyone in an unequal or disparate manner because of that person's inherent or natural personal characteristics, including race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, any other protected class, or participation in a protected activity, when such treatment causes the victim to suffer adverse educational, employment, or other school-related consequences.

Harassment is any unwelcome offensive verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive as to significantly affect the conditions of one's employment or a student's learning. Harassment includes, but is not limited to the following: slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments, unwelcome or abusive jokes, insults, name calling, threats, bullying or intimidation, unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct such as uninvited touching or sexually related comments or the exchange of benefits for performance of sexual or other favors.

Other conduct that can be unlawful harassment includes verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct that shows aversion, denigration, or hostility because of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or other protected classification and that:

- Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- Unreasonably interferes with an individual's work; or
- Adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Sexual Harassment

Of the various types of harassment, sexual harassment is worthy of special considerations beyond those applicable under the School's general Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy. No employee, student, volunteer, or contractor shall engage in sexual harassment against any other student, employee, or another person in the School community.

Definition. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination involving unwelcome sexual, or sex-based conduct that interferes with the employment of others. Sexual harassment is any unwanted or unwelcomed verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements, requests for sexual favors, or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone in the workplace which is offensive or objectionable to the recipient or which causes the recipient discomfort or humiliation, or which interferes with the recipient's job performance. Harassing behaviors can be verbal, non-verbal, or physical, range from subtle innuendo of a sexual nature to coerced sexual activity, and other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that usually takes place under the following circumstances:

- When submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of instruction, participation in school activities, or employment.
- When submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions or benefits; or
- When such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic, extracurricular, or work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment or working environment

Examples of Sexual Harassment. Workplace behavior that is sexually harassing includes but is not limited to:

- Unwanted sexual remarks or inferences.
- Offensive comments about sex or gender-specific traits.
- Unwelcome sexual propositions, threats, bribes, written notes, or phone calls.
- Unwelcome gestures or sounds or the display of sexually suggestive objects, signals, or pictures.
- Unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature (e.g., touching, pinching, kissing, holding).
- Promise of promotion, favorable performance evaluations, etc. in return for sexual favors, known as "quid pro quo" or "this for that"; or
- Threatening or insinuating, whether explicitly or implicitly, that an employee's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee's employment, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts or any other condition of employment.
- Pressure for sexual activity, continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions.
- Continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body.
- Sexually degrading words used toward, or in the presence of, an individual or to describe an individual

A hostile environment exists if the conduct of a sexual nature is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or

creates a hostile or abusive educational or work environment.

Romantic or sexual advances toward students by employees or romantic or sexual relationships between school employees and students are always prohibited in all circumstances. School employees are prohibited from engaging in romantic or other inappropriate relationships with students and are required to report such relationships or reasonable suspicions thereof, to the Executive Director or other administrator. Procedures established by the School for reporting suspected sexual harassment shall be followed in any instances involving such conduct.

Application

Either men or women can be sexually harassed by someone of the same or opposite sex, and the law protects both sexes equally from this discrimination. This policy applies to sexual harassment by staff, students, volunteers, vendors, and service providers of either gender against someone of the same or opposite gender.

Retaliation

School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of discrimination or harassment or who participates in an investigation as a witness or in any other capacity. Employees should report any such retaliation to the Executive Director. This policy, however, shall not be used to bring frivolous or malicious complaints.

Procedure for Complaints of Harassment, Discrimination and Retaliation

- Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation should immediately discuss and report to his or her direct supervisor, the Executive Director, or any other supervisor with whom the person feels comfortable. While the person should report sexual harassment to a supervisor or the Executive Director, there is no requirement that the person report sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation to a particular supervisor.
- Any supervisor receiving a complaint of harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation shall report such complaint to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is the subject of such complaint, then the supervisor shall report to the Chair of the Board of Directors or to any other Board member that the supervisor believes is appropriate.
- Any complaint of made under this policy will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. To the maximum extent possible, the School will protect the privacy of the parties involved.
- Any attempt to interfere with or influence the investigation of a harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation complaint is strictly prohibited, and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.
- There will be no adverse action against an employee who acts in good faith and reports an incident, or who participates in or cooperates with an investigation of an alleged incident.

Disciplinary Action

Any individual found to have engaged in harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. In addition, some forms of sexual harassment, such as sexual relations between an adult and minor, may violate criminal laws. The School will cooperate with local authorities in the investigation of any alleged criminal activity.

Confidentiality of Records

School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and protect the privacy of the parties involved in the investigation of a sexual harassment, discrimination, and retaliation complaint. All

written materials related to the investigation of allegations of harassment will be placed in confidential files, which are separate from student and personnel records. Reasonable efforts will be taken to ensure that access to these records is limited to those persons with a need to know.

Sexual and Other Types of Unlawful Harassment/Discrimination on School Grounds by Contractors, Volunteers or Individuals Who Are Not School Employees

The policies contained in this section, including the reporting procedures and no retaliation policy, regarding harassment, sexual harassment, and discrimination, shall also apply to contractors, volunteers or individuals who are not employees of the School when such individuals are on School property or during School events.

Implementation: Information and Education/Training

- This policy will be distributed to all employees and will be discussed as part of the staff orientation at the beginning of each school year.
- The Executive Director is authorized and expected to establish training and administrative procedures to help eliminate discrimination and harassment, and to foster an environment of understanding and respect for all individuals.
- This policy will be included in the School's Operation and Board Policy Manual and a summary policy included in the Parent/Student, which is sent to parents and students at the beginning of each school year.

Title IX Discrimination and Harassment Policies For Students and Staff Members

Title IX provides that "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

It is the policy of THE SCHOOL that students should not be subjected to forms of unlawful discrimination or harassment, while at school or school-sponsored activities. Furthermore, the policy's intent is to address the issue in a proactive manner through the establishment of a system for educating students and staff at the School regarding the identification, prevention, intervention, and reporting of such anti-social acts. The School acknowledges the dignity and worth of all students and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. The School strives to model an inclusive environment and prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of gender or sex, including sexual orientation and LGBTQ+ identification. The School will not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment in any of its educational or employment activities or programs based on such protected classifications.

A. PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES

1. Discrimination or Harassment

Students, employees, contractors, volunteers, and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. In accordance with Title IX, the School expressly prohibits discrimination or harassment, based on sex or gender, and prohibits sexual harassment (including sexual violence) and gender-based harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. It includes

unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex, requests for sexual favors in exchange for benefits (quid pro quo), and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent. A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion. In accordance with Title IX, the School also prohibits gender-based harassment, which is unwelcome conduct based on a student's sex, harassing conduct based on a student's failure to conform to sex stereotypes.

Sex-based harassment can be carried out by school employees, other students, and third parties. All students can experience sex-based harassment, including male and female students, LGBTQ+ students, students with disabilities, and students of different races, national origins, and ages. Title IX protects all students from sex-based harassment, regardless of the sex of the parties, including when they are members of the same sex.

2. Retaliation

The School prohibits intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under Title IX. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, constitutes retaliation. As such, the School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person for reporting or intending to report violations of this policy, supporting someone for reporting or intending to report a violation of this policy, or participating in the investigation of reported violations of this policy. After consideration of the nature and circumstances of the reprisal or retaliation and in accordance with applicable laws, policies, and regulations, the Executive Director or designee shall determine the consequences and remedial action for a person found to have engaged in reprisal or retaliation.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment does not constitute retaliation. Charging an individual with a code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under Title IX does not constitute retaliation prohibited under this policy, provided, however, that a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

B. APPLICATION OF POLICY

This policy prohibits unlawful discrimination or harassment by students, employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors. This policy is intended to apply to student's vis a via other students, faculty, staff, volunteers/visitors, or contractors. This policy also applies to employees, volunteers/visitors, and contractors. This policy applies to behavior that takes place within the School's "education program or activity," which includes, but is not necessarily limited to, behavior:

1. in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours.
2. on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity.

3. at any bus stop.
4. during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity.
5. at any time or place when the individual is subject to the oversight and authority of school personnel.
6. at any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools; and
7. while using school or personal electronic communications, including employee and student emails, text messaging, instant messaging, chat rooms, blogging, websites, and social networking websites (i.e., Snapchat or Instagram).

C. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy ONLY, the following definitions apply:

1. Discrimination

Discrimination means any act or failure to act that unreasonably and unfavorably differentiates treatment of others based solely on the basis of gender or sex (including transgender and LGBTQ+ identification). Discrimination may be intentional or unintentional.

2. Harassment

Prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, under this policy means conduct on the basis of sex/gender that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo)
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to an education program, employment, or activity (i.e., hostile environment)
3. Sexual assault (as defined by Clery Act), or "dating violence," "domestic violence" and "stalking" (as defined by Violence Against Women Act).

For purposes of this policy, "hostile environment" means that the harassment is objectively severe and pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is harassment and must be based on sex or gender. A hostile environment may be created through pervasive or persistent misbehavior if sufficiently severe.

Examples of behavior that may constitute harassment include, but are not limited to, verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, lewd propositions, exclusion from peer groups, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, assault, impeding or blocking movement, offensive touching or any physical interference with normal work or movement, and visual insults, such as derogatory posters or cartoons. Legitimate age-appropriate pedagogical techniques are not considered harassment. Harassment, including sexual or gender-based harassment, is not limited to specific situations or relationships. It may occur between fellow students or co-workers, between supervisors and subordinates, between employees and students, or between non-

employees, including visitors, and employees or students. Harassment may occur between members of the opposite sex or the same sex.

Examples of sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, deliberate, unwelcome touching that has sexual connotations or is of a sexual nature, suggestions or demands for sexual involvement accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment or threats, pressure for sexual activity, continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used toward an individual or to describe an individual, sexual violence, or the display of sexually suggestive drawings, objects, pictures or written materials. Acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, as well as intimidation or hostility based on sex, but not involving sexual activity or language, may be combined with incidents of sexually harassing conduct to determine if the incidents of sexually harassing conduct are sufficiently serious to create a sexually hostile environment.

Gender-based harassment is also a type of harassment. Gender-based harassment may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, as well as intimidation or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping but not involving conduct of a sexual nature.

3. Conduct Not Covered by This Policy

Conduct that does not meet the definitions set forth above in this Title IX Policy are not subject to the School's Title IX Policy or any reporting/grievance procedures that govern Title IX matters. However, such conduct may still constitute a violation of other School policy, including the School's Code of Conduct, non-discrimination policy, and bullying policy. Please refer to and follow those policies for such conduct.

TO REPORT A VIOLATION OF THIS POLICY: PLEASE REFER TO THE SCHOOLS TITLE IX REPORTING AND GRIEVANCE POLICY.

This Policy as it pertains to Title IX shall remain in effect to the extent required by law.

Title IX Coordinator's Duties, Notice, Reporting And Grievance Policy

This Policy sets forth the School's Notice, Reporting and Grievance policy for Title IX matters and should be read in conjunction with the School's Title IX policy. This Policy only pertains to Title IX and alleged violations of Title IX. It does not apply to any other type of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. Please refer to the School's other policies, including Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy, and student conduct policies when Title IX does not apply.

The School's Title IX Coordinator is:

1. TRAINING AND PROGRAMS

The designated Title IX Coordinator shall establish training and other programs that are designed to help eliminate unlawful discrimination or harassment and foster an environment of understanding

and respect for all members of the school community. Information about this policy and the related complaint procedure must be included in the training plan. The training or programs should:

- (1) provide examples of behavior that constitutes unlawful discrimination or harassment.
- (2) teach employees to identify groups that may be the target of unlawful discrimination, or harassment; and
- (3) train school employees to be alert to locations where such behavior may occur, including locations within school buildings, at school bus stops, on cell phones and on the Internet.

In addition, training of Title IX personnel, including the Title IX Coordinator, Investigator(s), and Decision-maker(s), must include training:

1. On the definition of the definitions of prohibited conduct, including sexual harassment.
2. The scope of the school's education program or activity.
3. How to conduct an investigation.
4. The grievance process including appeals, and informal resolution processes.
5. How to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias.
6. Relevance, including how to apply the rape shield protections provided only for complainants.

Moreover, training for Title IX personnel, including the Coordinator, Investigator(s), Decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, must not rely on sex stereotypes, and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of sexual harassment. The School will post materials used to train Title IX personnel on their websites for a minimum of seven (7) years after posted, if any, or make materials available for members of the public to inspect.

2. NOTICE

The designated Title IX Coordinator is responsible for providing effective notice to job applicants, student applicants, students, parents, and employees of the procedures for reporting and investigating complaints of unlawful sex/gender discrimination and harassment. This policy will be posted on the School's website, and copies of the policy are available at the front office. Notice of this policy will appear in all job applicant information, admissions information, student, and employee handbooks, and in any School publication that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for students and employees.

3. TITLE IX COORDINATOR

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for monitoring the overall implementation of Title IX for the SCHOOL and coordinating the institution's compliance with Title IX in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The major responsibility is the prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination. Other major monitoring duties include, but are not limited to, the following recruitment and admissions, educational programs, and activities, hiring and employment. Other areas of consideration include:

- Participating in the development and implementation of the SCHOOL's sexual harassment policy.
- Assisting faculty, counselors, and administrators in complying with Title IX, and when a need arises, planning remedial actions.
- Making your presence known in the community by disseminating civil rights information or by speaking at parent-teacher group meetings, social or professional organization meetings, and other community functions.
- Serving as a resource on Title IX/gender issues.
- Monitoring and evaluating the SCHOOL's Title IX compliance efforts and making recommendations for any appropriate changes.
- Providing updated information to schools on Title IX implementation and issues.
- Identifying and disseminating information about Title IX educational resources (organizations, individuals, print, internet, and audio-visual)

4. EVALUATION

The Executive Director or designee shall evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to correct or prevent unlawful sex/gender discrimination and harassment and shall share these evaluations periodically with the School's Board.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

The recipient, whether a School employee, staff member, contractor, or the Title IX Coordinator, must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by the FERPA or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of Title IX, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder. Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the Title IX grievance procedures.

The Title IX Coordinator shall maintain confidential records of complaints or reports of unlawful discrimination or harassment. The records will identify the names of all individuals accused of such offenses and the resolution of such complaints or reports. The Title IX Coordinator also shall maintain records of training conducted and corrective action(s) or other steps taken by the School to provide an environment free of unlawful discrimination or harassment. The Executive Director shall report to the Board all verified cases of unlawful discrimination or harassment under the School's Title IX Policy.

6. REPORTING TITLE IX VIOLATIONS

1. For Students:

- To report discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment/misconduct based on sex/gender, students or their parents should contact a trusted teacher or advisor, grade-level Principal, Executive Director and/or Title IX coordinator immediately and file a complaint.
- Employees are required to report any actual or suspected violations of this policy. When anyone reports harassment and/or discrimination to a school employee, that employee

shall notify the Title IX Coordinator, grade-level Principal, or Executive Director, as soon as possible and within 24 hours.

- c. If the Executive Director is involved in the allegation, then another administrator will immediately inform the Chair of the Board of Directors.

2. For Employees: for discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment complaints based on sex/gender, employees should contact the Title IX coordinator immediately and follow the School's harassment and discrimination policy as well as its Title IX Reporting and Grievance policy.

3. Students, parents, volunteers, visitors, or others are also strongly encouraged to report any actual or suspected incidents of discrimination or harassment based on sex/gender under this policy. Reports may be made anonymously, and all reports shall be investigated in accordance with that policy.

4. Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by e-mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report.

5. Reporting may be made at any time, including during non-business hours, by using the telephone number or e-mail address, or by mail to the office address, listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

G. DEFINITIONS

As used in this and all other Title IX related policies, the following definitions shall apply.

1. "Complainant" is as an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. This means that any third party as well as the complainant may report sexual harassment. While parents and guardians do not become complainants (or respondents), parents and guardians have a right to act on behalf of parties (including by filing formal complaints) in Title IX matters.
2. "Respondent" is as an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.
3. "Formal complaint" is as a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the school investigate the allegation of sexual harassment and state that at the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant was participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the School with which the formal complaint is filed. A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information required to be listed for the Title IX Coordinator, and by any additional method designated by the school.
4. "Document filed by a complainant" means a document or electronic submission (such as by e-mail or through an online portal provided for this purpose by the school) that contains the complainant's physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the

person filing the formal complaint. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a complainant or a party during a grievance process and must comply with requirements for Title IX personnel to be free from conflicts and bias.

5. "Supportive measures" are individualized services reasonably available that are non-punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, or deter sexual harassment. The School's selection of supportive measures and remedies shall be based on what is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

H. MANDATORY RESPONSE AND PROCEDURAL OBLIGATIONS

The School is required to respond whenever any employee has notice of sexual harassment, including allegations of sexual harassment or allegations relevant to mandatory reporting laws in North Carolina. Notice to the Title IX Coordinator or to any School employee, board member, or official with authority to institute corrective measures on the School's behalf, charges the School with actual knowledge and triggers the School's response obligations under Title IX.

The School will respond promptly to Title IX sexual harassment or discrimination in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent, which means a response that is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. The School shall also comply with the following mandates:

1. The School will offer supportive measures to the person alleged to be the victim (referred to as the "complainant").
2. The Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the complainant confidentially to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.
3. The School will follow the grievance process set forth herein before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures, against a respondent.
4. The School will not restrict rights protected under the U.S. Constitution, including the First Amendment, Fifth Amendment, and Fourteenth Amendment, when complying with Title IX.
5. The School will investigate sexual harassment allegations in any formal complaint, which can be filed by a complainant, or signed by a Title IX Coordinator.
6. A complainant's wishes with respect to whether the school investigates should be respected unless the school determines that not pursuing an investigation would be deliberately indifferent (or that pursuing an investigation is necessary for community safety or similar reasons), in which case the Title IX Coordinator may sign complaint even if the complainant does not file a formal complaint (doing so will not be viewed as adversarial toward the respondent).
7. If the allegations in a formal complaint do not meet the definition of sexual harassment as defined in the School's Title IX policy, or the alleged conduct did not occur in the School's education program or activity, against a person in the United States, the School must dismiss such allegations for purposes of Title IX. However, the School may still address the allegations in any manner the School deems appropriate under the School's code of conduct or other policies.
8. Treat complainants equitably by providing remedies any time a respondent is found responsible and treat respondents equitably by not imposing disciplinary sanctions without following the grievance process set forth herein.

9. Remedies, which are required to be provided to a complainant when a respondent is found responsible, must be designed to maintain the complainant's equal access to education and may include supportive measures; however, remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the respondent.

10. All Title IX personnel (Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, people who facilitate any informal resolution process) shall be free from conflicts of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents.

11. There is a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

12. The School's grievance process shall not use, rely on, or seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.

13. Any provisions, rules, or practices that a school adopts as part of its grievance process for handling formal complaints of sexual harassment must apply equally to both parties (complainant and respondent).

14. The standard of evidence to determine responsibility is the preponderance of the evidence standard for all formal complaints of sexual harassment, whether the respondent is a student or an employee (including faculty member).

I. SUPPORTIVE MEASURES, REMEDIES AND DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

Supportive measures include services, accommodations, and/or other assistance that the School puts in place for a complainant after receiving notice of alleged sexual misconduct but before any final outcomes – investigatory, disciplinary, or remedial – have been determined. The School wants students and employees to be safe, to receive appropriate medical attention, and to get the help they need to heal and to continue to access their educational opportunities. We also want students and employees to understand their reporting options and how to access available interim measures.

Upon receiving a report of sexual harassment, the School will provide the complainant, or their advocate, with a written explanation of the interim measures available at School and through local community resources [insert name of local resources] and shall ask complainants, or their advocates, what measures are sought. Some possible interim measures are listed below, and the School determines which measures are appropriate for a particular complainant on a case-by-case basis. Not all of the measures listed below will be necessary in every case to keep victims safe and ensure their equal access to educational programs and activities. If the complainant or advocate identifies an interim measure that is not already provided by the School, the School will consider whether the request can be granted. In those instances where interim measures affect both a complainant and the respondent, the School will minimize the burden on the complainant wherever appropriate while ensuring that the measures are non-disciplinary and non-punitive prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility.

A complainant or their advocate may request the interim measures listed below. The School – after consulting with the complainant and/or their advocate – will determine which measures are appropriate to ensure the complainant's safety and equal access to educational programs and activities:

- Academic accommodations, including change in classes, testing, or assignments.
- Medical and mental health services, including counseling.
- Modifications to extracurricular activities, field trips or on or off-campus activities.

- A “no contact” directive pending the outcome of an investigation. Such a directive serves as notice to both parties that they must not have verbal, electronic, written, or third party communication with one another.
- Providing an escort to ensure that the student can move safely between school programs and activities.
- Transportation accommodations; and
- Assistance identifying an advocate to help secure additional resources or assistance including off-campus and community advocacy, support, and services.

Remedies Include:

Depending on the specific nature of the problem, remedies for the complainant may include, but are not limited to:

- Providing an effective escort to ensure that the complainant can move safely between classes and activities.
- Ensuring the complainant and perpetrator do not share classes or extracurricular activities.
- Moving the perpetrator or complainant (if the complainant requests to be moved) to a different residence hall or, in the case of an elementary or secondary school student, to another school within the district.
- Providing comprehensive, holistic victim services including medical, counseling, and academic support services, such as tutoring.
- Arranging for the complainant to have extra time to complete or re-take a class or withdraw from a class without an academic or financial penalty; and
- Reviewing any disciplinary actions taken against the complainant to see if there is a causal connection between the sexual violence and the misconduct that may have resulted in the complainant being disciplined.

When a respondent is found responsible for sexual harassment, the School will offer all remedies needed to eliminate the harm to the complainant and the school community and prevent the recurrence of sexual harassment. Simply sanctioning a respondent found responsible, in some cases, may be insufficient to eliminate a hostile environment. Rather, in addition to sanctions, the School may consider offering appropriate remedies for the broader student/staff population after the final outcome, including the following:

- Training or retraining school employees on the school’s responsibilities to address allegations of sexual violence and how to conduct Title IX investigations.
- Developing materials on sexual harassment, which should be distributed to all staff and students.
- Conducting bystander intervention and sexual harassment prevention programs with students and/or staff.
- Issuing policy statements or taking other steps that clearly communicate that the school does not tolerate sexual harassment and will respond to any incidents and to any student who reports such incidents.
- Conducting, in conjunction with student leaders, a School climate check to assess the effectiveness of efforts to ensure that the school is free from sexual violence and using that information to inform future proactive steps that the school will take.

- Targeted training for a group of students if, for example, the sexual harassment created a hostile environment (i.e., on an athletic team).
- When a school is unable to conduct a full investigation into a particular incident (i.e., when it received a general report of sexual violence without any personally identifying information), it should consider remedies for the broader student population in response.

Disciplinary sanctions include:

- For Students found responsible: verbal warning, written warning, interim suspension, restitution, suspension, required participation in appropriate training, counseling, required completion of a probationary period without additional infractions, or requiring the respondent to stay away from the complainant for a period of time.
- For Employees found responsible: sanctions for violations of Title IX vary depending on severity from formal written warning to dismissal.

J. INVESTIGATIONS

The School shall investigate the allegations in any formal complaint and send written notice to both parties (complainants and respondents) of the allegations upon receipt of a formal complaint.

The School, through the Title IX Coordinator or other authorized School official, shall designate an impartial individual to serve as the Investigator and conduct an investigation. The Investigator may be the Title IX Coordinator. However, the Investigator shall not be someone with a conflict of interest or bias. The School may choose an outside investigator, School employee or contractor to conduct the investigation. During the grievance process and when investigating, the Investigator shall comply with the following:

1. The burden of gathering evidence and burden of proof must remain on the School, not on the parties.
2. The School must provide equal opportunity for the parties to present fact and expert witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
3. The School must not restrict the ability of the parties to discuss the allegations or gather evidence (e.g., no “gag orders”).
4. Parties must have the same opportunity to select an advisor of the party’s choice who may be, but need not be, an attorney.
5. The School shall send a written notice to the parties (complainant and respondent) of any investigative interviews, meetings, or hearings.
6. The School shall send the parties, and their advisors, evidence directly related to the allegations, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 days for the parties to inspect, review, and respond to the evidence.
7. The School shall send the parties, and their advisors, an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 days for the parties to respond.
8. The School shall dismiss allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of sexual harassment set forth in the School’s Title IX policy or did not occur in a school’s education program or activity against a person in the U.S. Such dismissal is only for Title IX purposes and does not preclude the School from addressing the conduct in any manner the school deems appropriate.

9. The School may, in its discretion, dismiss a formal complaint or allegations therein if the complainant informs the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant desires to withdraw the formal complaint or allegations therein, if the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the school, or if specific circumstances prevent the school from gathering sufficient evidence to reach a determination.
10. The School shall give the parties written notice of a dismissal (mandatory or discretionary) and the reasons for the dismissal.
11. The School may, in its discretion, consolidate formal complaints where the allegations arise out of the same facts.
12. The School shall protect the privacy of a party's medical, psychological, and similar treatment records and shall not access or use such records unless the School obtains the party's voluntary, written consent to do so.

K. DECISION-MAKER

The School, through the Title IX Coordinator or other authorized School official, shall designate a Decision-maker with regard to a Title IX complaint. The Decision-maker shall not be the Title IX Coordinator or Investigator and shall not be someone with a conflict of interest or bias. The Decision-maker shall comply with the following rules:

1. Start with the presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
2. All Complainants are afforded rape shield protections, deeming questions and evidence about a complainant's prior sexual behavior irrelevant, unless offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged misconduct or offered to prove consent.
3. Use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching her/his decision.
4. Require objective evaluation of all relevant evidence, inculpatory and exculpatory, and avoid credibility determinations based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.
5. After sending the investigative report to the parties and before reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker(s) must afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.
6. Issue a written determination regarding responsibility with findings of fact, conclusions about whether the alleged conduct occurred, rationale for the result as to each allegation, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and whether remedies will be provided to the complainant.
7. The written determination must be sent simultaneously to the parties along with information about how to file an appeal.

L. GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Prompt Filing. The Complainant must file a formal complaint within a reasonable time, ideally within 10 days of the alleged incident. A complaint will not be disallowed solely because of the passage of time. The Title IX coordinator is charged with ensuring that all such complaints are timely, impartially, and appropriately investigated in accordance with applicable law.

Confidentiality. Every effort will be made to ensure the confidentiality of the complainant. There may be times where confidentiality may not be possible for the School to conduct a thorough investigation. There may also be instances where the School has a legal obligation to report certain information it receives to state or local authorities or to protect the School community.

Timeline. While the timeframe for completing an investigation into individual complaints may vary depending on the circumstances, the Title IX coordinator will ensure that timeframes are reasonable and endeavor to complete any investigation, including any decision, within sixty (60) days of the filing of a complaint. The timeline may be extended where appropriate at the discretion of the School. Include reasonably prompt time frames for conclusion of the grievance process, including appeals and informal resolutions, with allowance for short-term, good cause delays or extensions of the time frames.

Investigation. The Title IX coordinator or other School official shall designate an impartial Investigator to conduct the investigation. The Investigator shall have full authority to investigate, including the authority to interview witnesses. The Investigator shall follow the guidance/mandates set forth above in this policy in conducting the investigation.

Decision-Maker. The Decision-maker shall follow the guidance/mandates set forth above in this policy and shall use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching her/his decision. The Decision-maker shall timely provide written notice of the outcome of the complaint to the relevant parties.

Appeal. Either party may appeal the Decision-maker's decision to the Board of Directors within 14 days after a decision is made or the School dismisses a formal complaint in a Title IX proceeding, on the following bases:

1. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter,
2. Newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter, and/or
3. Title IX personnel had a conflict of interest or bias, that affected the outcome of the matter.

The Board of Directors will appoint a panel of three board members to serve as the impartial review panel. The review will be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws and the panel may, but is not required to, request information directly from the parties. The three-member review panel will make a decision and will provide written notice of the outcome of the appeal to the parties within fourteen (14) school days, unless circumstances require more time.

M. INFORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR STUDENTS

After a formal Complaint is filed, the School may, in its discretion, offer and facilitate informal resolution options, such as mediation or restorative justice, so long as both parties give voluntary, informed, written consent to attempt informal resolution. The School will not require participation in an informal process. And, at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint.

The School does not require as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, or employment or continuing employment, or enjoyment of any other right, waiver of the right to a formal investigation and adjudication of formal complaints of sexual harassment. Any person who facilitates an informal resolution must be well-trained. The School will not offer or facilitate an informal resolution process to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student. Finally, the School may not offer an informal resolution process unless a formal complaint is filed.

N. POLICY APPLICATION

This policy shall remain in effect as long as required by law.

Americans with Disability Act

The School is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to individuals with disabilities, those regarded as having disabilities and those associated with individuals with disabilities. Accordingly, the School does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or any other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. The School complies with all federal and state laws concerning the employment of persons with disabilities including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAA) and acts in accordance with regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

Eligibility

the School will engage in an interactive process to find reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with a disability to enable them to perform the essential functions of a job, unless doing so causes an undue hardship to the School, or a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace, and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation.

When an individual with a disability is requesting accommodation and can be reasonably accommodated without creating an undue hardship or causing a direct threat to workplace safety, he or she will be given the same consideration for employment as any other employee or applicant.

All employees are required to comply with the School standards. Current employees who pose a direct threat to the health and safety of themselves or other individuals in the workplace will be placed on appropriate leave until the School can make a lawful and reasonable decision in regard to continued employment. Individuals who are active illegal drug users are excluded from coverage under the School's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) policy.

Applicants and employees are assured that all information regarding a disability shall be kept confidential except that:

- Appropriate supervisors may be informed regarding restrictions on the work or duties of disabled employees and any accommodations that have been made; and
- Government officials investigating compliance with federal laws may be informed.

All employees with responsibilities, which may require knowledge of disabilities, are advised that they are to treat the knowledge with confidentiality.

Procedures

The Executive Director or his/her designee is responsible for implementing this policy, including requests for and resolution of reasonable accommodations, safety and direct threat determinations, and undue hardship issues. All requests for reasonable accommodations should be presented to the Executive Director or her/his designee.

Any employee or job applicant who believes that he or she has been discriminated against on the

basis of disability should immediately bring the problem to the attention of their supervisor/administrator, or any other supervisor/administrator with whom the individual feels comfortable, including the Executive Director or the Board of Directors. The employee should also pursue the School's grievance procedure. No applicant or employee will be subject to coercion, intimidation, interference, discrimination, or retaliation for registering a complaint or for assisting in an investigation of any alleged violation of laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability.

The Pregnancy Workers Fairness Act, and The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act

School fully complies with The [Pregnant Workers Fairness Act \(PWFA\)](#) and provides reasonable accommodations to employees with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation will cause the employer an undue hardship, meaning significant difficulty or expense for the School. Employee covered by this policy should follow the process set forth in School's Americans with Disabilities Act policy. Examples of possible reasonable accommodations including the ability to sit or drink water; receive closer parking; receive additional break time to use the bathroom, eat, and rest; take unpaid leave or time off to recover from childbirth.

In accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), School also provides reasonable break time to any covered employee to express breast milk for their nursing child for one year after the child's birth each time such employee has need to express the milk.

In addition, School fully complies with The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections for Nursing Mothers Act ("The PUMP Act") which provides that nursing employees are entitled to a place to pump at work, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public. Please reach out to ____ for more information.

Employment At-Will, Open Door and Grievance Policy and Procedure

Employment-At-Will

Employment with the School is based on mutual consent; both the employee and the School have the right to terminate employment at any time, with or without notice, for any lawful reason, or for no reason at all. The most common circumstances under which employment is terminated include resignation, discharge, reduction-in-force, or retirement.

No provision in this handbook or any other personnel policy or procedure document shall be construed to the contrary or construed to limit this right in any way. No supervisor, employee or other representative of the School is authorized to alter the terminable at-will nature of employment with the School or make any agreement to the contrary. Any agreement altering or modifying the terminable at-will nature of employment with the School must be in writing signed by the Executive Director and approved by the School's Board of Directors.

Open-Door Policy

The School is committed to fair and equitable treatment for all employees. Good-faith complaints, grievances, questions, comments, suggestions, or ideas are of interest to School. The School encourages its employees to communicate such good-faith complaints, grievances, questions, comments, suggestions, or ideas to their supervisor, or the Executive Director.

Grievance Policy and Procedures

This policy is in place to respond to a grievance by an employee or volunteer (herein after "employee"). It is expected that any employee with an issue should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with their supervisor. If an employee feels that their issue is still a concern after speaking to their supervisor and that the issue has risen to the level of a grievance, then the employee may initiate the grievance procedures as described below. The goal of filing a formal grievance would be to use the process to come to an equitable solution.

1. **Definition of a grievance:** a grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by an employee stating that a specific action has violated a School policy, board policy, law or regulation. Complaints that do not raise an alleged violation of a School policy, board policy, law or regulation do not raise grievance issue and are not subject to these procedures. In addition, a grievance does not include: the non-renewal or termination of employment, disagreements on day to day operation issue, employee discipline or employee reviews unless they violate a specific policy, law or regulation. And, a grievance does not include a complaint covered by another policy including complaints under Title VII, Title IX, the ADA/ADAA, the PUMP Act, the PWEA and the School's non-Title VII and non-Title IX harassment and bullying policy which shall be handled in accordance with those policies.
2. **Time Limits:** A grievance will only be heard if the complaint has been filed within fifteen days of the act that is being reported. The fifteen-day deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Executive Director.
3. **The grievance process is as follows:**
Step 1: To file a grievance, an employee must submit a letter in writing (email accepted) stating the School policy, board policy or law that was violated including details of the

actions and the place, date, and time of the violation. The employee should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision-making process. The written letter should be submitted to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is implicated in the grievance, the grievance should be submitted to the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board of Directors or to any other Board member with whom the individual(s) feel comfortable disclosing the information.

Step 2: In response to the formal grievance, the Executive Director shall have up to five school days from the time they receive the formal grievance to respond to the grievance in writing. If the employee is satisfied with the decision after they receive the response from the Executive Director, the issue is considered resolved. The employee shall submit their satisfaction to the Executive Director in written form.

Step 3: If the employee is not satisfied with the response from the Executive Director, the employee may file an appeal by submitting a letter in writing (email accepted) stating the School policy, board policy or law that was violated including details of the actions and the place, date, and time of the violation. The employee should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision-making process to the Board of Directors. This must be done within 5 school days of the initial response from the Executive Director.

Step 4: Where the grievance is filed directly with the Board as set forth above or after receiving the appeal letter, the appeal shall be considered by the Board at its next regularly scheduled board meeting provided such meeting is more than seven days after the filing, or the Chair of the Board of Directors may call a special meeting of the Board to consider the appeal in accordance with The School's bylaws. The Board will consider and discuss the grievance at the meeting in accordance with Open Meetings laws. At that meeting the Board of Directors will make a decision on how to handle the grievance. If the board decides that it needs additional time to consider the grievance or gather information or conduct an investigation, it may defer its decision until another regularly scheduled board meeting or schedule a special meeting. At the Board's sole discretion, the Board may conduct an investigation or gather additional information regarding the grievance, including interviews or engagement of an investigator, if needed. At the meeting where the board makes a decision on the grievance, the board will give the individual filing the grievance or appeal the opportunity to attend the meeting. Once the board reaches a decision, the Board will communicate that decision to the individual who filed the grievance within five school days. The Board's decision concerning the grievance is final. The Board reserves the right to appoint a Board Panel to address the grievance. In such cases, the Board Panel's decision is final and there is no appeal rights to the Board.

Whistleblower Policy

This Whistleblower Policy applies to all School Board of Director members and employees, including full time staff, part time staff, and temporary staff members. The Policy is intended to encourage Board members and employees to have open communication and transparency and to enable them to raise serious concerns within the school before seeking resolution outside the school.

School is committed to operating with the highest expectations and the highest business, legal and ethical standards. School's Board of Director Agreement and Employee Handbook require the Board of Directors and the employees to maintain high standards of ethical conduct at all times. As representatives of the School, Board members and employees must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and complying with all applicable laws and regulations.

As part of the School Board of Director Agreement and the School Employee Handbook, all Board members and employees are required to report any violations or suspected violations in accordance with this whistleblower policy.

Employees

If an employee has a concern or is aware of a violation of the School Employee Handbook, he/she should speak to their direct supervisor. If he/she is not comfortable speaking with their supervisor they should speak to the Director of Education, Director of Operations or Director of Finance. All supervisors are required to report any concerns or violations to the Leadership Team who must then conduct an investigation of the violations.

Board of Directors, Directors, and Other Volunteers

Board of Directors, Directors, and other volunteers should submit Concerns in writing directly to the Chair of the Board of Directors. Contact information for the Chair is _____.

Handling of Reported Violations

The BOD shall address all reported Concerns from the Board of Directors, Directors, or school volunteers. The Chair of the BOD shall immediately notify the BOD, the Director of Education, the Director of Operations, and Director of Finance of any such report. The Chair will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the Concern within five business days, if possible. It will not be possible to acknowledge receipt of anonymously submitted Concerns.

All reports will be promptly investigated by the BOD, and appropriate corrective action will be recommended to the Board of Directors, if warranted by the investigation. In addition, action taken must include a conclusion and/or follow-up with the complainant for complete closure of the Concern. The BOD has the authority to retain outside legal counsel, accountants, private investigators, or any other resource deemed necessary to conduct a full and complete investigation of the allegations.

Acting in Good Faith

Anyone reporting a Concern must act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates an improper accounting or auditing practice, or a violation of the Codes. The act of making allegations that prove to be unsubstantiated, and that prove to have been made maliciously, recklessly, or with the foreknowledge that the allegations are false, will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and may result in discipline, up to and including dismissal from the volunteer position or termination of employment. Such conduct may also give rise to other actions, including civil lawsuits.

No one reporting a concern in good faith shall receive retaliation, harassment, or adverse employment consequences. If anyone retaliates against someone who has reported in good faith then they are subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment for an employee or Director and removal from the Board of Directors for a Board member.

Confidentiality

Reports of Concerns, and investigations pertaining thereto, shall be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation and to protect witnesses, the integrity of the investigation, and prevent disruption to business. Disclosure of reports of Concerns to individuals not involved in the investigation will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and may result in discipline, up

to and including termination of employment. Such conduct may also give rise to other actions, including civil lawsuits.

Conflict of Interest Policy

All School employees, contractor, and volunteers are expected to abide by the following conflict of interest policy.

Directors shall avoid improper conduct arising from conflicts of interest and shall abide by all legal requirements governing conflicts of interests, including N.C.G.S. Section 55A-8-31.

A person shall not be disqualified from serving as a member of the charter school's board of directors because of the existence of a conflict of interest, so long as the person's actions comply with this conflict of interest policy and applicable law.

Notwithstanding any other provisions in this policy, no voting member of the governing board shall be an employee of a for-profit company that provides substantial services to the charter school for a fee.

Definitions for the purposes of this policy:

1. Interested Person

Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee of the Board of Directors who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. Financial Interest

A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

- a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the School has a transaction or arrangement,
- b. A compensation arrangement with the School or with any entity or individual with which the School has a transaction or arrangement, or
- c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the School is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Board of Directors decides that a conflict of interest exists.

Procedures:

1. Duty to Disclose

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Board of Directors or members of a committee with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, s/he shall leave the Board of Directors or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a

conflict of interest exists.

3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

- a. An interested person may make a presentation at the Board of Directors or committee meeting, but after the presentation, s/he shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
- b. The chairperson of the Board of Directors or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- c. After exercising due diligence, the Board of Directors or committee shall determine whether the School can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
- d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Board of Directors or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the School's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy

- a. If the Board of Directors or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- b. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Board of Directors or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Records of Proceedings:

The minutes of the Board of Directors and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

- a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Compensation:

- a. A voting member of the Board of Directors who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- b. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- c. No voting member of the Board of Directors or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

Annual Statements:

Each director, principal officer, and member of a committee with Board of Directors delegated powers shall

annually sign a statement, which affirms such person:

- a. Has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy,
- b. Has read and understands the policy,
- c. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
- d. Understands the School is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption, it must engage primarily in activities, which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

Periodic Reviews:

To ensure the School operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining,
- b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the School's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

Use of Outside Experts:

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in this policy, the School may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the Board of Directors of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

FERPA and Confidentiality

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all educational agencies and institutions that receive funds under any program administered by the Department of Education. The law prohibits a school from disclosing personally identifiable information from students' education records without the consent of a parent or eligible student unless an exception to FERPA's general consent rule applies.

School employees, contractors and volunteers are exposed to confidential information daily. Information concerning children and their families should be treated as confidential information, including personally identifiable information from students' education records. The School staff with access to this information do not have the right to give this information to anyone who does not have a legitimate professional reason for access. Teachers or other staff members can be held liable for the individual release of information. Staff members are not permitted to discuss information about their students in open areas or where parents or other students have access. Anything said in meetings discussing students is considered confidential!

Please do not put a student's name in the subject box of an email. Treat their names as confidential as well.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high

school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." If you have questions regarding FERPA or have received a request for educational records, please contact the Executive Director. See FERPA: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

Confidentiality

Respecting the privacy of our students, donors, staff, and volunteers of the School itself is a basic value of School. Confidential information should not be disclosed or discussed with anyone without permission or authorization from the Board of Directors. Care shall also be taken to ensure that unauthorized individuals do not overhear any discussion of confidential information and that documents containing confidential information are not left in the open or inadvertently shared.

Employees, volunteers, and board members of School may be exposed to information, which is confidential and/or privileged and proprietary in nature. It is the policy of School that such information must be kept confidential both during and after employment or volunteer service. Staff and volunteers, including board members, are expected to return materials containing privileged or confidential information at the time of separation from employment or expiration of service.

Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged information is a serious violation of this policy and will subject the person(s) who made the unauthorized disclosure to appropriate discipline, including removal/dismissal.