



BERKLEY ACCELERATED POLICY MANUAL

Updated October, 2023

Berkley is committed to inspiring our students to Believe in Better, to encourage them to aspire to higher learning, and challenge them to achieve their maximum individual potential while providing a supportive and safe educational environment.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
(1) Foundation	5
(1.1) Mission Statement.....	5
(1.2) Organizational Philosophy.....	5
(1.3) Organizational Structure.....	5
(1.4) Decision Making.....	5
(1.5) Non-Discrimination.....	5
(2) Governing Board	6
(2.1) Governing Board Foundation.....	6
(2.2) General powers.....	6
(2.3) General Responsibilities.....	6
(2.4) Board Membership.....	7
(2.5) Meetings.....	9
(2.6) Committees.....	12
(2.7) Conflict of Interest Policy.....	13
(2.8) Financial Interest.....	16
(2.9) Employer Responsibilities.....	16
(3) Employment Manual	17
(3.1) Equal Opportunity Employment.....	17
(3.2) Employment Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment.....	17
(3.3) Personnel Records.....	20
(3.4) Compensation and Benefits.....	21
(3.5) Employee Evaluations.....	32
(3.6) Substitutes.....	34
(3.7) Leaves.....	34
(3.8) Employee Behavior.....	39
(3.9) Rights and Responsibilities.....	47
(3.10) Termination.....	56
(3.11) Travel and Entertainment Expenses.....	57
(3.12) Staff Teams.....	59
(4) Student Policies	61
(4.1) Admission of Students.....	61
(4.2) Attendance.....	64
(4.3) Behavioral.....	67
(4.4) Academic.....	75
(4.5) Extra-Curricular Activities.....	77
(4.6) Medical Policies.....	79
(4.7) General.....	85
(5) Teaching and Learning	91
(5.1) Curriculum Development.....	91
(5.2) Textbook Adoption.....	91
(5.3) Teacher’s Lesson Plans.....	92
(5.4) Reporting Student Progress.....	92
(5.5) Exceptional Student Education (ESE).....	93
(5.6) Section 504.....	93
(5.7) School Based Leadership Team (MTSS).....	94
(5.8) English as a Second Language.....	95
(5.9) Instructional Time.....	95
(6) School Management	96
(6.1) Students.....	96
(6.2) School Records.....	96
(6.3) School Safety.....	102
(6.4) Fund Raising.....	104
(6.5) Photographs of Students.....	104
(6.6) Gifts.....	104
(6.7) Volunteers.....	105
(6.8) Computer, E-Mail, and Cell Phone Usage.....	106

(6.9)	Complaint Process.....	117
(6.10)	Policy Against Bullying and Harassment	119
(6.11)	Civility Policy.....	125
(6.12)	Prohibition Against Firearms and Weapons.....	126
(6.13)	Research Requests.....	127
(6.14)	Parent Teacher Organization	127
(6.15)	Mental Health Services	128
(6.16)	Complaints Regarding Student Health, Safety and Welfare.....	129
(7)	Business Operations.....	130
(7.1)	General Office Procedures.....	130
(7.2)	Files and Record Management	130
(7.3)	Public Records Request	133
(7.4)	Contractual Agreements.....	135
(8)	Fiscal and Accounting Management	136
(8.1)	Operational Safeguards.....	136
(8.2)	Banking Policies.....	136
(8.3)	Accounting Platform.....	142
(8.4)	Purchasing	147
(8.5)	Accounting Processes	149
(8.6)	Payroll Processes.....	157
(8.7)	Financial Reporting	158
(8.8)	Financial Conditions	159
(8.9)	General Financial Matters.....	160
(9)	Facilities	163
(9.1)	Facilities Rental.....	163
(9.2)	Animals in School	164
(9.3)	Classroom Decor.....	164
(9.4)	Hazardous Materials	164
(9.5)	Key Distribution and Control.....	165
(10)	Transportation	166
(10.1)	Definitions.....	166
(10.2)	Student Transportation Services	166
(10.3)	School Bus Safety	166
(10.4)	Drivers	168
(10.5)	General.....	168
(11)	Food Service Program	170
(11.1)	Wellness Policy	170
(11.2)	Food Service Management.....	176
(11.3)	Uniform Policy for Free and Reduced-Price Meals	176
(11.4)	Food Safety	177
(11.5)	Unpaid Meal Policy	177
(12)	Before and After Care (If Applicable).....	180
(12.1)	General.....	180
(12.2)	Student Expectations	180
(12.3)	Staffing.....	181

Berkley Accelerated Policy Manual

(1) Foundation

(1.1) Mission Statement

Berkley is committed to inspiring our students to Believe in Better, to encourage them to aspire to higher learning, and challenge them to achieve their maximum individual potential while providing a supportive and safe educational environment.

(1.2) Organizational Philosophy

In carrying out its responsibilities, the Berkley Accelerated Board of Directors is guided by the desire to use the resources of its community, its staff, and its students to provide the highest quality education permitted by its financial resources. In reaching decisions, the Governing Board will attempt in every case to act in the best interest of its students.

(1.3) Organizational Structure

Berkley Accelerated is a not-for-profit corporation incorporated within the state of Florida. The organization is directed by the Governing Board who set the policies and guidelines for the organization and delegate to staff day-to-day responsibilities for operational matters. The President consults with staff members in order to allow for the greatest possible staff participation in the decision making of the organization. The President shall serve as the liaison between the Governing Board and the staff.

(1.4) Decision Making

The Governing Board is responsible for setting the budget, establishing organization wide policies, and overseeing the general operation of the organization. It is the President's responsibility to ensure these policies are carried out, and to develop a system that ensures the input of staff, students and community.

(1.5) Non-Discrimination

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, disability, political or religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, or sexual orientation be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices conducted by this School, except as provided by law.

The School shall comply with all state and federal laws, which prohibit discrimination and are designed to protect the civil rights of applicants, employees, and/or students, or other persons protected by applicable law.

The School shall admit students to programs and classes without regard to race, color,

religion, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, marital status, disability or handicap or sexual orientation.

(2) Governing Board

(2.1) Governing Board Foundation

The Governing Board is a legal requirement for a charter school organized as a not-for-profit organization and ensures its operations continue to focus on service to the public. In addition to its legal responsibilities, the Governing Board supports the organization's mission and seeks to promote it by advocating the educational philosophy.

(2.2) General powers

All affairs of the Organization shall be overseen and authorized or delegated by the Governing Board. The Governing Board's primary duties include, but are not limited to, the hiring and evaluation of the President, setting of Policies and Procedures, strategic planning, and assessment of the organization in accomplishing the missions of the organization, as well as the oversight of the public trust.

(2.3) General Responsibilities

The Governing Board is in charge of the direct or indirect assistance from state and federal governments and are put in a position of governance as a result of state charter school legislation, as well as nonprofit corporate law. This structure makes the organization's management accountable to the Governing Board, who due to their voluntary nature, can effectively provide financial oversight since no personal gain is involved as every governing board in Florida for charter public schools must be operated as a not-for-profit.

Election to the Governing Board carries with it a responsibility of stewardship. The Board members are the custodians of the integrity of the organization; they hold in trust the School's reputation as created by its founders and as developed by those who have shaped the School in the past. Current governing board members accept the obligation to not only preserve, but also add to this organization. In this way governing board members help form not only the present, but also the future composition of the organization.

The governing Board shall be responsible for ensuring the corporate documents have been adopted and are updated as necessary to define the proper operation and management of the organization. The following corporate documents are the responsibility of the Governing Board, and listed in order of priority/authority:

(2.3.1) Articles of Incorporation

The Articles of Incorporation incorporate the official and primary rules governing the management of the organization in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida and the United States of America. The Articles of Incorporation, and any amendments thereto, must be duly approved by the Governing Board and submitted to the State of Florida through the Florida Division of Corporations.

(2.3.2) Bylaws

The corporate Bylaws are the legally binding set of rules made by the organization to control the operation of the Governing Board and the corporation itself. The Bylaws set forth the structure of the organization in voting, operations, and guiding the Governing Board in the conduct of its business.

(2.3.3) Policy Manual

This Policy Manual, as adopted and amended from time to time by the Governing Board, is to provide direction over the general day-to-day operation of the organization. The policies shall be adopted or amended by the Governing Board in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Bylaws and shall represent the official strategy and direction given by the Governing Board to manage the daily affairs of the Corporation. All staff members of the organization should become familiar with and carry out the directives of the Policy Manual and any supplemental employee manual.

(2.3.4) Board Resolutions

A Board Resolution is a written statement made and approved by the Governing Board detailing decisions and directives of the Governing Board which may or may not be permanent directives to be included within the Policy Manual.

(2.3.5) Corporate Budget

The Corporate Operating Budget shall be the plan by which the expenditures of the organization's resources shall be approved. See section seven (7) of this Policy Manual for additional information regarding the Budget process. All expenditure of organization's funds must align with the approved Corporate Operating Budget. Corporate Operating and School specific budgets have different reporting requirements with the individual School sponsor's and the School shall abide by the reporting requirements set forth in the charter agreement.

(2.4) Board Membership

(2.4.1) Board Powers

The Governing Board affirms that the Directors, officers, administrators, faculty, and other employees of the organization have an obligation to exercise their authority and to carry out the duties of their respective positions for the sole benefit of the organization as delegated by the Governing Board. Other than described within these policies, individual members of the Governing Board hold no authority or decision-making ability outside of official meetings of the Governing Board unless an individual Governing Board member is delegated specific authority by the full Governing Board.

(2.4.2) Application Process

Any person wanting to apply to serve as a member of the Governing Board shall submit an application available from the organization's website along with a letter of intent and resume, which shall be submitted to the Governing Board for review and consideration. The applicant will agree to follow all Board policies and to submit to fingerprinting and a background check as required by Section 1002.33(12)(g), Florida Statutes.

The Governing Board may recruit members based on the identification of strategic needs of the Board and organization and solicit nominees who are natural matches and meet the criteria specified in the application.

(2.4.3) Election Process

The Chairman of the organization shall be elected annually by the Governing Board at the annual meeting of the Board. If the election of officers shall not be held at such meeting, such election shall be held as soon thereafter as is convenient. Vacancies may be filled or new offices created and filled at any meeting of the Governing Board where a quorum is present. When a newly elected Board member is filling a vacancy, that member shall fill the remainder of the original member's term, and then be eligible for reelection to continue on the Board. Each officer shall hold office until his or her successor has been duly elected, unless the Officer has voluntarily resigned prior to the end of his or her term or if, by a majority vote of the other Governing Board members, the Officer has been removed from its position.

The Board will evaluate the needs of the Governing Board at the annual meeting of the Board for the coming school year. After review of all nominees and applicants the Board shall vote on the acceptance or denial of present nominees by a majority vote of the Governing Board then present.

(2.4.4) Board Member Resignations

Any Board member who wishes to resign from office shall inform the School Board Chairman in writing. The resignation shall become effective upon receipt of the letter unless an alternative date is suggested within the resignation letter and also approved by the Chairperson. The Board Chairperson shall certify to the Board that the office is vacant. The Board will then appoint a replacement to serve using the process described within these policies.

(2.4.5) Removal Process

Any Chairman or agent elected or appointed by the Governing Board may be removed by the Board whenever, in its judgment, the best interests of the organization would be served thereby, but such removal shall be without prejudice. In order to remove a Chairman, the Board must vote on the issue and must have quorum to take the vote.

(2.4.6) Operational Procedures

Upon the election or appointment of new board members, the President shall provide the new Board member with copies of all relevant and important documents necessary in the fulfillment of the position as a Board member such as: Florida Laws relating to charter schools, State Board of Education Rules relating to charter schools, the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Policies and Procedures of the Corporation, the current Charter contract, current annual budget, and any other documents the President deems essential to an understanding of the operation of the organization.

The President shall set aside such time as is necessary to answer any questions arising from the study of these documentations and shall cooperate fully in assisting the new member to become an informed and active Board member.

New Board Members shall be required to complete statutorily required governance training which must include government in the sunshine laws, conflicts of interest, ethics, and financial responsibility.

The organization shall provide the new Board member opportunities to attend a charter school conference or other training opportunities in regard to the responsibilities of Charter School Board Members.

(2.5)

Meetings

All meetings of the Governing Board shall be held in accordance with Florida Government in the Sunshine laws. Except for special meetings described below, notice of all meetings and agendas shall be posted no less than three (3) calendar days prior to each meeting. The agenda will be prepared by the President with input from the Chairperson. Input into the agenda should consist only of the placement of items on it and not used as a means to circumvent the sunshine law. A working agenda will be distributed to Board members prior to the meeting for input prior to the distribution of the final agenda except for special meetings as described below. These meetings will be held at such place as designated in the agenda.

(2.5.1) Governance Meetings

The Governing Board shall fulfill these duties by meeting no less than quarterly. In compliance with the Florida Law the Board publishes the schedule of its meetings and holds them in open session. The Board will meet in accordance with the Florida Sunshine Law, Section 286.011 and shall meet in an executive session only when and to the extent permitted by Florida law during pending litigation.

(2.5.2) Annual Meeting.

The annual meeting of the Governing Board shall be held in May or June of each year. At the annual meeting, the new Board Members will be elected or reelected.

(2.5.3) General Meetings

An annual schedule of General Meetings will be set by the Governing Board and made available for public review, which shall be subject to amendment upon reasonable notice.

(2.5.4) Special Meetings

Special Meetings of the Board may be called by the Chairman or any two voting members of the Board. The person(s) calling such a meeting may set the location of the meeting as a conveniently accessible place for all Board members and the public.

Special Meetings must be scheduled with no less than one (1) day prior notice and must be established to discuss only a single issue.

(2.5.5) Electronic Meetings

Pursuant to Section 1002.33(9)(p)(3), Florida Statutes and Section 120.54(5), Florida Statutes the Governing Board may elect to hold meetings through the means of "Communication Media Technology." Governing Board members attending a meeting by means of

Communications Media Technology shall be counted towards the quorum and shall be considered present for quorum and voting purposes. In the event this method is chosen for use by the Board, the following requirements will be met:

2.5.5.1 ***Access***

The means by which the meeting will be held will be sufficient to permit all interested persons to attend the meeting either in person or electronically. In the event that the meeting experiences technical difficulties during the proceedings, the meeting shall be postponed until the problems have been corrected.

2.5.5.2 ***Access Points***

The School shall make available a physical location where individuals who do not have access to the technology required to participate can come to observe the meeting. This access point will have adequate set up to allow all physical participants to hear and see the meeting in person.

The President and the individual who is appointed by the Governing board to facilitate parental involvement, provide access to information, assist parents and others with questions and concerns, and resolve disputes shall both be required to attend the meeting in person at an access point.

2.5.5.3 ***Meeting Notice***

Meetings which are to be held electronically will require additional information in the meeting notice. Specifically, the notice must include:

- The physical addresses of all access points open to the public and where the public should go to participate in the meeting in person.
- An address, e-mail address, and telephone number where an interested person may write or call for additional information or submit a request for public comment.
- An address, e-mail address, and designated person to whom a person may submit written or other physical exhibits which he or she intends to offer for consideration at the public meeting.

(2.5.6) **Public Comments at Board Meetings**

It is the intention of this policy to encourage public comment regarding items to be addressed by the Board or committees of the organization. This policy describes the process to be followed to provide members of the public with a reasonable opportunity to be heard.

2.5.6.1 ***Conduct***

The opportunity to be heard at a public meeting of the organization is subject to Board rules, policies and procedures, including requirements regarding orderly conduct and proper decorum in a public meeting.

2.5.6.2 ***Notification***

Any person or group who wants to publicly comment on an Agenda item during a public meeting is required to follow the procedures set forth in Section 2.5.5.3 prior to the start of the meeting by supplying the agenda item they wish to comment on, or if no agenda item, submit a general request for public comment. Such a request can be made at the meeting

itself using a Public Comment Form which will be made available to visitors as they arrive at the access point. If written materials are to be distributed, a copy of such must accompany the request. When recognized by the Chairman of the Board, the presenter must state their name for the record.

2.5.6.3 ***Timing of Public Comments***

Comments for items on the current meeting's Board Action section of the agenda will be heard prior to the beginning of Board discussion for the related Agenda item.

Comments for items not on the current meeting's Board Action section of the agenda will be held until the end of the meeting, as noted on the agenda.

2.5.6.4 ***Time Limits***

Comments are limited to three (3) minutes for an individual.

2.5.6.5 ***Public Record***

All documents submitted to the Board are retained as part of the Public Record of the meeting.

2.5.6.6 ***Accommodations***

The Board will provide a reasonable accommodation to an individual with a disability who wishes to make a public comment at a Board meeting. Requests for such accommodations should be made at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled Board meeting.

(2.5.7) **Voting by Proxy**

In circumstances where attendance at the meeting is impossible, the Board member may participate electronically even if the meeting has not been designated as an electronic meeting pursuant to policy 2.5.5 above. In the event an individual board member elects to participate electronically, it must be ensured that all members and the public are able to hear all discussion and votes. Members who are participating electronically outside of a properly posted electronic meeting as defined in section 2.5.5 may not be considered in the count to determine whether quorum has been met.

(2.5.8) **Notice of Board Meetings**

Notice of meetings of the Governing Board, including Committees of the Board as described elsewhere within these policies, will be given in a manner to reasonably inform the public of the matters to be considered by the Board.

Notice of the time, date, and place of the meeting as well as the tentative agenda will be provided at least three (3) days prior to the regularly scheduled meetings of the Governing Board. For special meetings or committee meetings the notice must be given at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting.

In order to maximize public participation, notice of Board meetings will be posted on the School's calendar and on the School's website. Upon request, members of the media will be provided with notice of the meeting at the same time notice is provided to the general public.

(2.5.9) Records of Proceedings

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

- 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, if any, 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.
- The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement of any agenda or non-agenda item, 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.
- A written memorandum from the interested person explaining the nature of the interest to be filed within fifteen (15) days after the vote to which the interested person had exercised recusal steps under policy as described below in Section 2.7.

(2.6) Committees

(2.6.1) Development of Committees

The Governing Board, by resolution adopted by a majority of voting members, may designate one or more committees, each of which shall consist of at least one voting Board member, plus any non-board members as the Board sees fit to appoint. All decisions made by any committee shall be subject to final approval or authorization by the Governing Board.

(2.6.2) Meetings

Committees that have been designated by the Governing Board must be held in accordance with Florida's Government in the Sunshine law. The President shall ensure that all meetings are posted in the manner set forth above.

(2.6.3) Committee Reports

All Board Committees are subject to the direction and control of the Board and a designated Board member serving on that committee will serve as chairman or appoint a chairman who will report directly to the Board in the public Operational Board meeting unless a Special Meeting is called and lends itself to the function of the committee.

(2.6.4) Authority

The designation of such committees and the delegation of authority shall not operate to relieve the Governing Board or any individual member thereof of any responsibility imposed on it, him, or her by law. Committee recommendations are not binding until and unless adopted by a majority vote of the Governing Board in session, provided a quorum is present in accordance with the meeting requirements set forth above.

(2.7) **Conflict of Interest Policy**

The following Conflict of Interest and Anti-Nepotism Policy the Corporation is intended to supersede and replace all prior conflict of interest policies of the Corporation. The purpose of this Conflict-of-Interest Policy is to protect this tax-exempt Corporation's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or Governing Board member of the Corporation or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This Policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations, including but not limited to Section 1002.33, Florida Statutes and the laws contained therein. It is also intended to serve as a guide for the Corporation's Governing Board with respect to conflicts of interest and voting pursuant to Florida laws pertaining to charter school governing boards. This Conflict-of-Interest Policy shall be effective and binding on the Corporation and its Governing Board members as of the effective date of adoption contained herein. This Conflict-of-Interest Policy may be amended from time to time as determined by the Governing Board.

(2.7.1) **Definitions**

Interested Person: Any principal officer, owner, president, chairperson, Governing Board member, or member of a committee with Governing Board delegated powers and any superintendent, principal, other administrator, or any other person employed by the organization who has equivalent decision-making authority who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

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

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

Family: A “family” member has the definition contained in Section 1002.33(24)(a)(2), Florida Statutes and also includes: father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, or half-sister.

Compensation: Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as loans, gifts, in-kind services, favors or anything of value. 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 appropriate Governing Board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

(2.7.2) Procedures

(2.7.2.1) 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 Chairman and members of committees with Governing Board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

(2.7.2.2) 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, he/she shall leave the Governing Board 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.

(2.7.2.3) Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

- An interested person may make a presentation at the Governing Board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
- The chairperson of the Governing Board or committee may, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- After exercising due diligence, the Governing Board or committee shall determine whether the organization 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.
- If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Governing Board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested members whether the transaction or arrangement is in the organization's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable.
- In conformity with the above determination, the organization shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement, EXCEPT if the interested person or his/her spouse or child (i.e., immediate family) has a direct material interest in a transaction involving the purchase, rent or leasing of any realty, goods or services, the organization is prohibited from entering into such transaction without subjecting the decision to competitive bidding.

(2.7.2.4) Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy

- If the Governing Board 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.

- If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Governing Board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

(2.7.3) Compensation

- A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- No Governing Board member or his/her spouse or minor child may either solicit or accept anything of value (including a gift, loan, reward, promise of future employment, favor, or service) that is based on any understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the Governing Board member would be influenced by such gift.
- Board members may receive compensation for expenses spent on behalf of the Organization if such expenditures are approved within the Budget or by the Governing Board. This includes travel to conferences, meetings, seminars, and conventions related to charter schools or the Organization. The President shall follow the reimbursement processes described elsewhere within these policies.

(2.7.4) Nepotism

The Organization shall abide by Section 1002.33(24), Florida Statutes regarding the restriction on employment of relatives.

(2.7.5) Annual Statements

Each President, principal officer, and member of a committee with Governing Board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:

- Has received a copy of the conflict-of-interest policy,
- Has read and understands the policy,
- Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
- Understands the organization is (i) charitable and, in order to maintain its federal tax exemption, it must engage primarily in activities that accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes and is (ii) a public charter school subject to applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

(2.7.6) Periodic Reviews

To ensure the Organization 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:

- Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information and the result of arm's length bargaining.
- Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the Organization'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.

(2.7.7) Use of Outside Experts

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

(2.8) Financial Interest

Members of the Governing Board shall not receive any monetary compensation for their services, nor shall they have any financial interest in the organization other than their own monetary donations to the organization.

(2.9) Employer Responsibilities

(2.9.1) Purview of Employment Matters

Although the President is responsible for all faculty hiring and evaluations the Board sets general guidelines for the qualifications of staff, terms of contracts, performance evaluation expectations, salary guidelines and budgets, administrative grievance procedures, non-renewal, and termination processes.

(2.9.2) Individual Employment Matters

Most individual employment matters will be effectively handled by the President of the Organization. On occasion, should the President need additional advice or recommendations, the President may consult with an appropriate outside agent.

(3) Employment Manual

(3.1) Equal Opportunity Employment

The Organization is an equal opportunity employer. The Organization is committed to providing equal opportunity for all individuals in all areas of recruitment, selection, placement, training, assignment, transfer, compensation, benefits, discipline, retention, and promotion. The Board commits itself to the policy that there shall be no unlawful discrimination against any person because of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, genetic information, marital status, health status, or sexual orientation. All decisions regarding employment shall follow applicable state and federal laws.

The Organization is required by the Immigration Reform and Control Act to employ only American citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States. The purpose of this law is to preserve jobs for those individuals who are legally entitled to them.

(3.2) Employment Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment

Berkley Accelerated Board of Directors does not discriminate against anyone, regarding general operations of the organization prohibited by applicable law or regulation.

Berkley Accelerated Board promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, the Organization expects that all relationships among persons in the workplace will be business-like and free of discrimination, including all forms of harassment. Thus, the Organization does not, and will not, tolerate discrimination against or by our employees, students, vendors, or other persons. The term “harassment” includes, but is not limited to severe or pervasive, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual’s race, color, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, disability, marital, veteran or any other protected status. “Harassment” may involve a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors of a harassing or sexual nature involving individuals of the same or different gender. Discrimination or harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome or unwanted physical contact or sexual advances including, but not limited to, patting, grabbing, pinching, brushing-up against, hugging, cornering, kissing, fondling, or any other similar physical contact.
- Unwelcome requests or demands for favors including, but not limited to, subtle or blatant expectations, pressures, requests or demands for sexual, unethical or illegal favors; or unwelcome requests for dates or contacts. Such unwelcome requests or demands may relate to an implied or stated promise of preferential treatment, a threat of negative consequences concerning terms of employment, including, but not limited to, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, termination, pay or other form of compensation, and selection for training.
- Verbal and written abuse including, but not limited to, that which is sexually-oriented, including same-sex; commentary about an individual’s body, sexual

prowess or sexual deficiencies; inappropriate comments about race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, disability, workers compensation claims, marital, veteran or other legally protected status; dirty jokes or other jokes which are unwanted and considered offensive; or comments, innuendoes, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, leering, catcalls or other actions that offend, whether sexually oriented or otherwise related to a prohibited form of discrimination or harassment based on a legally protected status.

- Any form of behavior that unreasonably interferes with work performance, including, but not limited to, unwanted sexual attentions, comments, interruptions, or other communications, whether sexually oriented or otherwise related to a prohibited form of discrimination or harassment based on a legally protected status, that alters the terms or conditions of employment.
- Actions that create a work environment that is intimidating, hostile, abusive, or offensive because of unwelcome or unwanted conversations, suggestions, requests, demands, physical contacts or attentions, whether sexually oriented or otherwise related to a prohibited form of discrimination or harassment based on a legally protected status.
- The distribution, display, or discussion of any written or graphic material, including calendars, posters, cartoons, or names, that belittles or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual, his/her relatives, friends or associates or a group because of race, color, religion, sex (including same sex), pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, disability, marital, veteran, or other legally protected status.

All employees and applicants are covered by this policy and are strictly prohibited from engaging in any form of unlawful discriminatory or harassing conduct. Further, no employee has the authority to suggest to another employee or applicant that the individual's employment, continued employment, or future advancement will be affected in any way by an employee or applicant entering into, or refusing to enter into, a personal relationship. Such conduct is a direct violation of this policy.

Conduct prohibited by this policy is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as business trips, business meetings and business-related social events.

Violation of this policy will subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

(3.2.1) Retaliation is Prohibited

Berkley Accelerated Board prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports. Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a violation of this policy and will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

(3.2.2) Reporting Procedures and Investigation

Berkley Accelerated Board of Directors strongly urges the reporting of all incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe they have experienced conduct they believe is contrary to the Organization's policy or who have concerns about such matters should file their complaints with the President or any Member of the Governing Board or the Board's designee, whereupon the matter will be promptly, as discreetly as possible, and thoroughly investigated. The Organization will then take prompt remedial steps to stop any behavior which violates this policy and see that it does not repeat itself. Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, calculated to end any current discrimination or harassment and prevent future discrimination or harassment, will be taken, when appropriate, against the offender(s).

Employees who have experienced conduct they believe is contrary to this policy have an obligation to take advantage of this complaint procedure. An employee's failure to fulfill this obligation could affect his or her rights in pursuing any claim.

Early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. Therefore, while no fixed reporting period has been established, the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns is strongly urged so that prompt and constructive action can be taken.

The availability of this complaint procedure does not preclude individuals who believe they are being subjected to discriminating or harassing conduct from immediately advising the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and requesting that it be immediately discontinued.

(3.2.3) Responsive Action

Conduct constituting harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be dealt with appropriately. Responsive action may include training, referral to counseling and/or disciplinary action such as warning, reprimand, withholding of a promotion or pay increase, reassignment, temporary suspension with or without pay or termination, as the Organization believes appropriate under all of the circumstances.

Any person utilizing this complaint resolution procedure will be treated courteously, and the issue will be addressed swiftly and as confidentially as possible in light of all the circumstances, with appropriate corrective action being taken. The registering of a complaint will in no way be used against that individual, nor will it have an adverse impact on their employment status. A record of the complaint and findings will become a part of the complaint investigation record and that file will be maintained separately from the personnel files.

However, any report which the reporter has made maliciously or any report which the reporter has good reason to believe is false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense. No one who in good faith reports a violation, or who, in good faith, cooperates in the investigation of a violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment

action.

(3.2.4) Conclusion

Individuals who have questions or concerns about this policy may speak with the President or any member of the Governing Board.

The very nature of discrimination, harassment and retaliation makes it very difficult to detect unless a complaint is promptly reported; therefore, bring this information to the attention of the Organization so the issue can be appropriately resolved.

(3.2.5) Training

New employee orientation training shall include a component on the Organization's anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policy. All administrators are responsible for ensuring that their staff members are familiar with this Policy and that new employees are oriented as necessary throughout each school year.

(3.3) Personnel Records

Personnel records shall be maintained in accordance with applicable State and Federal Laws. The following records for each employee shall be maintained in a secure file:

- Evidence of successful completion of required education
- Florida Teaching Certificate, certificate of law for the position
- Employee assessments
- Signed contract (if required)
- Signed loyalty oath if required by the State of Florida or the Federal Government.
- Withholding allowance certificate (W-4)
- Copy of Social Security Card
- Background verification (results of School District fingerprint test and applicable State Department of Education background checks)
- Letters of reprimand and information regarding any disciplinary action taken
- Personal Data Sheet
- Employment Eligibility Verification (I9 Form)
- Arrest and Conviction Record
- Drug-Free Workplace Policy.
- Employee acknowledgement of review and receipt of Employee Manual
- Signed state code of ethics, as applicable

It is the responsibility of the employee to obtain and submit these documents, as applicable:

- a **Florida Certificate:** the employee must submit the original. A copy shall be made to keep within the file, and the original shall be returned to the employee.
- b **Contracts:** Each employee shall sign the offer letter or contract and submit it to the school office within the specified time.
- c **Certificate Extensions/Additions:** Other official correspondence with the state Department of Education and any other documents which may be requested shall be copied in the school office. Copies shall be retained, and the originals shall be returned to the employee.

Personnel records shall be open for inspection and copying consistent with Florida law, Chapter 119 and Federal laws. Items identifies in Florida Statutes (1012.91 and 119) as being exempt from public records will not be open for inspection.

(3.4) Compensation and Benefits

(3.4.1) Exempt Employees – Instructional

Instructional and certain administrative staff members are exempt employees, and therefore paid a salary. Annually the Governing Board will evaluate the salary schedule to make necessary adjustments that are in alignment with state and federal law and the Organization’s annual budget.

(3.4.1.1) Contracts for Exempt Employees

(3.4.1.1.1) At Will Employer

All contracts offered by the Organization will be at-will contracts specifically stating that either the Organization or employee may choose to cancel that contract at any time with or without cause.

(3.4.1.1.2) Probationary Contract

Eligible employees newly hired by the Organization shall be offered a one-year probationary contract in accordance with Section 1012.335, Florida Statutes, as amended from time to time. The employee’s probationary license may only be issued once to an employee unless the employee was rehired after a break of service for which an authorized leave of absence was not granted.

(3.4.1.1.3) Annual Contract

After completing one successful year on a probationary contract, and conditional upon the employee holding the appropriate state certification from the Department of Education and having not received two consecutive annual performance ratings of unsatisfactory nor three consecutive needs improvement or unsatisfactory performance ratings, the exempt employee will be issued an annual contract.

(3.4.1.2) Salary Schedule

All applicable employees will be paid under the performance salary schedule as defined in

Section 1012.22(1)(c) Florida Statutes, as stated in the Annual Contract.

(3.4.1.2.1) Initial Placement

The Governing Board will annually establish and approve a starting salary and increasing incremental amounts based upon criteria established by the Board for determining the initial placement of new employees on the salary schedule. This approval will be conducted as part of the development of the Corporate Operating Budget. The initial placement will be based on the employee's qualifications as of his or her first day of work with the Organization.

Experience credit on the instructional salary schedule will be granted for all verified public-school experience in accordance with state law. If public school credit is less than eight (8) years full-time private school experience may also be granted up to a maximum of eight (8) total years.

(3.4.1.2.2) Adjustments for Returning Instructional and Administrative Employees

Employees returning to the School after having completed an annual and approved evaluation may be eligible to receive annual adjustments in accordance with the amounts established by the Governing Board. The annual amounts are subject to change based on the annual budget, and shall only apply to the employee's Base Salary, not to any supplemental amounts the employee may receive any such adjustments shall be calculated as follows:

(3.4.1.2.2.1) Highly Effective

Employees having received a "Highly Effective" rating as part of their annual evaluation shall receive the highest possible annual salary adjustment, as defined by the Governing Board.

(3.4.1.2.2.2) Effective

Employees having received an "Effective" rating as part of their annual evaluation shall receive an adjustment equal to 50 percent of the adjustments awarded to the Highly Effective Employees.

(3.4.1.2.2.3) Other Rankings

Employees not receiving either Highly Effective or Effective will not be eligible for a performance adjustment.

(3.4.1.2.2.4) Cost of Living Adjustment

The Governing Board may approve a cost-of-living adjustment for all its employees. The cost-of-living adjustment will be applied to all employees on the schedule equally and can be no more than 50 percent of the amount awarded to employees rated as "Effective" in their annual evaluations.

(3.4.1.3) Salary Supplements

An employee's placement on the salary schedule shall constitute the employee's base salary. In addition to the base salary, the Governing Board may annually approve supplements to be paid to employees, which are annual additions to the base salary for specific qualifications or duties. Any supplement does not become part of the employee's continuing base salary. A schedule of possible supplements will be considered by the Governing Board in the

establishment of the Salary Schedule and Corporate Operating Budget.

(3.4.1.3.1) Degree Supplements

A degree utilized for salary supplement purposes must have been awarded by an institution, which was accredited at the time the degree was awarded or must have been validated by an accredited institution as covered under applicable Department of Education procedures for implementation of applicable State Board Rule. It is the employee's responsibility to provide all applicable transcripts.

(3.4.1.4) Pay Calculations

Exempt salaried employees of the Organization may be paid year-round, even though the services the employee provides to the organization is less than a full year. To clarify the calculations and methodology used by the organization, the Governing Board may adopt a "Compensation Manual" identifying the specific formulas to be used when calculating employee pay amounts. This Compensation Manual may take into account the following policies:

(3.4.1.4.1) Contract Days

Each year the President shall ensure a calendar is created specifically identifying the number of contract days for all exempt employees. This calendar should identify all the paid versus unpaid days for each employee class.

(3.4.1.4.2) Salary Amount

Each employee shall be assigned a salary amount which include their base salary plus any eligible supplemental amounts. This will be their annual salary.

(3.4.1.4.3) Salary Employees Regular Rates

The President shall ensure that a regular rate is calculated and communicated to each exempt employee. This daily rate shall be their employee's annual salary amount divided by the contract days in the fiscal year.

(3.4.1.4.4) Annual Earnings

Each exempt employee will receive their earnings based on the number of days worked during a fiscal year. In the event of any circumstance which may cause the employee to work less than the annual contract days identified above (i.e., starting after the start of the school year, leaving before the end of the school year, unpaid leave, etc.), the employee's actual annual earnings for the fiscal year will be calculated by taking the employee's daily rate times the total number of days worked (including any available PTO time) or scheduled to work.

(3.4.1.4.5) Pay Periods

The organization shall pay employees every two weeks, resulting in a total of 26 pay periods per year. The annual earnings for each salaried employee will be paid for the fiscal year will be divided by the remaining pay periods that fiscal year.

For the purposes of payroll, the fiscal year will begin with the second payment in August, and end with the first payment of the following August.

(3.4.1.4.6) *Calculations and Definitions:*

In order to implement the above policies, the following formulas shall be used to calculate payments based on the unique situations:

- **Annual Salary:** [Salary Schedule Amount] + [Supplement Amounts]
- **Daily Rate:** [Annual Salary] / [Contract Days]
- **Annual Earnings:** [Daily Rate] x [Actual Workdays]
- **Remaining Paydays:** Count of the actual pay days through the end of the fiscal year (1st Paycheck in August)
- **Per Paycheck Amount:** [Annual Earnings] + [Remaining Paydays]
- **Paid This Fiscal Year:** Total amount of GROSS pay (excluding any bonuses, reimbursements, stipends, or non-salary payments) paid since the first pay period of the fiscal year.
- **Final Paycheck:** [Annual Earnings] – [Paid This Fiscal Year]

(3.4.1.4.7) *Special Considerations:*

The following are examples of how the above formulas and policies should be implemented for special circumstances:

Employees Starting Mid-Year: The actual workdays shall be calculated by counting the actual number of paid employee days starting on the employees first day of work until the last day of the school year. The **Per Paycheck Amount** should be calculated when the employee begins work to establish the amount paid for the remainder of the year.

Employees Leaving Mid-Year: The actual workdays shall be calculated by counting the actual number of paid employee days starting when the employee started employment or the first day of the fiscal calendar (whichever is later) through the employees' final day of employment. In the event the employee over used PTO time, the over used days should be subtracted from the total number. The **Final Paycheck** shall be calculated for the paycheck immediately following the employee's last day of employment.

Employee Returning from Unpaid Leave: The actual workdays shall be calculated by counting the actual number of paid employee days starting when the employee started employment or the first day of the fiscal calendar (whichever is later) through the employee's final day before starting leave. Then add in the days from when the employee returns to work through the final day of the school year. During the unpaid leave, the employee's paycheck will be suspended. Upon returning from the leave, the per paycheck amount will be recalculated using the revised Annual Earnings amount.

(3.4.1.4.8) *Exceptions*

(3.4.1.4.9) *Late Hires After February 1*

Salaried employees who are hired on or after February 1 may elect to be paid only through the end of the school year instead of year-round for their first year of employment so as to

not dilute their per-paycheck amounts to include summer payments. The President shall present the employee with the per-paycheck amount for both situations and the employee may choose which option they wish to elect.

Assuming the employee continues to be employed the following school year, the per paycheck amount will be recalculated at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

(3.4.1.4.10) 12 Month Employees

Employees who are on a 12-month working schedule will be paid on a different schedule than other employees. Their paychecks will be calculated based on July 1 – June 30 pay periods.

(3.4.1.5) Paid Time Off

Salaried employees will be granted Paid Time Off (PTO) within the contract/agreement with the Organization.

(3.4.1.5.1) Approval of PTO

PTO requests must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor prior to the absence, unless the absence is an unexpected and prior notification is not possible.

(3.4.1.5.2) Overuse of PTO

If a staff member uses all PTO allotted to them, any additional days will be without pay. PTO accrues at one day per month, but PTO may be advanced upon approval of the President. Should employment be terminated before the end of the School, any advanced PTO days will be considered unpaid in the calculation of the final paycheck.

(3.4.1.5.3) Unused PTO for Salaried Employees

Employees are encouraged to use their PTO time during the fiscal year in which it accrues (July 1 – June 30), however, up to forty (40) hours of accrued but unused PTO time may be carried forward to the following fiscal year. No more than forty (40) hours may be carried forward into the next year.

(3.4.1.5.4) PTO Buy Back

At the conclusion of the exempt employees scheduled workdays for the fiscal year, should they have additional PTO days remaining, the employee may elect to receive additional compensation for the unused PTO days. The remaining PTO days will be paid at the employee's Daily Rate (as defined in policy 3.4.1.4.6).

(3.4.2) Hourly Employees

Non-instructional and non-administrative employees shall be paid hourly. Hourly rates will be set by the President to ensure they are alignment with the annual budget approved by Governing Board of the School and in accordance with state and federal law.

(3.4.2.1) Initial Compensation

The President shall consult comparative rate of pay at local school district(s) in the establishment of the hourly rates to justify the specific amounts set for specific positions based on the job responsibilities of each.

(3.4.2.2) Employee Leave

All hourly full-time employees are eligible to receive PTO. Temporary, part-time and PRN employees are not eligible. PTO accumulates in relationship to all regular hours you work. PTO does not accumulate on overtime hours or on hours not worked, such as when you are using PTO or are on a leave of absence. You may begin using your PTO at any time after it accumulates, however you may not use PTO in advance of any accumulation of it.

A. Insurance Benefits-Full-time employees shall receive health insurance as well as at least \$15,000.00 in life insurance paid by the School.

1. Full Time Employee: For insurance purposes, a full-time employee is considered to be one who works at least 7 ½ hours per day and 37 ½ hours per week.
2. Options: Additional health and life insurance, dependent coverage, dental and vision insurance, and other insurance products approved by BAMS, will be available through payroll deduction at the employee's expense.
3. Eligibility: Each of the insurance benefits will be available effective on the first day of the calendar month following thirty (30) days of employment in an eligible position.
4. Rejection: An employee may reject these insurance benefits in writing.
5. Retirees: Employees who retire according to the following Florida Retirement System (FRS) definitions are given the option of continuing the BAMS group health and life insurance.
 - a. Under the FRS Pension Plan, a "retiree" must have at least 6 years of FRS-covered service, be over 42 years of age, and be receiving a monthly retirement benefit from FRS.
 - b. Under the FRS Investment Plan, a "retiree" must have at least 6 years of service, be at least 59 ½ years of age, and be receiving a monthly retirement benefit from FRS.

B. **Retirement:** All Berkley Accelerated employees in regularly established positions are Compulsory members of the Florida Retirement System (FRS), and all compensation by Berkley Accelerated to FRS members are subject to retirement contributions and reporting. Members may choose whether to participate in the FRS Pension Plan (a defined benefit plan) or the FRS Investment Plan (A defined contribution plan). The laws and rules that govern these plans can be found in Chapter 121, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 60 of the Florida Administrative Code.

Leave with Pay

1. **Temporary Duty Assignment for Military Leave:** Employees will be granted temporary duty assignment for military leave up to seven ten (17) days WITH PAY as required by law. Such leave will be granted only after it has been determined that the active duty could not have been served during time that school was not in session.
2. **Injury/illness-in-line-of-duty:** Injury or illness-in-line- of-duty is granted up to a maximum of (10) days per year when any employee is absent because of personal injury sustained in the discharge of the employee's duties, or because of illness from any contagious or infectious disease contracted in school work.
3. **Jury Duty and Subpoena Leave:** Employees may be paid in full salary for jury duty or if summoned by subpoena to serve as a witness. An employee so called as a juror or witness will return to duty as soon as possible if dismissed by proper authority. This provision will not apply in those matters involving an employee's personal litigation.
4. **Sick/Personal Leave:** Full-time employees shall earn ten (10) days of sick/personal leave for each year of employment during a given fiscal year. This leave time may be used for illness or for other personal reasons.
 - a. **Crediting of sick/personal leave:** 10 days of sick leave shall be credited to each employee as of the first day of his/her employment for each contract year. 12 days of sick leave shall be credited to each 12 month employee as of the first day of his/her employment for each contract year.

b. Limitations for New and Terminating Employees: If an employee is hired or terminates during the first fiscal year, his/her maximum earned leave for the year shall be greater of (1) leave days used prior to termination, if applicable, or (2) the sum of one day for each month worked.

c. Sick/Personal Leave Used for Personal Reasons: Sick/personal leave used for personal reasons may not be used during the first (5) days in which students are in attendance, immediately before or after the scheduled holidays for Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Winter Breaks, Spring Break, Memorial Day, or other recognized holidays provided students are in attendance, except in emergency cases. The employee shall be required to give a reason when claiming an emergency.

d. Annual Payment for accumulated Sick/Personal Leave: Sick/Personal leave shall be accumulated, but not more than thirty (30) days may be carried to succeeding years. However, payment shall be made to employees for any credit days in excess of thirty (30) as of the end of each fiscal year. Payment shall be made at 50% of the daily rate of pay, and payment shall be effected as of the last work day of the fiscal year or as soon thereafter as feasible.

e. Terminal Pay for Unused Sick/Personal Leave: The BAMS Board shall provide terminal pay for accumulated sick/personal leave to all employees who have worked for the School District and the Charter School for at least one (1) year.

f. Rates of Payment: rates of payment shall be calculated as follows:

During the first Three Years of Service: During the first three years of service at Berkley Accelerated, the daily rate of pay at termination multiplied by 35% times the number of days of accumulated Sick/Personal Leave:

Fourth, fifth, and Sixth Years of Service: During the fourth, fifth, and sixth years of service at Berkley Accelerated, the daily rate of pay at termination multiplied by 40% times the number of days of accumulated sick/personal leave;

Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Years of Service: During the seventh, eighth and ninth years of service at Berkley Accelerated, the daily rate of pay at termination multiplied by 45% times the number of days accumulated sick/personal leave;

Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth years of Service: During the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth years of service at Berkley Accelerated, the daily rate of pay at termination by 50% times the number of days accumulated sick/personal leave.

During and after the Thirteenth years of Service: During and after the thirteenth years of service at Berkley Accelerated, the daily rate of pay at termination by 100% times the number of days accumulated sick/personal leave.

(i) **Payments to Employees at End of Approve Leave:** For employees on approved leave who terminate employment upon termination of the leave, the daily rate shall be the rate of the pay the employee would have been earning if he/she, at the effective date of termination of the leave, had actually been serving in the position from which leave was granted; however, experience credit will not be awarded for leave time unless otherwise provided by including those on Public Office Leave.

5. Vacation Leave: Vacation Leave is available ONLY to twelve (12) month employees because the calendars for employees working fewer months have vacation time built in to them, so that the net work days per month is approximately the same for all employees- after allowing vacation time for (12) month employees.

a. Amount of leave: Vacation Leave for 12 month employees is determined by the employee's combined years of service with Berkley Accelerated under a contract for (9) months or longer. The rate of leave credited is based on the most recent period of continuous and creditable service and is referenced to the first date of employment for this period of service. Rates of credit shall change. As applicable, at the end of the calendar month after attainment of the number of years specified below.

Up to 5 years of service—13 days per year

5 to 10 year of service—16 ¼ days per year

10 or more years of service—19 ½ days per year

b. **Advance Notice:** Requests for vacation leave must have prior approval from the immediate supervisor and should be planned in advance so that normal operations are not disrupted.

c. **Continuity:** Any service break of more than three (3) days without leave will break continuity and the employee must start back to zero (0) years if re-employed. This section does not apply to those employees placed on the displaced list or those employees subject to lay-off by action of the Berkley Accelerated Board.

d. **Accrued Vacation Leave:** Vacation leave earned during the pay period shall be credited to the employee on the last day of that pay period.

e. Rate & Method of Payment for Unused Vacation Leave:

(i) For currently active employees, the rate of payment shall be the daily rate of the employee at the time of termination, or, if the employee is on leave, the daily rate of pay the employee would have been earning if he/she, at the effective date of termination of the leave, had actually been serving in the position from which leave was granted: however, experience credit will not be awarded for leave of time, unless otherwise provided by Berkley Accelerated Board policy or other Board action.

(ii) Payment for unused vacation leave shall be made to the employee at the time of termination of employment, or to the employee's beneficiary or estate at the time of the employee's death, or as otherwise provided by law.

Maximum Carry-Over and Payment: In no case shall an employee carry forward to the next calendar year more than forty (40) days of vacation time. An employee shall not be paid for more than forty (40) days at time of retirement, resignation, or termination—nor shall an employee be paid for any accumulated vacation time in excess of forty (40) days at the end of any calendar year.

(i) **Leave of Absence:** Vacation leave shall not accrue during any leave of absence: however, the employee will retain any accumulated vacation.

(3.4.2.2.1) Approval of PTO

PTO requests must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor prior to the absence, unless the absence is unexpected PTO – no sick time and prior notification is not possible.

(3.4.2.2.2) Unused PTO for Hourly Employees

Hourly employees are encouraged to use their PTO time during the fiscal year in which it accrues (July 1 – June 30), however, up to forty (40) hours of accrued but unused PTO time may be carried forward to the following fiscal year. No more than forty (40) hours may be carried forward into the next year.

(3.4.2.3) Holidays

Hourly employees who normally work during the following times will be provided holiday pay for the following days. The amount to be paid will be based on the annual average hours worked per day, which is calculated by finding the sum of hours in the work agreement with the employee divided the number of contracted weeks, divided by 5.

Paid Holidays Time

- Independence Day

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (total of 3 days)
- Winter Break (total of 5 days - Schedule to be determined by the President)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Memorial Day

(3.4.2.4) Overtime Pay

Whether an employee is exempt from or subject to overtime pay (non-exempt) will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be indicated in the employee's job description.

Non-exempt employees may be required to work beyond the regularly scheduled workday or workweek, as necessary. In determining whether non-exempt employees are entitled to overtime pay, only actual hours worked in a given workday or workweek will be considered. All overtime work must be previously authorized by the President. The Organization provides compensation for all overtime hours worked by non-exempt employees in accordance with applicable state and federal law as follows:

For non-exempt employees subject to overtime, all hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours in one workweek shall be treated as overtime pursuant to applicable State and Federal laws. Compensation for hours in excess of forty (40) for the workweek shall be paid at a rate of one and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay. Workweeks begin each Sunday at 12:01 a.m.

(3.4.2.4.1) Calculating Overtime for Multiple Positions

In the event an employee works multiple positions for the School and has different rates of pay, if that employee works overtime, the average weekly pay rate will be calculated for that employee in order to calculate time-and-a-half payment for over time.

For example, say an employee worked 30 hours at \$12 per hour, and 20 hours at \$15 per hour. This would equate to \$660 total pay without overtime for 50 hours of work. This means the average pay would be \$13.20 for the week. The employee should be paid for 40 hours x \$13.20 + 10 hours at 1.5x(\$13.20) or a total of \$726.

This calculation must be completed separately for each week the employee works overtime.

(3.4.3) Benefits

The Organization provides a comprehensive Benefit Plan which may vary from year to year as determined by the Governing Board.

(3.4.3.1) Eligibility

Regular employees who work at least 30 hours per week are eligible for benefits.

- **Initial Enrollment:** Enrollment and change forms are due in the office within thirty calendar days of hire or change of eligibility status. Coverage becomes effective the first day of the month following thirty days of employment in an eligible benefit status.

- **Open Enrollment:** The Board provides an annual open enrollment period during which an employee may add, cancel, or change coverage. If no action is taken by the employee to change coverage, previous coverages will continue for the next calendar year.

(3.4.3.2) Organizational Contribution

The Organization may contribute toward the cost of certain employee benefits each pay period during the school year in which a paycheck is earned. Organizational contribution amounts, and employees should reference their benefits summary for details.

(3.4.3.3) Termination of Coverage

Insurance coverage ends the last day of the month in which an employee no longer meets eligibility requirements or terminates employment.

(3.4.3.4) Leaves of Absence

While on an approved, unpaid leave of absence, employees are required to pay the entire cost of all insurance plans, including the organization paid portion in order for coverage to continue. The appropriate person(s), agencies, and/or organizations must receive payment by the first of each month. Insurance coverage will be canceled for nonpayment if full payment is not received by the due date. When an employee is on an approved, paid leave, the employee is responsible only for payment of the portion of premium(s) the employee normally pays. Nonpayment of premiums will result in cancellation of coverage.

Suspension Without Pay: While on suspension without pay, an employee is considered to be on unpaid leave of absence. As such, the employee is entitled to maintain insurance coverage by paying the total cost of insurance. If the employee elects to continue insurance and is reinstated, the employee will be refunded the organization contribution paid during the period of suspension. If the employee elects to continue insurance and is not reinstated, the insurance will terminate the last day of the month in which the employee is dismissed. If the employee chooses not to continue insurance and is reinstated, insurance will be reinstated the first of the month following the date of the final order and the employee will be responsible for any regular employee contributions.

(3.4.3.5) Worker's Compensation

The Organization provides Workers' Compensation benefits pursuant to Florida law.

(3.4.4) Additional Compensation

(3.4.4.1) Compensation for Additional Responsibilities

From time-to-time employees may take on additional responsibilities beyond that covered within their contract. The Governing Board may authorize stipends or additional funds to be paid for such activities as described below:

(3.4.4.1.1) Non-Exempt Employees

Employees who are not exempt from wage and hour laws will be paid their typical regular rate based on their working hours. Efforts should be taken to avoid overtime in the completion of the additional tasks. If overtime is unavoidable, the approval of funds to cover

the activities should take the additional cost of overtime into consideration.

(3.4.4.1.2) Exempt Employees

Stipends for additional responsibilities will typically be paid in one lump sum on the date authorized by the Governing Board unless another arrangement is authorized by the Board.

The Governing Board shall annually approve a schedule of stipends to pay for additional responsibilities above the typical job responsibilities. The schedule should include the task for which the stipend is offered, when the stipend will be paid, and the amount which will be paid.

Examples of activities for which stipends might be offered include: tutoring that is provided by the School outside of school hours, coaching extracurricular activities, or providing additional services on behalf of the School.

If multiple employees share a responsibility of a task approved by the board (i.e., coaches who are sharing coaching responsibility), the President may authorize the stipend to be split appropriately between the employees.

(3.4.4.2) Employee Bonuses

The Governing Board may from time to time elect to assign employee bonuses if the annual budget allows for such discretionary bonuses to be made. All bonuses must be approved by the Governing Board and be applied uniformly amongst employees of similar employee categories. Bonuses to individual employees are not allowed unless using the performance-based bonuses described below.

(3.4.4.2.1) Performance Based Bonuses

If the Governing Board elects to provide Performance Based Bonuses, the Governing Board will establish an objective measure for how such bonuses will be applied. The performance criteria for the employees must be clearly defined by the employee category (i.e., 'Classroom Teacher', 'Administrator', etc.). The criteria should be objective and easily measurable. The criteria should be established as early in the fiscal year as possible.

If the available funds do not allow the Organization to fully fund the bonus schedule as defined by the Governing Board, all amounts may be prorated to match the available funds equally among all benefits to be awarded.

(3.4.5) Miscellaneous

(3.4.5.1) Reclassification

Employees who complete educational degrees or obtain a professional teaching certificate that would necessitate additional stipends or a change to their regular rate are required to provide appropriate documentation to the President. Such changes to the employee pay shall be considered negotiated only at the three applicable times during the year: at the start of the fiscal year, at the start of the school year, or at the start of second semester of the school year.

(3.4.5.2) Retroactive Payments

When changes to employee's pay are approved by the Governing Board, the board will determine whether those payments are retroactive at the time of approval.

(3.4.5.3) Return of Overpayments

If an employee is overpaid due to an error, resignation, or any other reason, the Organization is entitled to immediately recover any overpayment from the employee.

(3.4.5.4) Payroll Withholdings

The Organization shall withhold taxes from each employee's pay according to the law. Every deduction from a paycheck should be notated on the check voucher. If an employee does not understand the deductions, he/she should ask the President or designee to explain.

Employees may change the number of withholding allowances they wish to claim for Federal Income Tax purposes at any time by filling out a new W-4 form and submitting it to the President or designee. The office maintains a supply of these forms.

All Federal, State, and Social Security taxes will be automatically deducted from paychecks. The Federal Withholding Tax deduction is determined by the employee's W-4 form. The W-4 form must be completed upon hire, and it is the employee's responsibility to report any changes in filing status to the President or designee and to fill out a new W-4 form.

(3.5) Employee Evaluations

(3.5.1) Intent

It is the intent of the Organization that assessments of personnel be used for two reasons: 1) Determining the suitability for retention of the continuing and professional service of contract personnel; and 2) One method of assisting staff in their professional development to best impact the education of students and operation of the School. The Organization acknowledges and agrees to follow all legal requirements as set forth in Florida Statute as they apply to charter schools.

(3.5.2) Evaluation System

(3.5.2.1) Professional Staff Members

The President will recommend to the Governing Board an evaluation system in compliance with Florida Statute for evaluating instructional and administrative personnel. The evaluation system adopted by the Governing Board will meet all requirements of Florida Statute section 1012.34. Specifically:

- The system must incorporate student performance data in the final calculation
- Utilize continuous quality improvement models
- Performance data utilized must be obtained from multiple sources

(3.5.2.2) Support Staff Members

The President will develop and implement an evaluation matrix and form to be used for the evaluation of all support staff members which will provide feedback and guidance to support staff in alignment with the intent of this policy.

(3.5.2.3) Administrator Evaluation

The evaluation of the President shall be completed by the Governing Board. At least one member of the Governing Board should receive adequate training on the use of the adopted evaluation system to ensure proper administration of the instrument.

(3.5.3) Performance Indicators for Instructional and Administrative Staff

The final result of the evaluation system will result in one of the following annual performance levels:

- Highly Effective
- Effective
- Needs Improvement (or for employees in their first three years of employment 'Developing')
- Unsatisfactory

(3.5.4) Annual Evaluation

Each staff member will receive a written annual evaluation each year, and the evaluation shall be presented to the employee by May 30 of each year.

(3.5.4.1) Student Performance Data

Professional staff members shall have a portion of their annual evaluation based upon student performance indicators, as required by Florida law. If the student performance data is not available prior to the due date of the annual evaluations, the evaluations may be amended to incorporate the data once it becomes available.

(3.5.4.2) Individual Writing Evaluation

Each employee shall be notified at the start of each year who their immediate supervisor is who will be writing their annual evaluation. Instructional and support staff will be supervised by an administrative member of the staff.

(3.5.4.3) Miscellaneous

Following the completion of the annual evaluation, the supervisor shall meet with the employee to discuss the evaluation. Employees may provide a written response to the evaluation as a permanent attachment to the annual evaluation. Employees will be expected to sign the evaluation, however the signature does not necessarily indicate consent with the findings, only that the employee has received a copy of the evaluation. If the employee refuses to sign the evaluation, the supervisor shall provide a written amendment documenting the date the evaluation was discussed with the employee and that the employee refused to sign the document acknowledging its receipt. Evaluations may use electronic signatures and written responses within the evaluation system.

(3.5.4.4) Unsatisfactory Evaluations

If an employee has received an unsatisfactory performance assessment or concerns exist throughout the year such as following a formal observation, the supervisor shall confer with the employee and shall make specific recommendations for actions the supervisor believes should result in improvement. The supervisor and employee shall develop a plan, which will

be shared with the President of the organization. The plan shall include a prescribed period of time in which the corrective actions must be completed. If the employee has received an unsatisfactory evaluation, the employee shall be placed on a 90-day probationary period in which the employee shall receive assistance and training to correct the deficiencies noted in the evaluation.

(3.6) Substitutes

The Organization will utilize only qualified substitutes for all employee groups. The President or designee will develop procedures for reporting employee absences, assigning substitutes and developing a substitute compensation plan.

Substitute teachers shall meet all legal requirements for substitute teachers. The rate of compensation shall be according to the annual school budget approved by the Governing Board. Records shall be kept by the President concerning the number of days taught by substitutes and the amount of funds expended.

Staff members who require substitutes are responsible for notifying the President or designee to make arrangements for substitutes.

(3.7) Leaves

(3.7.1) Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

If applicable, Berkley Accelerated Board of Directors makes available unpaid, job protected leave in accordance with the requirements of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA).

(3.7.1.1) Eligibility

Employees are eligible for unpaid FMLA leave if they:

1. have a cumulative (not necessarily continuous) 12 months of prior service;
2. have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding the date on which the FMLA leave would commence; and,
3. work at a location where at least 50 employees are employed within a 75-mile radius.

(3.7.1.2) Basic Leave

For eligible employees, up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave, in a 12-month period, is available for one or more of the following purposes:

- For the birth and care of a newborn child of the employee;
- For the care and/or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To care for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; a child, for purposes of this policy, includes an individual who is either (1) under the age of 18 or (2) older than 18 but incapable of self-care because of a physical or mental disability;
- For your own serious health condition.

The 12-month period is measured on a “rolling backward” basis. Leave measured on a rolling

backward basis is measured backward from the date any FMLA leave would commence.

(3.7.1.3) *Qualifying Exigency Leave*

For eligible employees, up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave, in a 12-month period, is available for an eligible employee where the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent is on "covered active duty" and leave is needed for a "qualifying exigency." Covered Active Duty includes: (1) in the case of a member of a regular component of the Armed Forces, duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country; and (2) in the case of a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces, duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a call or order to active duty. A "qualifying exigency" is:

- Short notice deployment;
- Military events and related activities;
- Childcare and school activities;
- For the purpose of making financial and legal arrangements;
- Rest and recuperation;
- Post-deployment activities; and/or,
- Additional qualifying activities.

The "rolling backward" method used for measuring "Basic Leave" is also used to measure the 12-month period for "Qualifying Exigency Leave."

(3.7.1.4) *Covered Service Member Care Leave*

Leave is available for an eligible employee to care for a spouse, child, parent, or next-of-kin who:

- is a current member of the Armed Forces or a member of the Armed Forces who is on the temporary disability list, and who has a "serious injury or illness" for which he or she is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or, otherwise in outpatient status; or, otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, or
- is a veteran of the Armed Forces who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, for a "serious injury or illness" and who was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during the period of 5 years preceding the date on which the veteran began undergoing the medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

For purposes of this section the following definitions apply:

- the term "Armed Forces" includes Armed Forces, National Guard, and Reserves.
- the term "serious injury or illness" means:
 - For current members of Armed Forces – an injury or illness that was incurred by the member in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces (or existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces)

and that render the member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank, or rating.

- For veterans of the Armed Forces – an injury or illness that was incurred by the member in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces (or existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces) and that manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran.
- Next-of-kin of a covered service member is the nearest blood relative other than the covered service member's spouse, son, or daughter, unless the covered service member has specifically designated in writing another blood relative as his or her nearest blood relative for the purposes of military caregiver leave under the FMLA.

For Covered Service Member Care leave only, an employee is entitled to 26 work weeks of leave during any single 12-month period measured on a "rolling forward" basis. Service member Care leave measured on a rolling forward basis will be measured using the 12-month period forward from the date of the employee's first instance of Service member Care leave.

(3.7.1.5) Intermittent Leave

Eligible employees may take leave intermittently, as blocks of time off or in the form of reducing the employee's normal weekly or daily schedule. If the employee needs leave intermittently or on a reduced-leave schedule for planned medical treatment, it is the employee's obligation to schedule the treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the organization's operations. Further, intermittent leave or leave on a reduced-leave schedule must be medically necessary due to a serious health condition or a serious injury or illness, except in the case of intermittent leave for a Qualifying Exigency. In addition, employees are permitted to take intermittent leave for the birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care; however, intermittent leave for these reasons is only permitted upon the approval of the President.

(3.7.1.6) Giving Notice of the Need for Leave

Absent extenuating circumstances, an employee must provide the organization with at least 30 days' advance written notice before FMLA leave is to begin. Failure to do so may cause delay or denial of leave.

If the need for leave is unforeseeable, then the employee must provide notice to the Organization as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of their situation. For unforeseen leave, they must follow the normal procedure for contacting their supervisor to report an absence.

(3.7.1.7) Approval

If the organization has sufficient information to determine if the requested leave is covered under FMLA, the Organization will notify the employee of the status of the request. If the employee is not eligible, the Organization will tell them why.

(3.7.1.8) Providing Evidence of Need for Leave

In most cases, the Organization will request that the employee provide additional information regarding certification of the leave by providing the employee with a Certification form, specific to the type of leave the employee is requesting, to be completed and returned to the President. Certification forms and any other requested documentation must be returned to the President within fifteen (15) days of the Organization's request for Certification (absent extenuating circumstances).

(3.7.1.9) Designation of Leave

Within five (5) business days after the employee has submitted the appropriate Certification form and/or the Organization has sufficient information to determine whether the leave requested is FMLA covered, the President will complete and provide the employee with a written response to the employee's request for FMLA leave.

(3.7.1.10) Intent to Return to Work from FMLA Leave

The Organization may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically on the employee's status and intent to return to work.

(3.7.1.11) Pay During Leave

If the employee has available Paid Time Off (PTO), the Organization requires the employee to use the remaining PTO at the start of FMLA leave. Once PTO is exhausted, the employee will go on unpaid leave. Such paid and unpaid leave count towards the 12 or 26-week (in the case of Covered Service Member Care Leave) maximum leave.

(3.7.1.12) Benefits During Leave

Health insurance benefits will be maintained during leave, however, the employee must continue to pay his or her share of any premiums. If the employee falls more than thirty (30) days behind in making payments, the coverage may be canceled. In addition, should the employee fail to return to work at the expiration of the approved FMLA leave, under certain conditions, the organization is entitled to recover any premiums it paid on the employee's behalf in order to maintain the coverage. All insurances and retirement deposits other than health insurance shall be the employee's responsibility.

(3.7.1.13) Return from Leave

Upon the employee's release to return to work, the employee will be restored to the same or equivalent position, unless the employee would not otherwise have been employed at the time of reinstatement (e.g., due to an intervening reduction in force or discharge for misconduct or poor performance). The Organization reserves the right not to rehire a "key" employee if rehire would cause substantial economic harm to the Organization's operation. For the purpose of this policy, key employees are generally those in the top 10% of compensation.

(3.7.1.14) Return from Leave

Fitness-For-Duty Certification: Any employee who takes leave for the employee's own serious health condition will be required, as a condition of reinstatement, to obtain and provide certification that the employee is able to resume work and is able to perform the essential functions of his or her job. The cost of the Fitness-for-Duty Certification is paid by the

employee. The Organization may delay or deny reinstatement to employment if a Fitness-for-Duty Certification is not provided. The Organization may request a Fitness-for-Duty Certification for leave taken on an intermittent or reduced-leave schedule basis if reasonable safety concerns exist regarding the employee's ability to perform his or her duties based on the serious health condition for which the employee took leave.

(3.7.1.15) Taking More than the Allowed Leave

The Organization is unable to keep jobs open indefinitely. If an employee fails to return to work at the end of an approved leave of absence, including any approved extension of the leave, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment.

(3.7.1.16) Employee Rights and Responsibilities

The Department of Labor has prepared a summary of an Employee's Rights and Responsibilities under the FMLA. This summary is available to any employee upon request to the President or by visiting <http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/posters/fmlaen.pdf>.

(3.7.2) Military

If you enter military service while working for the Organization, you will not lose your status as a regular employee. You will be given an unpaid leave of absence for the duration of your initial tour of duty and your time in the service will count toward your length of service with the organization. If you are a member of a reserve component of the armed forces, you will be granted unpaid leaves necessary to fulfill the requirements of this affiliation. You may use your vacation time instead of leave time for this purpose if you prefer, but you are not required to do so.

If you apply for reemployment within the time specified by federal law following an honorable discharge from the service, you will be given employment comparable to the position you previously held.

(3.7.3) Personal Leave of Absence without Pay

Should a situation arise that temporarily prevents an employee from working, he/she may be eligible for a personal leave of absence without pay not to exceed 12 continuous weeks. However, employees must be employed for at least 12 months prior to the requested leave. Any request for a leave of absence without pay must be submitted in writing as far in advance as possible and it will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the President. If the request is for the employee's own medical reasons, the President may require a Certification of Health Care Provider form (available from the President). The decision to approve or disapprove is based on the educational requirements of the students, the business needs of the School, the length of time requested, the employee's job performance and attendance and punctuality record, the reasons for the leave, the affect the employee's absence will have on the work in the department and the expectation that the employee will return to work when the leave expires. Personal Leaves of absence will be considered only after all PTO leave has been exhausted.

Any planned pay increase for an employee returning from an unpaid leave of absence without pay will be deferred by the length of the leave.

While on an approved Personal Leave of Absence, the employee's medical coverage will continue during the length of the leave not to exceed 12 continuous weeks. For any month in which the employee does not work, the School may request the employee pay the cost of the premium. The Organization will not continue to make payments towards the employee's other benefits, such as, but not limited to, retirement, dental coverage, vision, or disability benefits.

Due to the nature of our business, the Organization cannot guarantee either that an employee's job will remain available or that a comparable position will exist when return from approved personnel leave is sought. When an employee returns from an approved personal leave, the Organization will attempt to reinstate the employee to his/her former position or to one with similar responsibilities. If the position or a similar position is not available, the organization may search for a suitable position for 30 days from the date the approved personal leave was to officially end. The employee will not be paid for this time. If the employee has not been placed by the end of this period, he/she will be administratively terminated. Employees who have been administratively terminated pursuant to this paragraph may be considered for reemployment.

An employee who returns to work following an approved personal leave will be considered as having continuous service. If an employee does not return from an unpaid leave of absence without pay, the termination date is the last day of the authorized leave period or the date the employee notifies the President that he or she is not returning, whichever is earlier.

(3.7.4) Jury Duty

If an employee is called for jury duty during a period they are regularly scheduled to work, they are not required to use PTO to cover the absence. When they are not impaneled for actual service and only on call, the employee shall report back to work unless authorized by their supervisor to be absent from the work assignment.

(3.7.5) Bereavement

When a death occurs in a regular full-time employee's immediate family, that employee may take up to three (3) days off with pay to attend the funeral or make funeral arrangements. The Organization reserves the right to require verification of the need for the leave. For the purposes of this policy, immediate family is defined as the employee's spouse, parents, stepparents, siblings, children, stepchildren, grandparent, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or grandchild. Should additional time off be needed, the employee may make arrangements with the President for PTO or unpaid days off.

(3.8) Employee Behavior

(3.8.1) Hours of Duty

Hours of duty are determined yearly and communicated to staff annually at least 30 days prior to a change in duty hours.

(3.8.2) Professional Conduct

Employees shall not use the classroom, nor any other part of school facilities, as a platform for making disparaging remarks against students, parents, teachers, or administrators. Conduct contrary to this policy may constitute grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

(3.8.2.1) Ethical Standards

All employees are required to comply with SBE Rule 6B-1.001, Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida and SBE Rule 6B-1.006, Principles of Professional Conduct for the Educational Profession in Florida.

(3.8.2.2) Reporting Requirements

It is the duty of all employees to promptly report to the President or the Board Chairperson any alleged misconduct by any employee that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Failure of an employee to report such misconduct shall result in disciplinary action. The report may be made verbally, however, the President or Board Chairperson may request a written explanation, which the employee shall be required to provide.

(3.8.2.3) Investigation

The President shall promptly and thoroughly investigate any allegation of misconduct by an employee that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. If the allegation is made against the President, the Board Chairperson may contact an outside agency to assist with investigating the situation.

Upon receiving a complaint of misconduct, a prompt preliminary investigation will be undertaken to determine if a reasonable basis exists. If the allegation warrants further investigation, the employee who is alleged to have committed such misconduct shall be reassigned to a position not requiring direct contact with students, or shall be placed on administrative leave with pay pending the outcome of the investigation.

Information related to the alleged misconduct shall be confidential during the investigation.

(3.8.2.4) Legally Sufficient Complaint

The President or Board Chairperson shall file any legally sufficient complaint with the Department of Education within thirty (30) days after the date the School became aware of the subject matter of the complaint. A complaint is considered to be legally sufficient if it contains ultimate facts that show that an instructional or administrative employee has committed a violation as provided in 1012.795, F.S., and defined by Florida Administrative Code.

(3.8.2.5) Resignation or Retirement in Lieu of Termination

The Organization, or any of its employees, shall not enter into a confidentiality agreement regarding terminated or dismissed instructional personnel or administrators, or instructional personnel or administrators who resign in lieu of termination, based in whole or in part on misconduct that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student.

(3.8.2.6) Training

All employees shall be offered the opportunity to go through training on the Code of Ethics and Principles of Professional Conduct. Annually employees will be reminded of the reporting requirements of this policy and participate in a refresher discussion regarding the Code of Ethics and Principles of Professional Conduct.

(3.8.2.7) Confidentiality

Employees, volunteers, and board members are bound by ethical and legal codes to protect the confidentiality and privacy of our students and their families and to protect and maintain the confidentiality of all information related to them. Confidential communications may include conversations, grades, progress, reports, forms, correspondence, and computer-generated communications with, about or involving in any way any students or their families.

(3.8.3) Professional Standards

Employees are expected to observe certain standards of job performance and good conduct. When performance or conduct does not meet Organizational standards, the School will endeavor, when it deems appropriate, to provide the employee a reasonable opportunity to correct the deficiency. If, however, the employee fails to make the correction, he or she will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

The rules set forth below are intended to provide employees with notice of what is expected of them. Necessarily, however, the below such rules, do not identify every type of unacceptable conduct and performance. Therefore, employees should be aware that conduct not specifically listed below but which adversely affects or is otherwise detrimental to the interests of the School's other employees, students or parents may also result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

(3.8.3.1) Job Performance

Employees may be disciplined for poor job performance, including but not limited to the following:

- Below-average work quality or quantity;
- Poor attitude (for example, rudeness or lack of cooperation);
- Excessive absenteeism, tardiness, or abuse of break and lunch privileges;
- Failure to follow instructions, or School procedures or policies; or
- Failure to follow established safety regulations.

(3.8.3.2) Misconduct

Employees may be disciplined for misconduct, including but not limited to the following:

- Insubordination;
- Dishonesty;
- Theft;
- Discourtesy;
- Misusing or destroying organization's property or the property of another on Organization's premises;

- Violating conflict of interest rules;
- Disclosing or using confidential or proprietary information without authorization;
- Falsifying or altering Organization's records, including but not limited to the application for employment;
- Interfering with the work performance of others;
- Altercations;
- Harassing, including sexually harassing, employees, students, or parents;
- Being under the influence of, manufacturing, dispensing, distributing, using, or possessing alcohol or illegal or controlled substances on Organization property or while conducting School business;
- Gambling on School premises or while conducting Organization business;
- Sleeping on the job or leaving the job without authorization;
- Possessing a firearm or other dangerous weapon on Organization property or while conducting Organization business; [or]
- Being convicted of a crime that indicates unfitness for the job or raises a threat to the safety or well-being of organization, its employees, students, parents, or property; or
- Refusing to submit to testing for drugs and/or alcohol.

(3.8.3.3) Attendance

In addition to the general rules stated above, employees may be disciplined for failing to observe the following specific requirements relating to attendance:

- Reporting to work on time, observing the time limits for rest and lunch periods, obtaining approval to leave work early; or
- Notifying the President in advance of anticipated tardiness or absence.

(3.8.4) Discipline Procedure

Except as set forth elsewhere in the organization's policies, discharge for poor performance may be preceded by an oral warning and a written warning.

The Organization reserves the right to proceed directly to a written warning for either misconduct or performance deficiency, or to terminate for misconduct without resort to prior disciplinary steps, when the Organization deems such action appropriate.

(3.8.4.1) Suspension of Employees

Decisions regarding suspension of employees shall be by the President. Whether such suspension will be with or without pay will be at the discretion of the President. The President (or designee) shall promptly notify each employee who has been suspended and set forth the basis for suspension. If the employee in question is the President, the decision regarding suspension will be made by the Governing Board.

(3.8.5) Employment at Will

Nothing in this policy is intended to alter the at-will status of employment with the organization.

(3.8.6) Conflicts of Interest

No employee or Board Members of the Organization shall solicit students, employees, or the organization for the selling of goods and services, other than as part of a school activity.

No employee shall accept any gift, favor, or service of value from companies or organizations that are engaged in, or are being considered for, doing business with the Organization, with the exception of the parent-teacher organization.

Expenses for trips to evaluate products or equipment shall be paid by the Organization if previously approved by the President or designee. Once equipment is purchased or leased, personnel may attend training sessions at the expense of the Organization if training is included as a service within the purchase or lease price and is approved by the President.

When a seminar, training, or educational meeting or session is provided by an industry representing more than one company and offered at no cost, or at reduced or partial costs, to staff, and the resulting knowledge or training is determined by the President (or designees) to be in the organization's interest with no advantage or obligation given to an individual company, and to be no conflict of interest, the President (or designee) may authorize attendance.

No employee shall accept other employment which might impair the employee's independence of judgment in the performance of duties for the Organization.

Violation of this policy may constitute grounds for dismissal from employment.

(3.8.7) Financial Obligations

Employees are expected to handle their personal financial obligations in such manner as to prevent the involvement of the Organization.

(3.8.8) Political Activities

Employees are not allowed to conduct activities supporting or denouncing individual political candidates or views while conducting activities for the Organization during working hours. The use of Organizational resources for such activities is strictly prohibited. Should an employee choose to campaign for and hold an elective public office, the President will ensure proper safeguards are put into place to ensure that the campaign or elected duties do not interfere with the role the employee plays at the Organization.

(3.8.9) Academic Freedom

It is the rightful duty of a qualified teacher to encourage within students a never-ending search for truth in its many forms. Such a search may inevitably lead to areas of controversy. It is the belief of the Organization that discussion of such issues, dealing with local, state, national and international affairs, shall be encouraged. Free, logical, and intelligent dialogue within the classroom is a necessity in the search for truth. Such freedom of expression should be viewed, not simply as a constitutional guarantee, but as a fundamental necessity for the successful practice of scholarship in a free society. All sides of such controversial issues shall be presented where reasonable and feasible in the judgment of the teacher and President.

It is recognized that the application of this principle in a K-12 program differs somewhat from its application at higher educational levels. Teachers shall consider the relative level of maturity of their students and their need for guidance in the study of such issues to arrive at objective and balanced views.

Teacher use of potentially controversial materials: It is the responsibility of the teacher (or other instructional staff member) that intends to use materials that may be considered controversial to reasonable persons within the community, to notify the President of the potentially controversial materials. It is the President's responsibility to ensure that the materials used are at grade level or below, and appropriate and consistent with Florida's academic standards. If the materials are potentially controversial, a notice will be sent home to the parents giving them the opportunity to opt out of receipt of such materials and allow their student to do an alternative project.

(3.8.10) Reporting Legal Infractions

All employees are required to self-report by promptly notifying the President within forty-eight (48) hours of any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance and report any known allegations of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1) F.S. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt, nor shall such notice be admissible for any purpose in any proceeding, civil or criminal, administrative or judicial, investigatory, or adjudicatory. In addition, all employees shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment or order. In the event that the employee in question is the President, he or she shall report said legal infraction to the Chairman of the Board. Once a report has been made, the President or the Board Chairman shall determine whether this offense could make the employee ineligible for employment under §1012.315 F.S., or whether the Charter School is required to file a legally sufficient complaint under Section 1012.796 F.S. for a violation under Section 1012.795, F.S., and the President or Board Chairman shall take such actions as are deemed necessary and/or legally required.

(3.8.11) Whistleblower Policy

The Organization requires its Presidents, officers, employees, and volunteers to observe high standards of ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities within the organization. As representatives of the Organization, such individuals must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and must comply with all applicable laws and regulations. The purpose of this policy is to create an ethical and open work environment, to ensure that the Organization has a governance and accountability structure that supports its mission, and to encourage and enable Presidents, officers, employees, and volunteers of the Organization to raise serious concerns about the occurrence of illegal or unethical actions within the Organization before turning to outside parties for resolution.

All Presidents, officers, employees, and volunteers of the organization have a responsibility to report any action or suspected action taken within the Organization that is illegal,

unethical or violates any adopted policy of the Organization. Anyone reporting a violation must act in good faith, without malice to the Organization or any individual at the organization and have reasonable grounds for believing that the information shared in the report indicates that a violation has occurred. However, any report which the reporter has made maliciously or any report which the reporter has good reason to believe is false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense. No one who in good faith reports a violation, or who, in good faith, cooperates in the investigation of a violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation, or adverse employment action.

(3.8.12) Occupational Safety

The Organization is committed to the safety of its employees, vendors, contractors, and the public and to providing a clear safety goal for management.

The prevention of accidents is the responsibility of every employee. It is also the duty of all employees to accept and promote the established safety regulations and procedures. Every effort will be made to provide adequate safety training. If an employee is ever in doubt how to perform a job or task safely, assistance should be requested. Unsafe conditions must be reported immediately.

It is the policy of the Organization that accident prevention shall be considered of primary importance in all phases of operation and administration. The Organization's administration is required to provide safe and healthy working conditions for all employees and to establish and require the use of safe practices at all times.

Failure to comply with or enforce the Organization's safety and health rules, practices and procedures could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

(3.8.12.1) Accident/Incident Reporting

It is the duty of every employee to immediately, or as soon as is practical, report any accident or injury occurring during work or on the Organization's premises so that arrangements can be made for medical or first aid treatment, as well as for investigation and follow-up purposes.

(3.8.13) Employee Grievance and Conflict Resolution Policy

A grievance is a conflict, issue or difficulty arising in the course, conduct and/or performance of an employee's job. A grievance may also include a claim by an employee that the rules of the Organization have been improperly applied or interpreted; or supervisory or administrative personnel apply unfair practices.

Conflict and grievance resolution begins with the persons directly involved. If resolution cannot be achieved by the involved staff, then the President shall become involved up to and including conflict resolution meetings and agreements. No student or staff member will be discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, or suffer any reprimand as a result of filing a grievance or participating in the investigation and resolution grievances. Each problem will be heard and resolved as quickly as possible.

(3.8.13.1) Steps for Resolution

(3.8.13.1.1) Resolution Amongst Individuals

1. Resolving grievances should first be attempted directly with the people involved.
2. Any complaints must be fully described by the person with the grievance.
3. The person should be directly given the full details and allegations against them.

If the above procedures have been completed and the situation is not resolved the issue should be brought to the employee's supervisor.

(3.8.13.1.2) Resolution with Assistance from Supervisor

1. If Step One is followed and no satisfactory resolution is achieved, then the employee may present the complaint, in writing, to their next level supervisor.
2. The written complaint should include full disclosure of the details of the allegations or complaint, the date and place of the first meeting, the names of any witnesses, the response by the person(s) involved, and the action taken at the conclusion of the prior step. The submitted complaint should include the employee's desired outcome or solution. The person with whom the employee has a grievance should be copied.
3. If the supervisor involved is not the President he or she will notify the President that there is a complaint or conflict.
4. The supervisor will provide a reasonable amount of time to hear and investigate all of the facts and will convene a meeting to include both parties and uninvolved witnesses. A decision may be made at that time.
5. If the issue is resolved, then a summary of the issues and resolution will be written up by the supervisor, signed by each person, and copied to the President, if the supervisor is not the President.

(3.8.13.1.3) Resolution with Assistance from Board

1. If the policy for Resolution with Assistance from Supervisor is followed and the conflict remains unresolved, the employee may make a written appeal to the Board Chair, who will review the appeal within a reasonable amount of time.
2. The Board Chair will, in a timely fashion, decide whether to assign the complaint to a committee for investigation and follow up, or to add the item to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors. If the item is urgent, the Board Chair has the ability to call an emergency meeting of the Board, this will be for unusual and extenuating circumstances only.
3. All decisions will be made by the Governing Board and will be considered final.
4. The final decision will be communicated, in writing, to the aggrieved employee and copied if appropriate, to the Board Chair. Copies will be maintained in the Organization's files.
5. If the original grievance resulted in either suspension or termination and the Board of Directors reinstates the employee, all benefits, pay, and status lost will

also be reinstated to the employee's credit.

(3.9) Rights and Responsibilities

(3.9.1) Employment of Relatives

No prospective employee shall be hired to a position over which a close relative holds an administrative or supervisory position that affects an employee directly or indirectly.

No prospective employee shall be hired without disclosure of a close relative holding any position within the School or as a member of the Governing Board.

If a close relative is employed by the Organization, both parties shall agree in writing to maintaining professional conduct while on duty or at school related activities.

If the close relative is a member of the Governing Board, the Board member shall abstain from any motions that directly involve employment matters or financial gain for the specific relative employee.

A close relative shall be defined as the first degree of kindred: husband, wife, father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, and in-laws of the same degree.

(3.9.2) Pre-Work Physical Examinations

Pre-work physical examinations may be required of some employees, as permitted and mandated by Florida law, and consistent with these policies.

(3.9.3) Initial Appointment

Except as otherwise provided for in Florida Statute, applicants for teaching positions must be eligible for or retain a Florida Certificate and be qualified for the positions for which they are applying.

Appointments shall be made only by the President. The Organization may offer employment to outstanding applicants as early as November in anticipation of openings for the following school year. Teachers who represent they have adequate professional competencies, but do not or cannot demonstrate them, whether deliberately or not, may be terminated at the discretion of the President. The Organization may require newly appointed teachers to participate in staff development activities up to 40 hours related to topics that are essential to the mission and vision of the Organization. Such training shall be given outside regular school hours at no cost to the teacher.

An adjunct instructor may be employed on an annual, daily, or part-time basis.

Employment decisions shall be made by the President, subject to guidelines and requirements set forth by the Governing Board, the annual budget and applicable law.

(3.9.3.1) Background Screening

Prior to employment, candidates must be screened by the Organization using the Department of Education's electronic screening tools. The school shall also check pending or obtained certifications and applicable alerts with the Department of Education, each

reference from the prospective employee's previous, employers and character references when provided and reasonably feasible. All employment candidates that pass the screening shall undergo a level 2 background check with the applicable school district to ensure they are eligible for employment under § 1012.315, F.S.

(3.9.3.2) *Initial Probationary Period*

Employees shall be subject to an initial probationary period of ninety (90) calendar days. Should the employee be discharged for unsatisfactory performance during such initial probationary period, as provided in Section 443.131, Florida Statutes, the Organization will not be liable for any unemployment compensation benefits.

(3.9.4) Professional Education

The Organization and the applicable school district conduct various types of professional development opportunities which shall serve to increase the efficiency of all staff members, instructional, administrative and support staff. Staff members are expected to participate in such professional education activities. Days and times designated as professional development or training must be used as such unless the President agrees to another use of the time in writing.

(3.9.5) Copyrights and Patents

In those instances in which a product is clearly outside the job description of an employee, the results of the employee's work are the employee's private property. Organization employees have the privilege to do research, write articles, pamphlets, and books, and to present papers before learned societies, to enter into contracts for the publication of their works, to procure copyrights and patents for their products, and to receive royalties that may accrue to them as a result of the sale of such works. Such work may not interfere with the performance of the employee's regular or assigned duties or conflict with the employee's employment.

When such a product relates to the employee's employment and/or work assignment, and the employee desires to obtain a copyright or patent, a written outline of the project and a written statement of the employee's intent to acquire a copyright or patent shall be presented to the President who shall have sixty (60) days to determine whether the Organization shall have an interest in such a product. If, at the end of such a sixty (60) day period, the employee has received no such determination from the President, the employee shall be free to consider such a product as personal property. In the event the President informs the employee that the Organization has an interest in such product, the employee and the Organization may enter into whatever contractual agreement(s) may be in their mutual interests.

(3.9.6) Reproduction of Copyrighted Materials

Organization employees are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the provisions of the copyright laws currently in force under Title XVII of the United States Code. Any reproduction of copyrighted materials shall be done either with permission of the copyright holder or within the bounds of the "fair use" doctrine of the copyright law; otherwise, the individual employee responsible for reproduction may be individually liable for breach of

copyright under existing laws.

(3.9.7) Transporting Students

Unless an employee is transporting a student at the direction of the President, during an emergency, or during an officially approved trip in accordance with Organization procedures, an employee's transportation of a student is not permitted. An employee who provides such transportation except for an emergency or during an officially approved trip shall be acting outside the scope of that employee's employment.

Each employee must provide a copy of a valid driver's license and proof of insurance to the organization prior to transporting any student for any reason.

(3.9.8) Smoking of Tobacco Products on School Property

The purpose of this policy is to comply with the "Florida Clean Indoor Air Act" in protecting the public health, comfort, and environment by creating areas in all school facilities that are free from tobacco smoke. No person may be in possession of a lighted cigarette, lighted pipe, lighted cigar, or any other lighted tobacco product, in any school facility, including the outside grounds, or within 100 feet of any building or area used by the organization. No areas for smoking shall be designated on the Organization's property, or within 100 feet of any building or area used by the Organization. Staff members found in possession of tobacco products will face disciplinary actions as described within this policy manual.

(3.9.9) Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace

The Organization has established and maintains a Drug Free Workplace policy to provide a safe, healthy, and productive work environment in accordance with the Florida Drug Free Workplace Act, Section 440.101 and 440.102, Florida Statutes.

(3.9.9.1) Prohibition

Employees are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, being under the influence of, or use of alcohol and/or a controlled substance (as defined in Chapter 893 of the Florida Statutes): in the workplace; or during the workday; or when on duty; or in the presence of students or students' families as part of any work-related activities. Violation of this prohibition shall result in appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination and referral for prosecution.

(3.9.9.2) Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace

A drug-free and alcohol-free workplace shall be maintained. Each employee shall be given a copy of this policy as part of this Policy Manual. Additionally, each employee shall be notified that, as a condition of employment, the employee will abide by the terms of this policy and notify the employer of any criminal drug and/or alcohol statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction. The employer will initiate certification/revocation proceedings pursuant to Section 1012.795 F.S. for certificated employees convicted of criminal charges. Within thirty (30) days of notification, appropriate personnel action against such an employee shall be taken, up to and including termination. Employees can also be required to participate satisfactorily in a drug and/or alcohol abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal,

State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.

(3.9.9.3) Drug and Alcohol Testing

The organization retains the right to perform testing for Drugs and Alcohol at the following times:

- **Pre-employment testing:** All individuals whom the organization intends to hire on a permanent or temporary basis may be tested at the discretion of the organization.
- **Reasonable Suspicion Testing:** When a covered employee's conduct or appearance is directly observed as indicative of being under the influence of a drug or alcohol during on-duty time.
- **Post-Accident Testing:** As soon as practicable following an accident, a driver (unless deceased) shall be tested for alcohol and controlled substances when any person involved in the accident has been fatally injured or the covered employee received a citation for a moving traffic violation arising from the accident. Testing will be conducted not later than thirty-two (32) hours after the accident for drugs and not later than eight (8) hours after the accident for alcohol. For the purpose of this rule an accident is defined as an incident involving a commercial motor vehicle in which there is either a fatality, an injury treated away from the scene, or a vehicle is required to be towed from the scene.
- **Follow-Up Testing:** As part of or as a follow-up to counseling or rehabilitation the covered employee is subject to unannounced follow-up drug or alcohol testing. The covered employee shall be subject to a minimum of six (6) follow-up drug or alcohol tests in the first twelve (12) months.
- **Random Testing:** Random testing can be performed at any point in time at the discretion of the President.
- **Return to Duty Testing:** Before a covered employee returns to duty requiring the performance of a safety-sensitive function after engaging in a prohibited conduct the covered employee shall undergo a return-to-duty test. In the event a return-to-duty test is required, a substance abuse professional (SAP) must also evaluate the covered employee and the employee must participate in any assistance program prescribed.

(3.9.9.4) Testable Substances

Individuals shall be tested for the following drugs: marijuana (unless the employee has a valid medical prescription for such), cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, phencyclidine (PCP), alcohol, and all other illegal or controlled substances. Covered employees who engage in prohibited drug and/or alcohol related conduct must be immediately removed from duties. Such removal shall be affected for the following, in addition to other actions deemed dangerous or improper by the President.

- a Using or being under the influence of alcohol while on Organization property or during a school-sponsored event.
- b When required to take a post-accident alcohol test, using alcohol within eight (8)

hours following the accident or prior to undergoing a post-accident alcohol test, whichever comes first.

- c Refusing to submit to a drug or alcohol test required by post-accident, reasonable suspicion, or follow-up test requirements.
- d Reporting for duty or remaining on duty, requiring the performance of safety-sensitive functions, when the covered employee uses any drug, except when instructed by a physician who has advised the covered employee that the drug does not adversely affect the covered employee's ability to safely operate a CMV.
- e Reporting for duty, remaining on duty or performing a safety-sensitive function, if the covered employee tests positive for drugs.

(3.9.9.5) Disciplinary Consequences If Positive Results

Disciplinary action up to and including termination may be instituted against covered employees who have violated the standards of conduct cited in this policy. Nothing will preclude the organization from seeking prosecution for violation of this policy where the Board deems appropriate. An employee who receives a positive drug test result or an alcohol test result (.04 or greater concentration) from a required test during on-duty time will be immediately suspended without pay and recommended for dismissal. An employee who refuses to submit to a required alcohol or controlled substances test will be immediately suspended and recommended for dismissal. Refusal to submit to an alcohol or controlled substances test is defined as: (1) failing to provide adequate breath for testing without a valid medical explanation after the employee has received notice of the requirement for breath testing; (2) failing to provide adequate urine for controlled substances testing without a valid medical explanation after the employee has received notice of the requirement for urine testing; or (3) the employee engaging in conduct that clearly obstructs the testing process. The employee will be provided with the name(s) of a qualified substance Abuse Professional (2) (SAP) and resources available from which the employee may choose to seek assistance.

An offer of employment will be withdrawn for any individual who receives a positive drug test result or who receives a result showing an alcohol concentration of .02 or greater on a required pre-employment test.

An employee who receives a result showing an alcohol concentration of .02-.039 from a required test shall be removed from performing any school-related function for a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours. Duty time missed shall be charged to unpaid leave or may be charged to PTO time if available. Disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with these policies.

An employee who receives a result showing an alcohol concentration of .02-.039 from a required post-accident test shall be removed from performing any school-related function for a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours. Duty time missed shall be charged to unpaid leave or may be charged to PTO time if available. Any covered employee who is cited and found guilty of a violation as a result of involvement in an accident will also receive a letter of reprimand. Disciplinary action for subsequent incidents will be taken in accordance with

these policies.

An employee who is convicted of felony driving under the influence (DUI) or any drug related offense will be recommended for dismissal. As used in this policy, conviction is defined as a finding of guilt, a plea of guilt, a plea of Nolo Contendere, or entering a Pre-Trial Intervention (PTI) program, whether or not there is a formal adjudication of guilt.

(3.9.9.6) Confidentiality

The laboratory may disclose test results only to the President. Any positive results which the organization justifies by acceptable and appropriate medical or scientific documentation to account for the result as other than the intentional ingestion of an illegal drug will be treated as a negative test result and may not be released for the purpose of identifying illegal drug use. Test results will be protected under the provision of the Privacy Act, U.S.C. Section 552(a) et seq., and Section 503(e) of the Act, and may not be released in violation of either Act. The Organization may maintain only those records necessary for compliance with this order. Any records of the organization, including drug test results, may be released to any management official for purposes of auditing the activities of the organization, except that the disclosure of the results of any audit may not include personal identifying information on an employee.

The results of a drug test of an employee may not be disclosed without the prior consent of such employee, unless the disclosure would be:

- a To the President, who has authority to take adverse personnel action against such employee; To any supervisory or management official within the organization having authority to take adverse personnel action against such employee.
- b Pursuant to the order of a court of competent jurisdiction or where required by the organization to defend against any challenge against any adverse personnel action.

Any covered employee who is the subject of a drug or alcohol test shall, upon written request, have access to any records relating to the employee's drug test, the results of any relevant certification, review or revocation of certification proceedings as referred to in 49 CFR Part 40 of the Privacy Act. Except as authorized by law, an applicant who is the subject of pre-employment drug testing, however, shall not be entitled to this information.

All drug testing information specifically relating to individuals is confidential and should be treated as such by anyone authorized to review or compile program records. In order to efficiently implement this order and to make information readily retrievable, the President shall maintain all records relating to reasonable suspicion testing, suspicion of tampering with evidence, and any other authorized documentation necessary to implement this order. Such shall remain confidential and maintained in a secure location with limited access. Only authorized individuals who have a "need to know" shall have access to them.

(3.9.10) Teacher Certification Standards

(3.9.10.1) Applicable Standards

In the absence of Florida Statutes or State Board of Education Rules mandating teacher certification requirements, the President is directed to establish and keep in

force procedures for appropriate certification guidelines. The provision of the Standards shall apply to all teaching certificates issued for grades taught at the School.

(3.9.10.2) Certification Renewals

Professional staff members are required to maintain their state educator certification in accordance with Florida regulations. Professional staff members are responsible for the completion and submission of all applicable forms and fees for the certification renewals. Once a professional staff member has renewed their certification, they must provide a copy of the certification to the President.

(3.9.11) Familiarity with Statutes, Rules and Policies

All instructional personnel are expected to be familiar with Florida Statutes, State Board of Education Rules, and Policies of the School, which have particular application to their responsibilities as educators. When in doubt about the existence or applicability of any such statute, rule or policy, personnel should check with the President, who can also provide links to the appropriate documents.

(3.9.12) Private Tutoring

No teacher shall receive compensation for privately tutoring a student who is enrolled in the teacher's class during the regular school term. No private tutoring by teachers for compensation is allowed on the Organization's property. Private tutoring is defined as reviewing curriculum that is taught within the classroom.

(3.9.13) Membership in Organizations

Membership in any Organization shall not be a condition for employment by the Organization.

(3.9.14) Professional Development Trade Hours

In an attempt to encourage instructional and administrative staff members to participate in outside professional development activities, the School agrees to offer Professional Development Trade Days [PDTD] to eligible employees. Periodically throughout the year professional development days are scheduled, staff members may utilize accumulated PDTD so that they may not report to work on some professional development days or be allowed to leave early on early release days. If a staff member wants to participate in a professional development activity outside of their normal work hours, and count the training as a PDTD, the employee will ask the President for permission to attend the training as a PDTD. The President has the discretion to allow or disallow the training to be used as PDTD. The President also has the option to disallow specific professional development days to be missed by staff members if the offering on that day is important to the mission of the School.

(3.9.15) Reappointment or Non-Reappointment of Certified Personnel Not Under Continuing Contract

Instructional staff members with annual contracts will receive notification by May 15 if they are being asked to return the following school year.

(3.10) Termination

(3.10.1) At-Will Employment

Pursuant to Section 1002.33(16)(c)(3), Florida Statutes, employment with Organization is voluntary and subject to termination by the employee or Organization at will, with or without cause, and with or without notice, at any time. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to conflict with or to eliminate or modify in any way the employment-at-will status of Organization employees.

(3.10.2) Voluntary Terminations

A voluntary termination of employment occurs when an employee submits a written or verbal notice of resignation, including intent to retire, to the President or when an employee is absent from work for three consecutive workdays and fails to contact the President (job abandonment).

(3.10.2.1) Procedures

1. Employees are requested to provide a minimum of two weeks' notice of their intention to separate employment. The employee should provide a written resignation notification to the President.
2. Upon receipt of an employee's resignation, the President will notify the human resource (HR) department.
3. The HR department or the President will coordinate the employee's departure from the company. This process will include the employee's returning all company property, a review of the employee's post-termination benefits status and the employee's completion of an exit interview, if applicable.

(3.10.2.2) Resignation of Instructional Staff Under Contract at Start of Fiscal Year

It is the practice of the Organization to release individuals who resign for good cause prior to July 1 of each year. After July 1, an instructional employee may resign, however, the Organization reserves the right to pursue any and all legal options available to it and may require monetary restitution from the employee for any funds the employee may have received for the new fiscal year.

(3.10.3) Involuntary Terminations

An involuntary termination of employment, including a layoff of over 30 days, is a management-initiated dismissal with or without cause. Discharge with cause refers to immediate termination of employment due to an employee's misconduct. Any kind of disciplinary action or progressive discipline, if instituted by the President that results in termination may be considered "for cause". Other wrongful behaviors or actions that result in immediate dismissal are also considered "for cause". Examples of such termination of employees include circumstances where an employee:

- Breaches their contract of employment
- Is discovered guilty of fraud, embezzlement, or other kinds of illegal actions against the company
- Is guilty of discriminatory behavior or harassment
- Is guilty of unlawful or immoral behavior on the job

- Is guilty of willful neglect of job responsibilities
- Is discovered to have caused intentional damage to company's assets
- Continuously disregards company policy
- Is charged and convicted of a criminal offense, or if charged with a criminal offense and fails to notify the Organization and President.
- The list is not exhaustive and discharge for cause remains at the Organization's discretion.

3.10.3.1

Procedures

1. Prior to the termination of an employee, the President shall ensure proper paperwork is completed to ensure documentation of the incidents related to the termination.
2. In most circumstances, the decision to terminate may be made by the President. If the employee in question is the President the decision shall be made by the Governing Board.
3. Except in circumstances in which immediate termination is justified based on the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff within the Organization, if the President would like additional guidance or support on a termination decision, he or she may request a review by the governing board.
4. The governing board will be responsible for reviewing the circumstances and determining if discharge is warranted. Such a review must occur in accordance with the Florida Government in the Sunshine regulations. If the board recommends discharge, the President will notify the employee.
5. The President should complete an employee change form and notify HR and payroll of the last day worked by the employee.

(3.10.4) Reduction in Force

(3.10.4.1) Instructional Staff

If it becomes necessary to reduce the number of teachers due to a decrease in enrollment, school reorganization or the financial condition of the School, the Organization will act to retain the most qualified teachers best able to serve the needs of the students. Seniority will not be the primary consideration for which staff members will be retained.

(3.10.4.2) Support Staff

The Organization is authorized to reduce the number of support staff when, in the President's sole discretion, factors including, but not limited to, decreases in student enrollment, school reorganization or financial reasons necessitate such reduction. In making such staff reductions, the organization will seek to retain those staff members best able to serve the needs of school's students.

(3.11) Travel and Entertainment Expenses

(3.11.1) Prior Approval

The Organization recognizes that employees who travel far from home to represent the charter school's business interests must forego their living accommodations and may forfeit personal time. Accordingly, the Organization will make efforts to provide comfortable and secure accommodations for lodging, meals, and travel for employees. However, these items are not intended to be perquisites and the Organization reserves the right to deny reimbursement of expenses that are considered lavish or extravagant. Prior to any travel or entertainment being conducted on the Organization's behalf, the employee must first obtain the prior approval of the President if the person making the request is the President. If permission should be obtained from the Board Chairperson.

(3.11.2) Travel Arrangements

All arrangements required for business travel are to be made by the individual participating in the travel. The President shall provide a form which will collect all pertinent travel information. For maximum savings on airfares, this form should be completed 30 days in advance unless this is not possible due to the nature of the trip. Unless otherwise agreed to by the President, all expenses shall be paid by the employee to be reimbursed by the Organization afterwards. The Organization discourages the use of cash advances to pay for travel expenses. However, should a cash advance be necessary under special circumstances, and the President approves such, all receipts must be submitted for the funds advanced. Any amount not covered by the receipts shall be returned to the Organization upon the conclusion of the travel. If the funds are not returned, they shall be deducted from the employee's paycheck.

(3.11.3) Expense Guidelines

Expenses will be paid in accordance with the expense reimbursement policy located in section seven (8) of this Policy Manual.

(3.11.4) Expense Report Preparation and Reimbursement

All business travel and entertainment expenditures incurred by employees are reimbursed through the use of a standard Expense Report attached to the Travel Arrangements form which shall be made available by the President. Expense reports should be completed and turned in within two weeks of return or incurrence of expenses. Expense report forms must be filled out and totaled completely. Use the appropriate headings and total on a daily basis. Required receipts for items charged must be attached to the report. Any questions regarding completion of the report should be directed to the President or designee for the Organization.

Upon completion, the expense report along with all attachments should be turned into the employee's supervisor for approval. After approval, the expense report is submitted to the President or designee for processing and reimbursement. In order to expedite reimbursements, the employee should ensure that the report is completed properly, required documentation is attached, proper authorization has been obtained, and any unusual items are properly explained and documented. Authorized expense reports will be reimbursed by check/automatic deposit, normally within two weeks after receipt by the

President or designee.

(3.11.5) Local Travel Reimbursement Report Preparation

All local travel expenditures incurred by employees on behalf of the Organization are reimbursable if approved by the employee's supervisor. Employees should complete an Expense Report to request reimbursement for these expenses. Upon completion, the expense report along with all attachments should be turned into the President for approval. After approval, the expense report is submitted to accounting or designee for processing and reimbursement. In order to expedite reimbursement, the employee should ensure that the report is completed properly, required documentation is attached, proper authorization is obtained, and any unusual items properly explained and documented.

(3.12) Staff Teams

The President shall designate specific teams of staff members to accomplish various tasks throughout the year. The following are required staff teams that will be set each year, and the President may appoint others on an as needed basis:

(3.12.1) School Advisory Team

The advisory team will consist of representatives from various teams of staff members throughout the organization. The advisory team will advise the President as part of a decision-making process to ensure staff participation in decision making.

(3.12.2) Staff Behavior Team

The behavior team will review the School's behavior policy, matrix, and consequences annually and advise the President on necessary changes to these documents. The behavior committee shall also serve as an appeal board when a parent wishes to appeal a referral or decision made by an administrator, as outlined elsewhere within this policy. The team shall be comprised of at least five members in addition to the President. A staff member shall be appointed as chair, who shall not be the President.

(3.12.3) Threat Management Team

The Threat Management Team's duties include the coordination of resources and assessment and intervention with individuals whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of school staff or students consistent with the model policies developed by the Florida Department of Education's Office of Safe Schools. These will include such actions as referrals to mental health services when appropriate, and procedures for behavioral threat assessments.

The President is responsible for ensuring that the team records data in order to report quantitative data on its activities to the Office of Safe Schools in accordance with guidance from the Florida Department of Education and shall use the threat assessment database available through the Office of Safe Schools.

(3.12.4) School Based Leadership Team

The School Based Leadership Team shall be a group of experienced educators who come together to brainstorm researched based interventions to assist specific students and student groups who are struggling. The school-based leadership team is further defined in the Teaching and Learning section of this policy manual.

(3.12.5) Master Schedule Team

The Master Scheduling Team shall annually meet with the President to provide advice on the development or modification to the School's master schedule.

(4) Student Policies

(4.1) Admission of Students

The school[s] operated by the Organization are public charter schools, and as such, comply with all applicable requirements of state and Federal law (unless specifically exempt in Section 1002.33(16), Florida Statutes as well as their Charters. Federal Law may also apply if the School is the recipient of federal grant funds. As such, they must admit all students based on availability through use of the lottery process described below.

(4.1.1) Student Selection Procedures

As per Section 1002.33, Florida Statutes a lottery will be conducted at each grade level to select students for enrollment when the number of applications exceeds capacity. All lotteries will be conducted in a manner that ensures each eligible student receives an equal chance of being selected. Each individual charter school will hold independent lotteries for student selection. Applicants will be selected in random order until all applications have been addressed or placed on a waiting list. In order of selection (with consideration of any applicable preference), applicants will be offered admission until all seats have been filled. The remaining students' names will be placed in a waiting pool.

(4.1.1.1) Enrollment Deadlines

The President shall develop an enrollment schedule each year to establish the enrollment deadlines. The initial student selection lottery will be conducted in the spring prior to the opening of the school year. The initial enrollment window must be at least 7 days and be advertised on the School's website and through other methods allowed for within the Corporate Budget.

After the initial enrollment period, the President shall establish a regular schedule for the random selection of applications, and post this along with the enrollment schedule. The deadlines and process shall be clearly explained on the School's website.

(4.1.1.2) Non-Discrimination

Consistent with this Policy, state and federal statutes, the Organization will not discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, marital status, disability or handicap, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected class. All students who are eligible to apply shall be included in the student selection lottery and have an equal chance of being selected.

Publication of the enrollment process will include a non-discrimination statement.

(4.1.1.3) Student Preferences

The following students will be given a priority in the admission process under Section 1002.33(10), Florida Statutes:

- Students who are siblings of a student enrolled in the charter school.
- Students who are the children of a member of the governing board of the charter school.
- Students who are the children of an employee of the charter school.

- Students who are the children of an active-duty member of any branch of the United States Armed Forces.
- A priority will be given to the following students in this order of priority:
 - Students whose parent is employed by Berkley Accelerated, Berkley Elementary Charter or whose parent is an active governing board member of either school.
 - Sixth grade students whose siblings or residents in the same household are enrolled in 6th-10th grade at Berkley Accelerated at the time of Open Enrollment. 9th grade students who are currently enrolled in BAMS 8th grade.
 - Students applying from Berkley Charter Elementary School's 5th grade.
 - Dependent children of active duty military personnel whose move resulted from military orders.
- In order to enjoy this priority, these students must apply during the week of open enrollment period and clearly mark their priority on the application. Upcoming sixth graders who have a sibling enrolled at Berkley Accelerated during open enrollment period will automatically be accepted to sixth grade if they apply during the open enrollment period and space is available.

A charter school may limit the enrollment process only to target the following student populations:

- Students within specific age groups or grade levels.
- Students considered at risk of dropping out of school or academic failure. Such students shall include exceptional education students.
- Students enrolling in a charter school-in-the-workplace or charter school-in-a-municipality.
- Students residing within a reasonable distance of the charter school. Such students shall be subject to a random lottery and to the racial/ethnic balance provisions described in subparagraph Section 1002.33(7)(a)8, Florida Statutes. or any federal provisions that require a school to achieve a racial/ethnic balance reflective of the community it serves.
- Students who meet reasonable academic, artistic, or other eligibility standards established by the charter school and included in the charter school application and charter or, in the case of existing charter schools, standards that are consistent with the School's mission and purpose. Such standards shall be in accordance with current state law and practice in public schools and may not discriminate against otherwise qualified individuals.
- Students articulating from one charter school to another pursuant to an articulation agreement between the charter schools that has been approved by the sponsor.
- Students living in a development in which a business entity provides the School facility and related property having an appraised value of at least \$5 million to be used as a charter school to mitigate the educational impact created by the development of new residential dwelling units. Students living in the development shall be entitled to no more than 50 percent of the student stations in the charter school. The students who are eligible for enrollment are subject to a

random lottery, the racial/ethnic balance provisions, or any federal provisions, as described herein

(4.1.1.3.1) *Federal Charter Schools Program Grant*

In the event the School is selected to participate in the Charter Schools Program grant program, the School will modify the student preferences to comply with federal regulations for the duration of the time that the School is working under the federal CSP program. The allowed preferences in this circumstance will include:

- Students who have siblings enrolled with at that particular school
- Students whose parents are staff members at that particular school
- Students whose parents were on the School's founding Governing Board (as defined in the charter Application)
- Students who were enrolled in the immediate prior grade of an affiliate charter school that is run by this organization with the same Governing Board.

(4.1.1.4) *Selection Process*

The selection process will be determined annually by the Governing Board and will ensure transparency of the Selection Process. On the dates specified within the enrollment schedule, the School shall abide by the following selection process:

(4.1.1.4.1) *All applicants will be placed into the lottery*

All completed applications received within the enrollment period up until the enrollment deadline will be included in the lottery.

(4.1.1.4.2) *Determine Openings*

The President, in accordance with direction from the Governing Board, will determine the number of openings to be filled within the lottery process. The number of openings will be determined based on the contractual limits of the Charter Contract, facility limits, and enrollment limits.

(4.1.1.4.3) *Determine Students with Allowed Preferences*

Students who will be granted preference in the lottery process, as described above, shall be identified, accompanied with a specific reason as noted herein of why each student is being offered preference.

(4.1.1.4.4) *Select Students by Grade Level*

The Organization shall use a system which conducts a lottery within the following parameters as determined annually by the Governing Board.

First, students who are allowed preference will be selected and rank ordered, followed by the remaining students at that grade level, who will be added to the rank ordered list. The top number of students on the rank ordered list equal to the number of openings will be offered a position at the School. All remaining students will be added to the waiting pool.

This process will be repeated for each grade level until all student applications have been

filed and selected for admission to the School.

(4.1.1.4.5) *Out-Of-County Open Enrollment Stipulation*

Students who reside outside of the limits of the School district in which the School is located may still apply for enrollment at the School. In the event such applications are received, they will not be placed in the lottery process until all in-county students have been placed to comply with Section 1 Florida Statutes 1002.31(2)e

(4.1.1.4.6) *Parent Notification*

After the lottery has been conducted, the President shall ensure that the parents or legal guardians of the students who are being offered positions are properly notified. In addition, those parents or legal guardians of students who are placed on the waiting list will be so notified.

(4.1.1.5) *Parent Acceptance*

Once parents receive notification that the student is being offered a position at the School following the student selection lottery, parents will be given a deadline of five (5) business days from the date of notification to respond to the School to confirm or decline the position at the School.

(4.1.1.6) *Maintenance of the Waiting List*

In the event that more students apply to the School than openings are available, the remaining students will be added to the waiting pool. Students selected in lotteries subsequent to the first enrollment lottery will be added to the waiting pool in the order they were selected.

The school shall maintain the waiting pool, and any time an opening becomes available, the School shall contact the next student in the waiting pool to offer a position at the School to the parents or legal guardian of the student.

(4.1.2) *Late Entries*

Some assignments or testing which are essential to the completion of the required State Standards may be required. Teachers will give students until the end of the current term to complete assignments. Students who enroll into the organization after the start of a term will be given directives from teachers and administrators to determine what additional work, if any, needs to be completed.

(4.1.3) *Withdrawals*

Students who choose to leave the School will be assisted in their transition to their new school in accordance with Florida law. The Organization reserves the right to contact the student's future placement to ensure compliance with compulsory attendance laws.

(4.2) *Attendance*

Florida Statutes § 1003.21 sets forth specific requirements for the School and student attendance requirements. Both parents and students can be held legally accountable for

truancy.

(4.2.1) Parental Reporting

Within 48 hours of a student's absence, the parent will send a note or call the School explaining the absence. If that contact does not occur, the absence will be recorded as unexcused. In the case that an unexcused absence is recorded, the School will attempt to contact the student's parent or legal guardian regarding the absence to prevent a pattern of nonattendance.

(4.2.2) Excused Absences

The following absences will be considered excused:

- a Student is ill. (If illness persists for three or more consecutive days, or requires numerous nonconsecutive absences, a doctor's note may be required, as requested by the President or designee).
- b Major illness in the family. (If illness persists for three or more consecutive days, or requires numerous nonconsecutive absences, a doctor's note may be required, as requested by the President or designee).
- c Death in the immediate family of the student.
- d Religious holiday of the student's faith. This requires a parent's note seventy-two (72) hours prior to the absence.
- e Religious institutes, conferences, or workshops.
- f Subpoena or forced absence by any law enforcement agency. A copy of the subpoena or summons shall be given to the School's President (or designee). This includes detention at a juvenile center in which the student continues his/her education.
- g Mental health counseling for the student. A note on business stationery from the mental health facility or personnel may be requested by the President or designee.
- h A major weather disaster. Any absence, including those for field trips or other parental requests as judged appropriate by the President, provided that the request is submitted to the President forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the absence. The President may waive the requirement for advance notice if extenuating circumstances exist.

(4.2.3) Tardiness

Students are allowed to enter the building 30 minutes prior to the start of school. Students are considered to be tardy to school in the morning if:

- a Students who are not in class at the time class begins will be considered tardy.
- b For the legal purposes of truancy; numerous latenesses can be equated to absences. If a student is excessively tardy (defined as an hour or more late to school), three (3)

such events will equate a single absence. Six (6) occurrences of tardiness less than one hour will equate to a single absence. The President can disallow individual instances of being tardy from this rule if a written explanation is provided to the School upon the return of the student.

(4.2.4) Early Removal / Dismissal

Students are expected to attend the entire day of school. The early release of students causes disruption to academic performance of all students and may create safety and security concerns. A student who is removed an hour or more early from school three (3) times will be equated to one (1) absence. Six (6) occurrences of being removed from school less than an hour will equate to a single absence.

(4.2.4.1) Early Removal Must Be More Than Half Hour Before Dismissal

Students will not be allowed to be removed from the School one-half hour before the end of the school day. If a student must be removed early, it must occur more than 30 minutes before the end of the School day to prevent disorganization and confusion at the time of dismissal. The President may make exceptions to this policy on a case-by- case basis.

(4.2.5) Make Up Work

Students who miss school for any reason (excused or not) will be expected to make up all work missed during their absence, tardiness, early removal from school, or suspensions. Parents may contact the School to request missed work but should allow for at least a 24-hour business day response from the School to prepare such materials. Students whose absences are excused will not receive any academic penalty for made up work unless the work is not made up within the time limits explained within the Homework Policy.

(4.2.6) Truancy Consequences

Florida law defines "habitual truant" as a student who has 15 or more unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the student's parent or guardian, and who is subject to compulsory school attendance. After this referral, the President will consider referring the student to the School Based Leadership Team ("SBLT"). If the SBLT finds a pattern of nonattendance, the team will meet with the parent to identify potential remedies; the President must notify the School District's charter school office of the identified pattern of nonattendance. If the initial meeting with the parent does not resolve the problem, the SBLT shall implement the following pursuant to Florida Statutes:

- Frequent attempts at communication between the teacher and the family.
- Evaluation for alternative education programs.
- Attendance contracts.

The SBLT may also, but is not required to, implement other interventions that include referral to other agencies for family services or changes to the learning environment. Additionally, legal authorities will be notified if the problem is not corrected.

If the parent refuses to participate in the remedial strategies because he or she believes those strategies are unnecessary or inappropriate, the parent may appeal to the President.

(4.3) Behavioral

(4.3.1) Code of Student Conduct

Unless the Organization has opted out of or as expressly noted within these organizational policies, the Organization will adhere to the School District's Code of Student Conduct. Copies of Berkley Accelerated Parent Contract student policies and the District's Code of Conduct will be made available to all parents and students.

(4.3.2) Foundation

The organization believes that children learn in a variety of ways, and that our teachers provide an environment that meets the needs of our students. Utilizing our approach to education we believe that through student engagement we reduce the number of behavioral concerns within the classroom. However, we realize that when dealing with children, issues may arise which may require the School to address student behavior. In doing so, the School believes behavioral correction should be a learning opportunity, where students are given the opportunity to learn and demonstrate appropriate behavior, and cooperatively accept responsibility and be accountable for their actions. The organization believes we have a unique partnership with like-minded parents who share this philosophy of behavioral management and positive parental role modeling.

(4.3.3) Removal of Students from Class

A student's behavior may require that he or she be removed from a class to ensure either the continued academic growth of other students or the health, safety, or welfare of everyone involved. Teachers do not have the option of requesting permanent removal from class. Should a situation arise that a student requires removal from class, the student may be issued a 10–15-minute temporary removal. The student will be placed in the office until they are able to return to class safely and cooperatively. If necessary, the student may meet with the President (or designee) to discuss the concern and ways of remedying the situation. If necessary, the President (or designee) may meet with other involved or uninvolved students and/or the teacher(s) to identify ways to rectify the situation. Parents will receive notification by either a telephone call and/or in writing if a child is removed from class for serious or repetitive behavioral concerns.

(4.3.4) Behavioral Expectations

Students are expected to behave in a manner required in the Student Code of Conduct and Parent Contract while under the responsibility of school staff. This includes during the School hours, after school activities, or any activity in which school staff members are responsible for the students.

(4.3.7) Student Conduct on Buses

Students are subject to all school rules and potential consequences while utilizing school transportation in the same manner as if the student were on School grounds. Additionally, suspension of transportation privileges is another possible consequence for misbehavior during transportation.

(4.3.8) Teen Dating Violence and Abuse

It is the policy of this Organization that all of its students have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from dating violence or abuse of any kind. The Organization will not tolerate any form of teen dating violence or abuse as defined in the definitions defined below.

Consistent with the intent and requirements of Section 1006.148, Florida Statutes, the Organization upholds that dating violence by any student is prohibited:

- On school property;
- During any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity; or
- During school-sponsored transportation.

(4.3.8.1) Definition of Teen Dating Violence or Abuse

Teen dating violence is a pattern of emotional, verbal, sexual, or physical abuse used by one person in a current or past dating relationship to exert power and control over another when one or both of the partners is a teenager. Abuse may include insults, coercion, social sabotage, sexual harassment, stalking, threats and/or acts of physical or sexual abuse. The abusive partner uses this pattern of violent and coercive behavior to gain power and maintain control over the dating partner. This may also include abuse, harassment, and stalking via electronic devices such as cell phones and computers, and harassment through a third party, and may be physical, mental, or both.

(4.3.8.2) Reporting an act of teen dating violence or abuse

The President or designee is responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the President or designee. In addition to reporting the incident to the President or designee, if a school employee has reason to suspect that an alleged violation of this policy might constitute a crime, the employee shall also immediately report the complaint to law enforcement. Any uncertainty regarding whether an alleged violation might constitute a crime must be resolved in favor of reporting the incident to law enforcement. All other members of the School community, including students, parents/legal guardians, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy anonymously or in-person to the President or designee. In cases involving an alleged perpetrator who is of adult age and an alleged teen victim, certain suspicions of abuse must be reported to the Florida Abuse Hotline or local law enforcement pursuant to Section 39.201, Florida Statutes.

The President shall establish and prominently publicize to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians, how a report of dating violence and abuse may be filed either in-person or anonymously and how this report will be acted upon. The victim of teen dating violence or abuse, anyone who witnessed an act of dating violence or abuse, and anyone who has reasonable suspicion that an act of dating violence or abuse has taken place may file a report of dating violence or abuse. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of teen violence or abuse will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, learning or working environment, or work assignments. Appropriate remedial

action will be pursued for persons found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another of an act of dating violence or abuse.

Any written or oral reporting of an act of dating violence or abuse shall be considered an official means of reporting such act(s). Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

(4.3.8.3) Prompt investigation and disciplinary action

The Procedures for Investigating dating violence or abuse include the following:

The President or designee selects a designee(s), employed by the School, trained in investigative procedures to initiate the investigation. The designee(s) may not be a relative of the accused perpetrator or victim.

- Documented interviews of the victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses are conducted privately, separately, and are confidential. Each individual (victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses) will be interviewed separately and at no time will the alleged perpetrator and victim be interviewed together.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) of youth involved in a dating violence or abuse complaint may be notified of the complaint, except if such notification is not in the best interest or impairs the safety of the students involved.
- The maximum of 10 school days after the complaint shall be the limit between the initial filing of incidents and completion of the investigative procedural steps. The highest level of confidentiality possible will be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or a report of teen violence and/or abuse, and the investigative procedures that follow.
- School employees shall refrain from sharing confidential student information with other school employees, students, or community members, unless disclosure is required by law or is necessary to protect the student's safety. Any notification made must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).
- If it is determined that dating violence or abuse has occurred, the designee will make recommendations for disciplinary action to the President.
- Immediate action will be taken to eliminate the behavior. Disciplinary action will be taken immediately, based on the circumstances of the behavior(s).
- If a crime has been committed, the police will be immediately notified.
- If the alleged act in violation of this policy is also the subject of an investigation by law enforcement, the investigation by the School shall proceed in full cooperation, and without interference, with the criminal investigation.

Whenever possible, face-to-face contact between the victim and alleged perpetrator should be avoided. If changes need be made, attention should be given to the victim's preference. The burden for any bus, classroom, or other schedule changes should be on the alleged perpetrator, not the victim.

(4.3.8.4) Providing restraining orders to school resource officers/deputies

Should a student or their guardian inform the School that an order of protection has been issued, the designee will contact the abuser and his/her parents to initiate a Stay-Away-Agreement, consistent with the terms of the order, with penalties for known violations of the agreement. The President will notify law enforcement immediately if they have a reasonable belief that a criminal or civil restraining order has been violated. Campus security officers will respond immediately to a report of a violation of a criminal or a civil restraining order.

The school-based alternative to a legal protective order is called a Stay-Away-Agreement. The Stay-Away-Agreement provides a list of conditions that must be followed by the alleged perpetrator while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. It is designed to ensure the safety of the victim.

The Organization encourages schools to administer Stay-Away-Agreements in a conference with the alleged perpetrator and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s). If the parent/guardian is unavailable or unwilling to attend the conference, the School may note this on the agreement. A Stay-Away-Agreement may include the following elements:

- A description of the relationship between the victim and alleged perpetrator.
- A description of the violent incident(s): what, when, where, witnesses.
- A list of behaviors that the alleged perpetrator may not do (i.e., talking to the victim, sitting near the victim, sending notes to the victim, etc.).
- Schedule changes for the alleged perpetrator (to separate the victim and alleged perpetrator), including classes, lunch period, arrival and dismissal times, locker location, and extracurricular activities.
- Notes on other disciplinary actions taken.
- Disciplinary consequences if the alleged perpetrator violates the Stay-Away Agreement.
- Dates during which the Stay-Away-Agreement is valid.
- Date when the Stay-Away-Agreement will be reviewed.

(4.3.8.5) Provide instruction and reasonable accommodations to the victim

Requests for accommodations may be made orally or in writing to any school employee and these requests should be taken to the President or designee. If the request is made orally, the President or designee shall document the request in writing. The school shall provide a written decision to the student as soon as possible, but in all cases a decision must be made within five school days of the request. A denial to a request for accommodation must include the reason(s) for the denial. All requests for accommodations should be kept strictly confidential. At no time shall the School personnel notify the alleged perpetrator of the student's request for accommodation, nor shall the School require the student to pursue a complaint against the alleged perpetrator through the School grievance process or the criminal justice system.

All accommodations under this policy are voluntary; the student may choose to decline or rescind any accommodations at any time by notifying the President or designee. The student shall not be subject to any retribution or disciplinary action for such decision

and shall not lose the right to request and receive future accommodations.

Accommodations for safety shall be made even if the alleged perpetrator is not a student at the School or if the abuse occurred outside of school grounds.

The Organization will provide a victim of dating violence or abuse with the following, based on the circumstances:

- Stay-Away-Agreement: an agreement with the offender to stay away from the victim while on school grounds, on school transportation, and during school sponsored programs and events.
- Reasonable accommodations, such as class schedule changes, private space for meeting with school guidance counselor or other appropriate school personnel. If needed, the School will assist the student in creating an alternative education plan for the student such as transferring to a different school or the ability to make up schoolwork missed due to dating violence.
- Security protection, such as safe egress/regress from school and within the School.
- Timely and comprehensive investigation of dating violence and abuse complaints.
- Referrals for outside support and/or counseling.
- Information and assistance in securing interventions to address the behavior of abusers (e.g., empathy training, anger management).
- Information and assistance in securing intervention which includes assistance and support provided to parents/guardians, if deemed necessary and appropriate.
- Other actions determined appropriate under the circumstances.

(4.3.8.6)

Providing instruction to students in comprehensive health education including a teen dating violence or abuse component

Members of the instructional staff shall teach all comprehensive health components listed in Section 1003.42, Florida Statutes, including a health education curriculum for students in grades 7 through 12 in the area of dating violence or abuse. This instruction shall include teen dating violence or abuse component that includes, but is not limited to, the definition of dating violence or abuse, the warning signs of dating violence or abusive behavior, the characteristics of healthy relationships, measures to prevent and stop dating violence or abuse, and community resources available to victims of dating violence or abuse. The curriculum chosen must also have an emphasis on prevention- based education.

(4.3.8.7) *Providing training teachers, staff, and school administrators*

The Organization ensures that schools sustain healthy, positive, and safe learning environments for all students. It is important to change the social climate of the School and the social norms with regards to dating violence or abuse. This requires the efforts of everyone in the School environment – teachers, administrators, counselors, school nurses other non-teaching staff (such as bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, school resource officers, and/or instructional aides).

Teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and other employees shall be provided training in the areas of the proper identification, investigation, and intervention of dating violence or abuse incidents that fall within the jurisdiction of the School.

Students, parents/legal guardians, teachers, and school volunteers shall be provided information at a minimum on an annual basis on the Organization's Policy and Procedures against dating violence or abuse. The information shall include evidence-based methods of preventing dating violence or abuse, as well as how to effectively identify and respond to dating violence or abuse incidents within the scope of the School.

The Organization should utilize existing resources, including but not limited to, student support services staff (e.g., school social workers, school counselors) to assist in providing teen dating violence or abuse intervention and prevention training.

(4.3.8.8) *Victim's Rights:*

- Right to be treated with respect and dignity. This includes not being blamed by staff and/or students (referred to as victim blaming), and not spreading rumors or retaliating against the victim.
- Right to be informed of his/her options with regard to notifying law enforcement authorities, and to be assisted in notifying such authorities. To the extent state and federal law allow, victims must make a voluntary and informed decision to notify authorities.
- Right to not have parents/guardians notified if such notification would endanger the student(s). In some cases, parental notification will endanger the student(s) and prevent the student(s) from obtaining important services. In these cases, guardians/parents should not be notified unless the victim voluntarily consents in writing.
- Right to be free from pressure not to report crimes to civil or criminal authorities. This includes the right to be free from pressure to report a crime as a lesser offense than the victim perceives, and the right to be free from any suggestion that a victim somehow contributed to his or her own victimization by contributory negligence, or by assuming the risk of being assaulted, or by otherwise sharing the responsibility for what is alleged to have occurred.
- Right to have any violence committed against him/her investigated by the proper civil and criminal authorities. This right is in addition to, and independent of, school disciplinary proceedings.
- Right to full and prompt cooperation from school personnel in obtaining and securing evidence necessary for any potential criminal/civil proceedings. Failure to fully and promptly cooperate to the extent possible may be considered a form of retaliation against the victim.
- Right to be informed of any disciplinary actions taken against the offender. Knowing about subsequent disciplinary actions, such as suspension or expulsion, helps victims with safety planning.
- Right to attend classes and to work in an environment free from unwanted contact or proximity with alleged assailants insofar as the School is able to

provide. To the extent possible, victims and alleged perpetrators should be separated on campus. This might involve changing class schedules or having the parties agree to stay a certain number of feet away from each other in a Stay-Away-Agreement.

- Right to be free from violence at school. All students have the right to an education in a safe school environment. The district will take affirmative steps to prevent and respond to dating violence or abuse that occurs both on and off campus.
- Right to transfer from school. Victims of teen dating violence or abuse have a right to transfer to another school. A victim's decision to transfer to another school must be informed and voluntary. The offender will generally be required to transfer whenever there is a choice between transferring the victim or the offender.
- Right to be free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. All students have the right to be free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment at school. Dating violence or abuse are forms of sexual harassment.
- Right to referrals for services. Victims of teen dating violence or abuse have the right to have access to counseling, medical services, and victim support services both on and off-campus. The district shall refer the victim of teen dating violence or abuse to a community-based advocate. The district will maintain a list of domestic violence/dating violence/sexual assault agencies and services in the community and make this list available to victims. Participation in any referral program is voluntary for victims.
- Right to have a support person present.

(4.3.8.9) Other violations

Individuals who knowingly make a false report or complaint of teen dating violence and abuse, or individuals who retaliate against a person who has made such a report or was a witness in such an investigation, shall be subject to disciplinary actions as stated elsewhere within these policies. Additionally, any employee of the Organization who does not inform the President or the designee of a report or suspicion of teen dating violence and abuse shall be subject to disciplinary action as defined within the Employee section of this policy manual, including but not limited to immediate suspension and or termination.

(4.3.8.10) Confidentiality

The Organization will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses to the fullest extent of the law, consistent with the School's legal obligations to investigate, take appropriate action, and conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations as mandated by law or these policies. All records generated under the terms of this policy and its related administrative procedures shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law.

(4.3.8.11) Education and Training

The President shall, along with the publication of the anti-harassment, anti-bullying, and anti-discrimination policy as defined within this policy manual, inform school staff, students

and parents/guardians of the policy and reporting requirements regarding teen dating violence and abuse.

(4.3.9) Student Participation in Secret Organizations and Gangs

The presence of gangs and gang activities can cause a substantial disruption of or material interference with School and School activities. A "gang" as defined in this policy is any group of two or more persons whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts. By this policy, the organization acts to prohibit existence of gangs and gang activities as follows:

No student on or about School property or at any School activity:

1. Shall wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other things which are evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang.
2. Shall commit any act or omission or use any speech either verbal or non- verbal (gestures, handshakes, etc.) showing membership or affiliation in a gang.
3. Shall use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interests of any gang or gang activity, including but not limited to:
 - Soliciting others for membership in any gangs.
 - Requesting any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person.
 - Committing any other illegal act or other violation of the School's policies.
 - Inciting other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.

(4.3.10) Student Conflict Resolution Policy

The Organization educates all students, regardless of race, sex, religion, nationality, or ethnic background, and helps them to reach their fullest potential intellectually, socially, and physically.

Conflict and grievance resolution begins with the persons directly involved. If resolution cannot be achieved by and between students, then a designated school staff member shall become involved up to and including conflict resolution meetings and agreements. No student or staff member will be discriminated against, harassed, intimidated, or suffer any reprimand as a result of filing a grievance or participating in the investigation and resolving grievances. Each conflict or grievance will be heard and resolved as quickly as possible. This policy excludes situations of physical harm, vandalism, or potentially illegal behavior.

(4.3.10.1) Steps for Resolution Between Individuals

1. Any complaints or grievances must be particularly described by the person with the grievance so the School can accurately and promptly respond and investigate any grievance.
2. The person whom the grievance is filed against shall be notified that a grievance has been filed against them and shall be given the full details and allegations against them.
3. A designated staff member or the President shall meet with the person whom the grievance is filed against and the complainant, separately, to determine

(1) whether the grievance has merit and (2) whether any remedial actions can be taken to rectify the complainant's allegations.

If the above procedures have been completed and the situation is not resolved, the issue should be brought to a staff member at the School to set up a mediation or other verdicts as determined by School leadership.

(4.3.10.2) Mediation

Mediation is available to resolve conflicts that are not resolvable directly by the students involved and shall be conducted by the President or designated staff member. If students undergo mediation, they must abide by the final remedial actions determined and established in mediation by the President or designated staff member. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary actions as defined within this Policy.

(4.4) Academic

(4.4.1) Grading Policy

There are multiple purposes for the assignment of grades, including but not limited to the documentation of student and teacher achievement; providing teacher feedback on student progress to students, parents, and fellow teachers; monitoring for continuous student growth and concept mastery; and informing instructional practices and small- group instruction in the classroom.

(4.4.1.1) Traditional Grading System

The following grade scale will be used by the organization:

- A (90% - 100%) Superior
- B (80% - 89%) Above Average
- C (70% - 79%) Average
- D (60% - 69%) Below Average
- F (0% - 59%) Unsatisfactory
- I - Incomplete

(4.4.1.2) Standards Based Grading System

Standards based assessment provides an accurate snapshot of student abilities based on the standards which they are accountable for at their individual grade level. As such, the following scale is utilized to identify a student's progress towards a standard:

- 4 - Has demonstrated advanced, in-depth understanding of the standard (I know it even better than my teacher taught it)
- 3 - Has demonstrated a complete understanding of the target learning goal (I know it just the way my teacher taught it)
- 2 - Has demonstrated a simple understanding of the target learning goal (I know some of the simpler stuff but cannot do the harder parts)
- 1 - Is able to partially demonstrate understanding with assistance (With some help, I can do it)

- 0 - Is not successful with the learning goal, even with assistance
(Even with help, I cannot do it).

(4.4.2) Honor Roll

Any student who receives all As and/or Bs on their report card will be considered to be on the Honor Roll. Any student who receives all A's will be added to the "Honors List"

(4.4.3) Graduation and Promotion Requirements

(4.4.3.1) Adoption of District Progression Plan

The organization will follow the county's Student Progress plan to determine promotional requirements.

(4.4.3.2) Grade Level Retention

The purpose of promotions and retention is to provide maximum consideration for the long-range welfare of the student and to provide an opportunity for each student to progress through school according to his/her own needs and abilities.

It is expected that most students will be promoted annually from one grade level to another upon completion of satisfactory work, however, a student may be retained when his/her standards of achievement or social, emotional, mental, or physical development would not allow satisfactory progress in the next higher grade. Retention normally occurs before the student leaves the primary grades.

Parents/guardians who wish to appeal the decision for retention must first contact the President. If parents/guardians do not accept the decision of the President, an appeal may be made in writing to the Board. All appeals must be requested within two (2) weeks after the close of school.

(4.4.4) Homework Policy

The organization believes that homework reinforces the learning happening in the classroom as well as gives students the opportunity to learn important lessons in responsibility and accountability. Therefore, homework is assigned to reinforce or serve as a precursory activity for learning that has taken or will take place in the classroom. Homework is an integral part of the students' education.

(4.4.4.1) Approximate Time Guidelines

In general, the organization attempts to assign approximately ten minutes of homework per grade level to students. (6th Grade= 60 minutes, etc.) While we strive to use these guidelines, we like to make clear that it is impossible to gauge perfectly how long an assignment will take a given child, as some students take longer to complete tasks than others.

(4.4.4.2) Late Homework

One of the responsibilities of homework is to teach students responsibility and accountability. In order to accomplish this, and to ensure students do not fall behind on their schoolwork, it is essential that students complete their work on time. Late homework is not

accepted except in the case of an excused absence. Students who have an excused absence will have the number of days equal to the number of days absent to make up class and homework without penalty up to seven (7) days or as determined and agreed upon by the teacher.

(4.4.5) Dual Enrollment

The Organization understands that the services of one school may not be able to completely address the needs of every student and recognizes the value of Dual Enrollment. Given the academic structure of our school and the scheduling concerns, we do not permit students to be enrolled with the Organization part-time as the result of a dual enrollment agreement, except for as allowed below.

(4.4.5.1) Florida Virtual School

Students whose academic needs require more than the course selections available within the organization will be allowed to enroll in courses through the Florida Virtual School or any similar approved program within the State. Prior approval must be granted by Berkley Accelerated.

(4.4.5.2) Extracurricular Activities

Students attending the School in grades 9-10, for academic classes may be allowed to request at other schools for extracurricular activities including sports if not offered at the School.

(4.5) Extra-Curricular Activities

(4.5.1) Attendance Required for Extracurricular Participation

Students participating in any school sponsored event must have attended school the day of the event, otherwise they will be disallowed from participating in the extracurricular event. For school sponsored events on weekends, students must have attended school on the school day preceding the event. Additionally, students who are considered truant based on this policy manual may be disallowed from participating in any extracurricular activities sponsored by the School.

(4.5.2) Extra-Curricular Activities

Participation in interscholastic and extracurricular activities is a privilege and not a right. Interscholastic competition and participation in extracurricular activities may be withheld from any student as a condition of discipline. Furthermore, all policies that apply to the regular school day apply also to interscholastic competition and extracurricular activities. Coaches and sponsors may establish policies for their groups in addition to those set out by athletic associations, however, any and all disciplinary action resulting from conduct at an extracurricular activity rest solely with the School.

(4.5.2.1) Clubs

The organization supports the use of clubs to allow students to gain extracurricular

experience at school. When clubs are available, they will be advertised amongst the students and parents/legal guardians. All students participating in a School-sponsored club are required to maintain a 2.0 GPA, have no behavioral concerns, and meet the expectation of the club. A copy of the club expectations will be provided to students joining an individual club. Clubs must be sponsored and supervised by a school staff member.

(4.5.2.2) *Hazing*

Student hazing is inconsistent with the educational goals of the organization and poses a significant risk to the physical and mental welfare of students. Hazing of students, on or off School property, is prohibited and may result in suspension from school and from activity/athletic participation.

(4.5.3) *Field Trips, Off Campus Events*

Field trips are school-related events for which school staff arranges transportation and ensures an appropriate number of chaperones. All trips shall be subject to prudent safety precautions and conducted according to the rules established by the School. Every effort will be made to schedule field trips without interrupting other school functions.

(4.5.3.1) *Approval*

All trips off school property must be approved by the President at least two weeks prior to the event occurring. Field trips should have an educational purpose to be approved. All trips must be conducted under the supervision of a designated School employee, and additional chaperones may be necessary dependent upon the activity. The request for approval must include all locations the students will visit while on the trip, the details of transportation, and any other logistical issues the President requests. Students will follow the specific itinerary provided to the administration on the field trip request.

(4.5.3.2) *Behavioral Exclusion*

If a student has demonstrated an inability to control their behavior in School:

- The school reserves the right to require parents or guardians of some students to attend the field trip to provide supervision for their child. In such cases, if a parent is unable to attend, the student will be required to remain at school.
- If a student has received an out-of-school suspension, or has demonstrated unsafe behavior, the student's parent or guardian may be required to attend as a chaperone. The President or designee will determine.
- Class field trips are reserved for students who show responsibility during the school year and meet school expectations. Students who have been issued an out of school suspension during the year may be disallowed from attending the end of the year field trip.
 - Parents or guardians of students who have earned only one (1) suspension have the option of requesting the President or designee for an exception to this rule. They can present the reasons they feel their child should be allowed to attend. The President or designee can decide to 1) disallow the student from attending, 2) allow the student to attend unaccompanied, or 3) allow the student to attend with conditions, possibly including

- requiring the student to be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Students with more than one (1) suspension are not allowed to attend.

(4.5.3.3) *Financial Limitations*

Students cannot be excluded from a field trip based on the inability to pay the accompanying fee. If a family is unable to pay the accompanying fee, the student's parent or legal guardian must contact the President (or designee) prior to the date the field trip permission slip is due back to school to make alternative arrangements. Alternative arrangements will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

(4.5.3.4) *Student Supervision*

While attending field trips, students will be closely monitored and supervised. Each student shall be directly assigned to a staff person or chaperone for the duration of the trip.

(4.5.3.5) *Chaperones*

Chaperones for field trips must follow the volunteer guidelines found within the policies of the Organization. Chaperones must be registered with the School prior to attending the field trip. All chaperones must be provided with a detailed list of the students they are responsible for and emergency contact information to reach the School employee in charge.

(4.5.3.6) *Teacher Check Ins*

While attending field trips where groups are separated from one another, the employee in charge of the trip will coordinate times and locations where all staff and chaperones shall rendezvous periodically throughout the day.

(4.5.3.7) *Student Counts*

Before transporting students to or from any field trip, the employee supervising the students and at least one other chaperone will do a complete a roll call of all students to ensure all students are accounted for. Each staff member and chaperone shall know the number of students they are currently responsible for.

(4.6) *Medical Policies*

(4.6.1) *Inoculations of Students*

All students accepted by and attending the School are required to be in compliance with state programs mandating immunization against specific diseases. Failure to comply with the state requirements will result in the students being unable to attend classes, resulting in and receiving unexcused absences, until proof of compliance is provided.

The President shall institute procedures for the maintenance of health records, which are to show the immunization status of every student enrolled, and for the completion of all necessary reports in accordance with guidelines prepared by the Florida Department of Health, which include exceptions and waivers as defined in Florida Statute. The President shall make available to all students and parents/legal guardians the required health records to satisfy any applicable government required immunization program.

(4.6.2) Medication Administration at School

This policy is designed to ensure safe and accurate administration of routine medications to students in the School. Every attempt must be made by the student's parent or legal guardian and healthcare provider to have medications administered during non-school hours. However, in the event that it is not possible for medications to be administered at home this Medication Administration at School Policy shall be followed.

(4.6.2.1) Staff and Training

The President shall designate appropriate personnel as being responsible for medication administration.

- All designated individuals must obtain appropriate medication administration training prior to dispensing, accepting, or answering any questions regarding medication administration at the School.
- The designated personnel responsible for the oversight of any medical administration at the School must complete appropriate training on medication administration.

(4.6.2.2) Submission and Required Documentation

- All medications must be personally brought into the School by the student's parent/guardian accompanied by the appropriate required medical paperwork.
- All prescription medications require written Authorization for Medication Administration, with original signature by the parent and health care provider before the School shall accept the medication.
- Medication may not be disbursed until the written Authorization for Medication Administration form contains the date of the current prescription, the expiration date of the prescription and the frequency by the medication is to be administered.
- Prescription Medication/Treatment must be received in a pharmacy labeled container with the student's name, healthcare provider's name, name of pharmacy and phone number, name of medication, directions for dosage and date of prescription.
- School personnel shall not administer medication if there is a change in type, dosage, or frequency unless a new written Authorization for Medication Administration with original signature by the parent and health care provider is presented to the School official.
- When medication is delivered to the School, the designated employees shall count the exact quantity of the medication being delivered and log the medication into the Medication Administration Log.
- Students who require the use of an MDI (Metered Dose Inhaler) may be given permission to carry the medication with them only if a completed Authorization to Carry and Self Administer MDI form is submitted to the School with both the parent/guardian and physician signature.
- All medications kept at the School must be kept in a locked cabinet or refrigerator stored away from general population areas where students will not independently have access to the storage.
- Over-the-counter (OTC) medication must be received in the original, unopened

container and labeled with the student's name and accompanied by an Authorization for Medication Administration. OTC medications will be administered by Authorized school staff. No OTC medications should be administered by students. OTC medications do not require the signature of a health care provider.

(4.6.2.3) Administration

- All employees shall adhere to the universal medication safety precaution of “The Six Rights of Medication Administration”. Specifically, each time medication is administered the employee should verify:
 - The right patient/student
 - The right drug
 - The right dose
 - The right route (method of administration)
 - The right time
 - The right documentation
- All designees shall be approved by the School and/or legal guardian to administer any medication to a student prior to such administration
- All designees shall wash hands before and after administering the medication.
- All designees shall direct any questions and concerns regarding the medication to the parent/guardian or health service provider whose signature is on the Authorization for Medication Administration.
- Each and every time medication is administered, the proper notation must be made on the Medication Administration Log.
- If a student is receiving more than one medication at school, separate student medication records must be maintained for each medication.
- The school designee must maintain a Medication Administration Log in alphabetical order.
- The Florida Records Retention Schedule require that the Medication Administration Logs be maintained for seven years.

(4.6.2.4) Medication Errors

In the event that medication is delivered contrary to the “Six Rights of Medication Administration,” the employee must take the following steps:

- Immediately notify the School's President;
- Call the poison control non-emergency number (1-800-282-3171) for toxicity or expected side effects, if the error involved the wrong student, medication, dosage, time, or route;
- Notify the parent or legal guardian; and
- Complete and file the appropriate documentation/incident report for submission in the student's medical file.

In the event of medication errors, the President shall provide additional training to the employee and should take necessary steps to ensure the error does not occur again in the future.

(4.6.2.5) Miscellaneous

- Narcotic medications are not to be administered by school staff.
- Absolutely no OTC medications will be administered by school staff to students without appropriate documentation, and unless provided by the parents.
- Medications including, but not limited to, inhalers for bronchial disorder, are not to be transported on a school bus unless the student is accompanied by a trained official or is authorized to self-medicate. A written self-medication authorization must be signed by the parent/guardian or health care provider and presented to the School.
- In the event of expired medication or the end of the school year, the School's employees will contact parents to ask them to pick up the medication. Medications may not be given to students for transport home. If medications are not picked up by parents, they should be properly disposed of according to location requirements. Medication disposal should be witnessed by a second person and documented by both people involved.

(4.6.3) Students with Communicable Diseases

A student shall not attend classes or other school-sponsored activities, if the student (1) has, or has been exposed to, an acute (short duration) or chronic (long duration) contagious or infectious disease, and (2) is liable to transmit the contagious or infectious disease, unless the President or its designee has determined, based upon medical evidence, that the student:

- No longer has the disease.
- Is not in the contagious or infectious stage of an acute disease.
- Has a chronic infectious disease that poses little risk of transmission in the School environment with reasonable precautions.

School officials may require any child suspected of having a contagious or infectious disease to be examined by a physician and may exclude the child from school, in accordance with the procedures authorized by this policy, so long as there is a risk of transmission of the disease in the School environment.

A student who has a chronic infectious disease, and who is permitted to attend school, may be required to do so under specified conditions. Failure to adhere to the conditions will result in the student being excluded from school. A student who has a chronic infectious disease and who is not permitted to attend school or participate in school activities will be provided instruction in an alternative educational setting in accordance with the Organization's policy.

Students with acute or chronic contagious or infectious diseases and their families have a right to privacy and confidentiality. Only staff members who have a medical reason to know the identity and condition of such students will be informed. Willful or negligent disclosure of confidential information about a student's medical condition by staff members will be cause for disciplinary action and/or criminal investigation.

The Organization will implement reporting and disease outbreak control measures as necessary if a communicable disease seems to be spreading amongst the student body.

(4.6.4) Student Physical Examination

The organization may require any student to be examined by a physician for the purpose of determining whether the student is afflicted with a contagious or infectious disease or have the liability of transmitting the disease.

The organization may also require certification from a physician indicating a student's fitness to participate in specific educational programs or extra-curricular activities.

Refusal on the part of parent/guardian to obtain the required examination and to submit the certification indicating freedom from contagious or infectious disease may result in student's exclusion from school.

Students may be excused from engaging in required educational activities upon proper certification from a physician advising of student disability.

All costs of physical or other examinations shall be at the expense of students and parents or legal guardians unless state or federal law specifically mandates the examination to be the responsibility of the School.

(4.6.5) Medical Marijuana

The Governing Board recognizes that there may be students at the School who rely on the use of medical marijuana to manage or treat a medical condition. The purpose of this policy is to facilitate administration of medical marijuana with a minimum interruption of instructional time for the student and with a minimum of disruption of School operations. Administration of medical marijuana to qualified students shall be in accordance with this policy.

(4.6.5.1) Definitions

1. "Caregiver" means a resident of Florida who has agreed to assist with a qualified patient's medical use of marijuana, has a valid Florida-issued caregiver identification card, and meets all requirements of Florida law.
2. "Marijuana" means all parts of any plant of the genus Cannabis, whether growing or not; the seeds thereof; the resin extracted from any part of the plant; and every compound, manufacture, salt, derivative, mixture, or preparation of the plant or its seeds or resin, including low-THC cannabis, which are dispensed from a Florida licensed medical marijuana treatment center for medical use by a qualified patient. For purposes of this policy, "Marijuana" must be in a non-smokable, non-inhalable form, such as oils, tinctures, edible products, or lotions.
3. "Qualified Patient" means a resident of Florida and a student at the School who has been added to the medical marijuana use registry by a qualified physician to receive marijuana for a medical use and who has a Florida- issued, valid, qualified patient identification card.

(4.6.5.2) Guidelines

1. Upon written permission, a Caregiver may possess and administer Marijuana on the grounds of the School during the School day to a student provided the student is a Qualified Patient and the Caregiver's possession of the Marijuana is for the sole purpose of administering it to the Qualified Patient. A parent/guardian of a Qualified Patient must submit a written request to the President at least ten school days in advance requesting authorization to administer Marijuana pursuant to this policy.
2. The Caregiver must provide written documentation to the School that (1) he/she is the licensed Caregiver for the student; (2) the student has a valid patient identification card indicating that he/she has been added to the state medical marijuana use registry by a qualified physician.
3. The Caregiver, parent or guardian must provide the School with written documentation from a qualified physician that the student must have the drug administered during School hours as opposed to before or after School. The School will prepare, with input from the student's parent/guardian, a written plan that identifies the form, amount, possible side effects, designated time and location, identification of Caregiver, and any other instructions or relevant information regarding the administration of Marijuana. The School shall keep photocopies of the Qualified Patient identification card and Caregiver identification card on file with the written plan. All parties shall sign the written plan. If there are any changes to the type and form of medication the plan shall be updated.
4. Marijuana may only be possessed by the Caregiver and only for the purpose of administering it to the student at School. It cannot be given to, held by, or administered by any School employee, student, or other person at the School.
5. Upon receiving notice that a student meets the requirements of this policy, the parent/guardian, Caregiver, student and President or the President's designee shall meet to coordinate an appropriate time and place for the administration of the drug. Marijuana must be administered only at the designated place and time coordinated with the School.
6. The student may not possess Marijuana at any time or place except during the time of its consumption, at the designated time and location and under the supervision of the Caregiver.
7. Marijuana shall not be stored on School grounds and must be removed by the Caregiver after administering the drug.
8. This policy conveys no right to any student or the student's parent/guardian or other Caregiver to demand access to any location on School property, a school bus or at a School-sponsored event. The parent/guardian/Caregiver shall be provided a copy of this policy.
9. Permission to administer Marijuana to a Qualified Patient may be limited or revoked if the Qualified Patient and/or Caregiver violate this policy or demonstrate an inability to responsibly follow this policy's parameters. At no time shall the Qualified Patient have Marijuana in his/her possession except during the administration process, as dispensed by the Caregiver.

10. Student possession or use of Marijuana or marijuana derivatives inconsistent with this policy may be subject to disciplinary consequences, including suspension or dismissal, in accordance with the School's Code of Student Conduct. In addition, local law enforcement may be contacted.

(4.6.5.3) Termination of Policy

If the state or federal government indicates that the School's state or federal funds are jeopardized by this policy, the Board of Directors authorizes the President to suspend this policy immediately, and the administration of any form of Marijuana to students on School property shall be prohibited. In such event the School shall provide notice to affected families.

(4.6.6) Health Screenings and Services

At the beginning of the school year, the President shall notify parents of each health care service offered at the School and the option to withhold consent or decline any specific service. Parental consent to a health care service does not waive the parent's right to access his or her student's educational or health records or to be notified about a change in his or her student's services or monitoring.

(4.7) General

(4.7.1) Releasing a Student from School

The organization is concerned about the safety of our students. Students will only be released to people who are their parents or legal guardians, unless we have received **written** permission to release the student to another adult. In the case of divorce or separation of the parents, both parents shall have full rights until legal notification is provided to the School limiting the rights of either parent. If a parent or legal guardian is not able to receive a student and the person receiving the student is not an approved person with written permission to receive the student, the School shall make all efforts to contact the parents/legal guardians, and if not the parents/legal guardians, then the previously approved persons. If none are able to provide permission, then the local police or sheriff's office shall be contacted to take custody of the child or determine whether the person attempting to receive the child without written permission may do so. The President shall also notify the Florida Department of Children and Families informing them of the matter.

(4.7.2) Relations with Law Enforcement Authorities

It is the Organization's policy to cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies in promoting the health, safety, and welfare of students, staff, and the community.

(4.7.2.1) Child Abuse, Molestation, Neglect

The organization considers the welfare of students to be of paramount concern in its responsibilities. Therefore, all organization employees and volunteers are directed to take whatever action may be necessary as required by Chapter 39, and 827 Florida Statutes and all statutes and laws of the State of Florida regarding all instances of suspected child abuse, molestation, and child neglect.

Any employee of the Organization or volunteer who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse shall immediately make an oral report to the Department of Children and Families Abuse and Neglect Hotline. A person who is required to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect and who knowingly and willfully fails to do so, or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so, is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083. Further, a person who does make a report of suspected abuse in good faith has immunity from civil and criminal liability pursuant to § 39.203, Florida Statutes. The person making the call (if other than the President) shall notify the President immediately. Any person who reports should keep a record of the date and time they made the report, whom they spoke to and the general information they provided to the Abuse Hotline. The President shall maintain records of the report but these will not be placed in a student records folder unless required by law.

The report shall be made under the following circumstances: When there is reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse or maltreatment has been inflicted through willful or negligent acts which result in neglect, malnutrition, sexual abuse, physical injury, or mental injury. Neglect is a failure to provide sustenance, clothing, shelter, or medical condition. Abuse of maltreatment may also include aiding, abetting, counseling, hiring, or procuring a child to perform or participate in any photographic motion picture, exhibition show, representation, or other presentation which, in whole or in part, depicts sexual conduct, sexual excitement or masochistic abuse involving a child as defined by law.

(4.7.2.2) Interviews, Interrogations and Removal from School by Law Enforcement

The School has legal jurisdiction over students during the School day and hours of approved extracurricular activities. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the School day or periods of extracurricular activities, the President or designee will be present, and the interview will be conducted in private.

The President or designee will verify and record the identity of the officer or other authority and request an explanation of the need to question or interview the student at school. The President ordinarily will make reasonable efforts to notify the student's parents/guardians.

Removal of Students from School - Before a student at school is arrested or taken into custody by law enforcement or other legally authorized person, the President will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student. The School President will attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian that the student is being removed from school.

(4.7.2.3) Reporting Violent Behavior

The Organization requires school administrators to report acts of school violence to teachers and other employees who are directly responsible for the student's education or who interact with the student in the performance of the employee's duties. School administrators will also disclose to appropriate staff members portions of any student's individualized education program that is related to past or potentially future violent behavior. Violent behavior and the phrase "acts of school violence" are defined as the use of physical force by a student with the intent to do serious physical injury to another person while on school

property, including a school bus, or while involved in school activities.

In addition, the President will report to law enforcement officials, as soon as is reasonably practicable, the commission of any of the acts or related juvenile offenses which are committed on school property, including school buses, or while involved in school activities.

(4.7.3a)

Dress Code

A higher standard of dress encourages greater respect for individual students and others and results in a higher standard of behavior. It also prepares students for the dress code requirements of the workforce.

The President shall ensure that specific dress code expectations are made available to students and parents at the start of each school year which will include examples of acceptable and unacceptable attire.

The appearance of the student is the responsibility of the parent(s). Parents should ensure that their children come to school properly dressed. Adherence to the dress code policy is mandatory unless the principal designates a special day or occasion to promote school spirit and/or to improve school climate.

All students are required to always abide by the School dress code including while attending school or any school sponsored activity.

Specific grade level rules are located in the Parent Student Handbook and is made available to all students and parents before the start of each school year and posted on the school website.

Basic rules include but are not limited to the following:

Clothing, jewelry, buttons, haircuts, or other items or markings which are suggestive, revealing, or indecent, promotes the use of drugs, alcohol, or violence, or support discrimination based on age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, linguistic differences, marital status, national origin, race, religion, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, physical appearance, or on any other basis as determined by the President are strictly prohibited.

- Clothing must be the appropriate size for the student, not oversized or undersized.
- Clothing that is torn, has holes, or frayed is not allowed.
- All headgear (hats, scarves, bandanas etc.) is prohibited unless a cultural or religious exception is requested by the students' parents.
- Jewelry or accessories that may be used as a weapon, such as chains, spiked jewelry, dog collars, arm bands, large hair picks or any other jewelry/accessories that pose a safety concern are not permitted.
- **Upper Garments**
 - All shirts must cover midriff, back and sides always; shirts should be fastened with no visible cleavage or undergarments visible. Shirts may be short or long sleeved. The straps on sleeveless garments must be a

minimum of 1½ inch in width.

- **Lower Garments:**
 - The following types of lower garments are allowed: pants, capris, shorts, skorts, skirts and jumpers. When standing up, the length of skorts/skirts/shorts/jumpers/dresses may be no shorter than mid-thigh.
- **Shoes**
 - Shoes must be worn that cover both the toes and the heels of the feet and must be worn at all times. Shoes should not inhibit the student from performing required educational tasks/assignments.
 - Students must wear tennis shoes (athletic sneakers) while participating in PE class.
 - Footwear that is commonly considered “Beach Attire”, e.g., flip-flops, Crocs, etc., is prohibited.
- **Hair**
 - No designs or styles that will cause undue attention or distraction from the educational environment, as determined by administration, will be permitted. Symbols, shapes, or signs shaved into the hair that go against policy are prohibited.

(4.7.3b.1) Violations

The President or designee has the authority to decide if clothing complies with the School’s dress code.

- 1st offense – Warning in writing and call home for change of clothes.
- 2nd offense – Warning in writing and call home for change of clothes.
- 3rd offense - In School Suspension, call home for change of clothes, and Parent Conference.

(4.7.4) Games and Electronic Devices

Toys, games, playing cards, electronic devices and other non-academic items or games are only allowed with specific permission from a staff member (for example, clubs or special events). All usage of these items should be educationally focused and directed by a staff member. Any items found without permission will be confiscated and made available to parents for direct pick up. Items not picked up within five (5) school days may be discarded. The Organization shall not be held liable for any lost or stolen items confiscated by the School.

(4.7.5) Textbook Policy

Students will be issued books in some of their classes, which remain the property of the School. Textbooks include either the physical copy of the book itself, or the digital version. Any lost, stolen, or damaged books are the sole responsibility of the student whom the book has been loaned out to. If something occurs to this property, including lost or damaged books, the incident must be reported immediately to the student’s teacher. Students not returning books or returning severely damaged books or digital media will be required to make payment for the replacement or repair costs to the School.

(4.7.6) Dances

The Organization may periodically sponsor dances for students. Attendance is limited to those students who are enrolled with the organization and following the rules of conduct set forth by the School. Dances may be held separately for different age levels. Students are required to follow the rules and regulations of the Organization while attending any dance. All Dress Code restrictions and intent for modest and acceptable fashion wear apply.

(4.7.7) Movies in the Classroom

The Organization emphasizes the use of engaging the multiple intelligences of students, and as such will use various media to educate students. Teachers are welcome to occasionally use videos in the classroom and at school sponsored events, providing that the following policies are adhered to:

(4.7.7.1) *Copyright*

Teachers are required to follow the legal copyright requirements of videos and media within the classroom.

(4.7.7.2) *Elementary Students*

Elementary students may be shown “G” rated movies without parental permission. Movies which are “PG” require that the teacher notify parents at least one week in advance using the School’s online email communication system, giving parents the option to opt- their students out of watching the video.

(4.7.7.3) *Secondary School Students*

Students in grades six through twelve may be shown “G” or “PG” rated movies without parental permission. Movies with are rated “PG-13” require that the teacher notify parents at least one week in advance using the School’s online email communication system, giving parents the option to opt- their students out of watching the video.

(4.7.7.4) *“R” Rated Movies:*

No “R” rated movies may be shown to students during school events unless approved by the President and the student’s parents/legal guardians prior to showing any “R” rated movie.

(4.7.8) Searches by School Personnel

In accordance with the state and federal law, should a school staff member have reasonable suspicion that a crime or violation of school rules and policies has occurred; the School staff member has the authority to conduct an appropriate search.

Reasonable suspicion is defined to mean that the person initiating the search has a well-founded suspicion -- based on objective facts that can be articulated -- of either criminal activity or a violation of school rules. Reasonable suspicion is more than a mere hunch or supposition.

If reasonable suspicion exists, and if the School staff can justify the search at its inception, a reasonable search can be conducted to prove or disprove the stated suspicion.

Student lockers and desks may be searched by school administrators or staff who have a

reasonable suspicion that the lockers or desks contain drugs, alcohol, stolen properties, weapons, items posing a danger to the health or safety of students and school employees, or evidence of a violation of school policy. In addition, the Board authorizes the use of trained dogs to sniff lockers or other school property to assist in the detection of the presence of drugs, explosives, and other contraband. The School does not need reasonable suspicion to utilize drug sniffing dogs.

Students or student property may be searched based on reasonable suspicion of a violation of School rules, policy, or state and/or federal law. The privacy and dignity of students shall be respected. Searches shall be carried out in the presence of adult witnesses, preferably both the individual conducting the search and the witness will be of the same gender as the student unless otherwise agreed to by the student or parents/guardian of the student. Students may be asked to empty pockets, remove jackets, coats, shoes, and other articles of exterior clothing for examination if reasonable under the circumstances. No employee shall perform a strip search of any student.

Law enforcement officials shall be contacted if the search produces a controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, weapons, stolen goods, or evidence of a crime, in any case involving a violation of law when a student refuses to allow a search, or where the search cannot safely be conducted. Parents may also be contacted.

(4.7.9) Student Publications

The Organization encourages student production and distribution of publications which can provide opportunities for practical journalistic experience and for the written expression of differing opinions. The Organization recognizes that freedom of speech and press bring corresponding responsibilities. The President, through appointment of a faculty advisor, shall provide guidance to students in appropriate methods for preparing and producing publications. The President or designee may delay or stop distribution of any materials proposed for printing or that have been printed which may be reasonably forecast to cause substantial and material disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function of the School.

(5) Teaching and Learning

(5.1) Curriculum Development

The organization recognizes the need and value of a systematic and on-going program of curriculum review. The organization encourages and supports the professional staff in its efforts to identify and review new curricular ideas, develop and improve existing programs and evaluate all instructional programs.

The President will continuously carry out the curriculum development and implementation process. As used in this Policy, curriculum is the process, attitudes, skills and knowledge that is taught and learned at the appropriate levels.

(5.1.1) Curriculum Research

The organization directs that all curriculum developed and/or adopted by the organization shall be based on current research relative to how students best learn. Resources to be consulted include, but are not limited to, local or area universities, State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education services, Association for Supervision of Curriculum Development and similar national, state and/or local curriculum organizations. Every effort should be made to ensure that the organization's curriculum is current and based on sound educational research findings.

(5.1.2) Curriculum Map

The President or designee will ensure that a current curriculum map identifying the instructional objectives to be met at each grade level taught at the School is created and implemented. The curriculum map will be updated as necessary and be posted on the School's website.

(5.2) Textbook Adoption

The President or designee will appoint a committee of teachers and administrators to review textbook offerings in specific instructional areas. The committee will submit its report together with its recommendation to the President for final approval.

(5.2.1) Standards Alignment

The organization shall ensure that all textbook and curricular materials utilized by the School will align with Florida's Benchmark's for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T) Standards or Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.

Classroom instruction by School personnel or third parties on sexual orientation or gender identity may not occur in kindergarten through grade 3 or in a manner that is not age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate for students in accordance with state standards.

(5.2.2) Challenged Materials

The Governing Board has the ultimate responsibility for establishing the curriculum and for purchasing instructional and/or media materials to be used in the School. While the Board

recognizes the right of students to free access to the many different types of books and instructional materials, the Board also recognizes the right of teachers and administrators to select books and other materials in accordance with current trends in education and the established curriculum.

It is therefore the policy of the organization to require that books and other instructional materials shall be chosen for values of educational interest and the enlightenment of all students in the community. Instructional materials shall not be excluded on the basis of the writer's racial, nationalistic, political, or religious views. Every effort will be made to provide materials that present all points of view concerning international, national, and local problems and issues of our times. Books, or other instructional or media materials of sound factual authority, shall not be prescribed, nor removed from library shelves or classrooms on the basis of partisan or doctrinal approval or disapproval. The organization will strive to provide stimulating, effective materials that will be appropriate to the community's values and the students' abilities and maturity levels.

Instructional or media materials used in the School's educational program consist of various types of print and non-print materials. Despite the care taken to select those materials deemed to be educationally useful, occasional objections to the selection of instructional materials may be made by the public. However, the principles of academic freedom and the freedom to read must be defended, rather than the materials.

If a challenge is made, it should be properly channeled through the complaint process described elsewhere within this policy manual.

(5.3) Teacher's Lesson Plans

Teachers will be expected to submit lesson plans that correlate with both the School's Curriculum Guide and aligned to the State and/or National Standards. Lesson plans shall be submitted electronically through the method identified by the President, not later than one hour prior to the start of school before the day the lesson is to be taught. Lesson plans will be reviewed to ensure compliance with school and state requirements and will be kept on file for five years.

(5.4) Reporting Student Progress

The organization believes parents are an integral part in their child's education. To keep parents informed, students' progress will be formally reported eight times per year. Midway through each marking period a progress report will be available students and parents electronically. At the end of each quarter report cards will be distributed documenting student progress.

Additionally, the Organization will utilize an online grading system. Using this system, teachers will update student grades at least weekly onto the Internet so that parents can stay up to date about the progress of their children.

(5.5) Exceptional Student Education (ESE)

(5.5.1) Acceptance of Students

The organization operates public schools that are required to admit all students, based on space availability and subject to selection through the School's lottery system. A student's ESE status will not be used in the selection and lottery process. The school operates within the context of the larger school district. The district serves as the Local Education Agency (LEA) with regards to federal IDEA (Individual with Disabilities Education Act), and therefore, the School personnel are required to abide by the district's policies and procedures with regards to special education services. Given that the IDEA does not require that all special education services be provided at all schools, the School acknowledges that some ESE services may need to be provided at alternative locations based on the needs of the students and the district's special education delivery model.

(5.5.2) LEA (Local Education Agency)

This organization acknowledges that it does not serve as its own LEA (Local Education Agency) as defined in the federal IDEA statutes. The sponsoring school district serves this role. As such, the School acknowledges that it will abide by all applicable and required policies of the sponsoring school district with regards to special education services as described within the IDEA. If there are variations or conflicts between the School's policies and that of the School district with regards to special education, the School district's policy will take precedence.

(5.5.3) Limitation of Services

The organization strives to meet the needs of all of our students. We attempt to provide individualized instruction to all of our students. The school will retain the services of an ESE specialist to assist with working with children who have special needs. When a child with an IEP (Individualized Education Program) is considering enrolling with the organization the family will be informed of the services provided by the School and the current staffing levels. It is ultimately the responsibility of the IEP team to determine the most appropriate placement for a student within the broader context of services provided by the LEA. If a student were to be accepted to the School whose IEP requires services significantly above what is currently being offered at the School, the School will convene an IEP meeting to discuss the placement and develop a plan for meeting the needs of the individual student.

(5.6) Section 504

(5.6.1) Section 504 Plans

The organization provides a free and public education to each student who is disabled within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regardless of the nature of severity of the disability.

(5.6.2) When a 504 Plan will be Considered

The organization will consider a 504 plan for accommodations if a School Based Leadership

Team feels that the child may have a disability which would meet the criteria for such a plan. This can occur when a teacher identifies a student who is having difficulties, a parent requests a team to consider the needs of a student, or if a medical report has been submitted identifying a student as having a disability.

(5.6.3) Meeting to consider 504 Plan

If the School Based Leadership Team recommends a student be considered for a 504 plan, the President or designee will coordinate a meeting among the student's teachers and school specialist. The teacher will also ensure the parents have been notified and invited to the meeting. While at the meeting, the team members will consider whether the student's disabilities qualify them for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If so, the team will identify the accommodations necessary to allow the student to be successful within the School environment. The authorizing School District's forms will be used for both determination and the actual 504 Plan.

(5.6.4.) Eligibility

To determine if a child has a disability that qualifies them for a 504 Plan, the team will utilize the policies of authorizing School District in regard to eligibility.

(5.7) School Based Leadership Team (MTSS)

(5.7.1) Purpose

The purpose of the School Based Leadership Team [SBLT] is to discuss issues that may arise regarding specific students. The team will be comprised of a diverse group of professionals who will brainstorm strategies and research-based interventions to use with students that may be having academic, behavioral, or other concerns within school. The SBLT will analyze school data, assist with the providing suggestions for the MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support) process, and make recommendations for modifications in the classroom and monitor student progress by analyzing interventions to assess response to those interventions

(5.7.2) Membership

The President shall, at the start of each school year, assign members to the School Based Leadership Team. Membership will consist of the President, ESE Coordinator(s), and a careful selection of other staff members who represent a variety of backgrounds and expertise. Members shall serve for the entire school year.

Additionally, the specific team of teachers who work with an individual student will be requested to attend when that specific student is being discussed.

(5.7.3) Procedure

The SBLT, in conjunction with the President, will regularly review school assessment data to determine students needing extra assistance. If a staff member wishes to seek the advice of the SBLT for a specific student, they shall complete a request form and forward it to the President. The President shall then schedule a team meeting and distribute the relevant information to the team members. When the staff member requesting the meeting completes the form, they shall indicate whether or not they feel it would be beneficial to invite the parents to the meeting. The

President shall make the determination whether parents will be invited and will coordinate their attendance if requested.

When the School Based Leadership Team meets, the staff member requesting the meeting has the responsibility to explain what the key issues or concerns are, and the team shall work together to brainstorm a list of action items to be attempted with the student. One staff member will be assigned to follow up at a specified time interval after the meeting to see how the recommendations are working.

(5.8) English as a Second Language

The organization is committed to identifying and assessing the educational needs of students whose native or home language is other than English (“ESOL”). Once identified, the School will provide appropriate programs to address the needs of these students.

(5.8.1) Home Language Assessment

Upon being accepted to the School, the President will ensure each student’s records are reviewed to ensure a home language survey/assessment has been completed, and if it has not, will ensure the survey is completed by the student’s parents within the first two weeks of enrollment.

(5.8.2) Services

The organization will take steps to ensure to the maximum extent practicable that the interests of ESOL students are included in the development and implementation of School programs and services that are offered by the School to and for its student body. The President will ensure that all legal requirements are adhered to in regard to the instruction and services provided to students who qualify for ESOL students.

(5.8.3) Adherence to District Policies Regarding ESOL

This organization acknowledges that it is required to abide by the policies of the sponsoring school district with regards to ESOL services and the requirements under Florida Statutes and the League of United Latin American Citizens (“LULAC”) et al. Consent Decree. If there are variations or conflicts between the School’s policies and that of the School district with regards to ESOL services, the School district’s policy will take precedence.

(5.9) Instructional Time

The primary focus of the School's staff and programs is maximization of student learning. While learning occurs as a result of extracurricular activities and as a result of non-structured interaction between students and between students and staff, most learning occurs as a result of planned learning activities during class time. Therefore, every effort will be made to minimize disruptions in instructional time. Public address announcements and pull-out programs will be planned to avoid loss of critical instruction time.

(6) School Management

(6.1) Students

(6.1.1) Supervision of Students

Students are to be supervised at all times while under the control of the organization. This includes the time students are attending school, while away from the School on school-sponsored events, or while participating in extracurricular activities, such as clubs. Supervision will be provided for 15-minutes prior and 15-minutes after the start and end of school. Parents will be notified of supervision times at least twice per year in writing through the School's website. Students may not be left alone or without supervision.

(6.2) School Records

(6.2.1) Security of Student Records

All student information is considered confidential and will be maintained as such in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including FERPA. Such information shall be available to the parent or guardian or to the student him or herself who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years within a reasonable period of time not to exceed 30 days after receipt of request. Professionally competent personnel shall be available for interpreting any data with the student's cumulative folder. Copies of such contents shall also be made available to parents/students at cost, within the limitations of copying facilities.

The School may, without the consent of the student or his/her parents, release student records contained within the cumulative folder or any supplementary classifications to school officials who have a proper educational purpose in examining such information.

No other person may have access to or make copies of a student's records, except under the following circumstances:

- The consent must be given by the student's parent or guardian except when a student reaches the age of eighteen (18) or is married, at which time his consent and not that of his parents shall be obtained in order to release the information; and a student who meets the foregoing requirements shall consent to parental access to his records. However, if the student is a dependent under the Internal Revenue Code of a parent, or if another exception applies under 34 CFR § 99.31 (a), then the parents still have access to the student's education records without consent from the eligible student.
- The consent shall be written and shall specify the records to be released and to whom they are to be released. Each request for consent shall be handled separately; blanket permission for the release of information shall not be acceptable.
- Under compulsion of law: courts, law enforcement agencies, agencies subpoenaing such records.
- When data for outside purposes is released in such form that no individual

student is identifiable.

- When the President determines the release of specific information as described by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 is in the best interests of the student, provided such information has not been disallowed by the parents.
- The President may disclose to appropriate parties, including parents/guardians and eligible students, personally identifiable student information in health and safety emergencies if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. The School may make the determination whether to disclose information to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals based upon, but not limited to, the following factors taking into account the totality of the circumstances: (1) the seriousness of the threat to the health or safety of the student or eligible student or other individuals; (2) the need for the information to meet the emergency; (3) whether the parties to whom the information is disclosed are in a position to deal with the emergency; and (4) the extent to which time is of the essence in dealing with the emergency

The parent or guardian, or an eighteen (18) year old or older student, shall have the right to challenge the accuracy and authenticity of data recorded within the student’s cumulative folder. Any such data that is determined by the President to be inaccurate shall be expunged from the record; and an appeal from the decision of the President shall be made to the Governing Board.

In each instance in which a student’s record is transferred out of the organization, the School shall retain a complete copy of the student’s academic record, together with all other confidential information and reports. After three (3) years this material will be sent to Central Files within the School district in which the School is located.

(6.2.2) Fees for Copies of Educational Records

The school reserves the right to charge the following fees for copies of educational records:

<u>TYPE OF RECORD</u>	<u>FEES</u>
Legal page, one side	\$0.15
Letter page, one side	\$0.15
Legal page, double-sided	\$0.20
Letter page, double-sided	\$0.20

For any copies not listed above, the charge shall be limited to the actual cost of duplication.

(6.2.3) Up-To-Date Records

It is the parent/legal guardian’s responsibility to keep the School’s administrative office informed and up to date regarding any changes of names, addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, etc. so that important student information may be received from or provided to the parent/legal guardian in a timely manner for the benefit and well- being of

the student. Parents must return the beginning of the year paperwork within two weeks to remain enrolled.

(6.2.4) Record Storage

The President shall be responsible for establishing procedures to ensure that all student records are stored in secure and fire-proof storage areas. Only authorized individuals will have access to student records, and a log of all individuals who access a student's cumulative record shall be maintained. Staff members shall not be allowed to borrow or remove records from the student storage area unless expressly authorized by the President.

The President shall assign a staff member who is responsible for ensuring the implementation of state administrative rule 6A-1.0955 is followed with regards to the information that must be permanently maintained, and that which may be periodically eliminated once no longer useful.

(6.2.5) Record Retention

The school will abide by the Records Retention Policy established by the FL Department of State: Division of Library and Information Services section GS7 which currently can be found at: <https://dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/records-management/general-records-schedules/>

The records retention schedule establishes the minimum length of time that the record series must be retained. Records retention will be overseen by the Office Manager and a records review will be conducted no less than annually.

Storage of archived records will be maintained in the locked storage area of the organization or designated public storage facility. Access to this area will be limited to the President, treasurer, officers of the charter school and the Office Manager.

Non-permanent files will be stored in cardboard file boxes. Each file box will be labeled on the front with the contents, dates covered, and destruction date if applicable. Permanent records will be maintained in metal fire-resistant file cabinets.

Files should be stored in boxes with similar items, dates, and retention periods. This will allow for easier access and purging of records. A general rule to keep in mind is that it is better to fill a file box only half than to file dissimilar types of files in the same box. The Office Manager will be responsible for categorizing and maintaining a listing of records maintained and the location (i.e., by wall unit and shelf row number).

When possible, electronic records will not be deleted. If the need arises, electronic records such as: e-mails, voice mails, electronic calendars, CD-ROMs, DVDs, tapes, thumb or flash drives, back-up drives, floppy disks, computer hard drives, the School's intranet and website(s), and other media for storing electronic records can be scheduled for routine deletion throughout the year or periodically backed up in compliance with the records-retention Schedule.

Three to six months after each year-end, the Office Manager will proceed with the destruction of all files that have exceeded their recognized holding period. A listing of file

categories to be destroyed will be circulated to all the officers thirty days prior to destruction for review and comment. The actual listing of records destroyed will be maintained permanently for future reference. Destruction of the files will be by shredding. Disposal of records into the organization's general trash service is not allowed.

The most common documents for retention are as follows (as of 2/2021) - any item that is not listed can be found by visiting the Division of Library and Information Services Section GS7.

Item	Retention Period
Absentee Excuses and Admission Slips	30 days after end of grading period provided any grade appeal period expired.
Access Log: Personnel Records	Retain as long as personnel file.
Access Log: Student Education Records	Permanent.
Accident Records: Students	4 anniversary years after date accident reported.
Attendance Records: Student	3 fiscal years or until all applicable FTE audits have been released, whichever is longer.
Bus Schedules/Reports	3 fiscal years.
Certificates: Age	Retain until obsolete, superseded, or administrative value is lost.
Charter School Records (Approval/Denial...)	2 anniversary years after denial of application or expiration or termination of charter.

Clinic Log	7 anniversary years.
Discipline Records: Student (Major Offense)	3 school years.
Discipline Records: Student (Minor Offense)	Retain until end of school year.
E-Rate Program Records	10 fiscal years after completion of program or last day of service delivered in the funding year, whichever occurs later.
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Records	5 fiscal years after completion of or withdrawal/transfer from program.
Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Records	5 fiscal years after graduation, transfer out of program, refusal of admittance to the program, or withdrawal from school district.
Expulsion Records	5 fiscal years after final disposition.

Food Service Records	5 fiscal years.
Full-Time Equivalency Records	3 fiscal years.
Grade Records: Final Grades	Retain until posted to permanent record.
Grade Records: Teacher Grade Books	3 fiscal years.
Health Immunization Certification	Permanent
In-Service Education Records	5 fiscal years.
Registrations: K-12	3 fiscal years.
School Demographic Reports	Permanent.
Student Education Records: Category A	Permanent
Truancy Case Files	5 anniversary years after case closed.
Yearbooks	Permanent

(6.2.6)

Annual Written Notice

An annual notice of parent/guardian and eligible students' rights under FERPA and Fla. Stat. § 1002.22, regarding student records, shall be published in the School's Student Handbook and published on the School's website. This annual notice to parents/guardians and eligible students shall include the information required by 34 CFR § 99.7, Fla. Stat. § 1002.22 (2)(e), and State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.0995. This notice shall also be translated to other languages so as to effectively notify parents who have a primary or home language other than English, and the President shall develop methods to inform parents/guardians of the notice if they are unable to comprehend the notice in English or these translated languages.

The President shall annually provide notice to parents and eligible students if PII will be collected by the online educational service. The notice shall include notice that the PII will be collected, how the data will be used, when and how it will be destroyed and terms of re-disclosure to other third parties (if applicable). The annual notice shall be published in the School's Student Handbook and published on the School's website. In addition, the President shall provide notice on its website as described in Section below.

(6.2.6.1)

Online educational service providers (Internet Safety)

Online educational service providers deemed necessary by the School for its programs shall be deemed to have a legitimate educational interest in student PII. The School shall only provide the minimum amount of PII necessary to use the services of the online educational provider. The PII shall only be disclosed to the provider as long as the provider:

- (a) Performs a service of function for which the School would otherwise use its own employees; and
- (b) Has been determined by the School to have a legitimate educational interest in the

records and the online educational provider has been specifically included in the annual FERPA notice provided to families; and

(c) Agrees to be under the control of the School with regard to the use and maintenance of education records; and

(d) Uses PII only for authorized purposes and may not disclose PII to other parties.

Student Data Privacy:

- Any student data shared with software providers is subject to a student data privacy agreement. This agreement outlines how the data will be used, protected, and maintained by the software providers in compliance with personally identifiable information (PII) regulations, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA). To review the details of any of the student data privacy agreements, please visit <https://www.berkleymiddle.net/internet-safety.html>

Filtering and Content Restrictions:

The school employs an in-house web filtering system to ensure a safe online environment for students. The system filters websites based on various criteria, including but not limited to, social media, explicit content, drugs, violence, and adult material. Access to websites considered inappropriate or harmful is restricted. The aim is to create a productive and secure digital space for learning. The school’s internet filtering practices are fully compliant with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Email Communication:

Student email accounts are limited to communication within the school’s network. External communication is restricted to ensure a focused and secure educational environment. This measure is taken to prevent unsolicited emails and potential security risks.

Software Installation and Execution:

Student devices are configured to prevent the installation of unauthorized software and the execution of arbitrary executable programs. This ensures the integrity of the devices and minimizes the risk of malware, viruses, or disruptions to the educational process.

Staff Oversight and Approval:

All staff members are required to review the school’s list of approved websites and software before allowing student access. In cases where a specific online resource is blocked, staff must request its unblocking from the Internet Privacy and Security Board. This practice ensures that all online resources are in line with the school’s educational goals and adhere to established content guidelines. It also empowers staff to make informed decisions about the suitability and relevance of digital resources, maintaining a secure and productive online learning environment for students.

Prohibited Platforms:

TikTok and any successor platforms are strictly prohibited and blocked from being used on any devices provided by the school. This measure is in place to maintain a distraction-free and safe online learning environment.

Personal Devices on School Network:

Personal devices are not allowed to connect to the school’s network. This policy helps maintain network security, prevent potential disruptions, and ensures a controlled digital environment for learning.

No School Promotion on TikTok or Successor Platforms:

The school will never use TikTok or any successor platform to promote the school, school-sponsored clubs, extracurricular organizations, or athletic teams. This ensures that the school maintains a professional and consistent image across all digital platforms.

(6.2.6.2) Prohibition of Commercial Purposes

The School shall not use any online educational service that will share or sell a student's PII for commercial purposes without providing parents a means to either consent or opt-out.

(6.2.6.3) Notice

For any online educational service that a student is required to use, the School shall provide notice on its website of the PII that may be collected, how it will be used, when it will be destroyed and the terms of re-disclosure, if any. This notice must include a link to the online educational service's terms of service and privacy policy, if publicly available.

(6.3) School Safety

(6.3.1) School Safety Plan

The President shall coordinate with the School's Governing Board, and relevant staff teams to develop and annually review a comprehensive School Safety Plan. This plan shall provide a comprehensive plan for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of students and staff and clearly lay out the procedures to be followed in various situations which could jeopardize the health, safety or welfare of the students and staff of the School. Pursuant to Florida statutes, the School Safety Plan shall be a confidential document and not available via a public records request.

Pursuant to Section 1006.07, Florida Statutes the plan must include how the School will consult with public safety agencies, for emergency drills and for actual emergencies, including, but not limited to, fires, natural disasters, active shooter and hostage situations, and bomb threats. The plan shall include plans for regularly conducting drills for active shooter and hostage situations, which shall be conducted at last five (5) times a school year. The School will follow the District's Critical Incident Response Plan (CIRP).

(6.3.2) School Safety Specialist

The President shall either serve as, or designate another member to serve as the School Safety Specialist for the School. The identity of this person should be reported annually to the Governing Board. The School Safety Specialist is required to attend trainings provided regarding school safety procedures from the district and state. The individual shall also serve as a member of the Threat Management Team.

(6.3.3) Safe-School Officer

The School shall comply with Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes and provide a Safe- School Officer. The School should consult with the sponsoring school district and determine if the sponsoring school district will establish or assign a Safe-School Officer This individual will be on campus whenever students are present for school related activities. The Governing Board

shall select one of the four (4) available options available in Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes to meet this requirement (School Resource Officer, School Safety Officer, School Guardian, or School Security Guard). The Board shall ensure contracts, insurance and budgets are set aside to adequately support the selected option.

(6.3.4) FortifyFL

The school will ensure to adequately promote the use of FortifyFL, the mobile suspicious activity reporting tool operated by the State of Florida. The President will ensure that there is a link on the School's website, that at least two email communications per year will make reference to the service, poster will be made available on the community bulletin board. In addition, the application will be installed on all mobile devices issued to students, and the site will be bookmarked on all computer devices issued to students.

(6.3.5) Mobile Panic Alert System

The President shall annually review options for a mobile panic alert system and ensure that the system is installed, and that appropriate staff members are trained on the use of the system. The President will work with emergency services, approved by the Florida Department of Education to ensure the system is set up and operating appropriately.

(6.3.6) Fire Drill Procedures

The School Safety Plan will clearly document the procedures and details for fire drill and emergency evacuations. All students and staff members shall be made aware of the plan, and maps highlighting the escape routes will be posted in all school rooms and provided to students and staff if requested. Fire drills will be conducted at least five (5) times per school year. Drills will be held at various times throughout the day and will test various types of fire emergencies. Documentation of the drills will be maintained by the organization for review. The School will follow the District's Critical Incident Response Plan (CIRP).

(6.3.7) Tornado Drill Procedures

The School Safety Plan will clearly document the shelter in place procedures to be used for emergency weather such as tornados. All staff and students shall be made aware of this plan. The plan will be practiced at least twice per year as is required by Florida law. Documentation of the drills will be maintained by the organization for review. The School will follow the District's Critical Incident Response Plan (CIRP).

(6.3.8) Hurricane Closures

The organization will follow the same emergency closures as the authorizing school district. Parents should monitor local news outlets during inclement weather. If the public schools are closed, the School will also be closed. In the event that multiple closures occur, and time must be made up, school days will be added according to the adopted amended school calendar by the School's governing board.

(6.3.9) Threat Management

In the event a student appears to pose a threat of violence or physical harm to him or herself or others, the staff member with concerns should immediately notify the President. The President will activate the Threat Management Team who shall make a preliminary determination about whether the student poses such a threat. The President shall

immediately attempt to notify the student's parent or legal guardian. Nothing in this subsection shall preclude School personnel from acting immediately to address an imminent threat, including contacting local law enforcement.

In the event that the Threat Management Team has decided that the student poses a threat of violence to himself or herself or others or exhibits significantly disruptive behavior or need for assistance, authorized members of the Threat Management Team may obtain criminal history record information pursuant to Section 985.04(1), Florida Statutes. A member of a Threat Management Team may not disclose any criminal history record information obtained pursuant to this section or otherwise use any record of an individual beyond the purpose for which such disclosure was made to the Threat Management Team.

(6.4) Fund Raising

The Organization is incorporated as a nonprofit organization which relies on governmental funds and contributions to effectively educate our students. As a result, fundraising is necessary to help support the educational programs offered. The President shall approve all fundraising activities and ensure that families are not being asked to contribute excessively at any given time. All fundraisers will identify the purpose for the money raised. Fundraising is not a prerequisite or on-going requirement for any student or family to attend a public charter school.

(6.5) Photographs of Students

(6.5.1) Portraits

The Organization will sponsor one or two formal portrait days for students. A company which best meets the needs of the families for a reasonable cost will be selected by school staff. These photos will be utilized for the creation of the yearbook in addition to being sold to the families. Portraits may be purchased by students and parents/legal guardians and portraits may be used by the School in grade-level compilations unless specifically opted-out by a student or parent/legal guardian.

(6.5.2) Snapshots

Throughout the school year School staff may take pictures of events that happen during the School day. Should a parent not want their child photographed in such a way, they must submit written notification of their request to the President. This request will then be passed along to school staff taking such photographs. Snapshots may periodically be used for promotional materials for the School. Every attempt will be made to receive parental permission prior to the publishing of promotional materials which include the photograph of students. Additionally, the School reserves the right to utilize such snapshots through electronic media which do not individually identify any specific student. If a parent or guardian requests the removal of such a photograph, the School staff will comply with the request within 72 hours.

(6.6) Gifts

Collections of funds from students by students for the purpose of giving gifts to a staff member of the organization is only permitted if sponsored by the PTO or a staff member who will run the fund-raising effort according to school policy. In the event that such an activity is approved by the President it must be done through the PTO organization or by staff member following the Fund-Raising policy as established herein.

(6.7) Volunteers

(6.7.1) Background Checks

All individuals who are not employed by the Organization must enter through the main office. Should they wish to go beyond the main office, their identification must be scanned by the background check system which will print a badge to wear, identifying that the volunteer has properly checked in through the office with proper protocols followed. It is the responsibility of all staff members to help monitor the halls to ensure that all visitors have properly checked into the office. Any individual who does not have an appropriate name badge must be walked back to the office to ensure they are signed in properly.

(6.7.2) Background Check Concern

If, during the background check, an individual is identified as having a background as a sexual predator as defined by Florida Statutes, the President will immediately be notified by the system. The person running the check should call the President and/or designee. The following guidelines are applicable in the event a background check returns that the person is a sexual predator:

- If the person trying to gain entry has a relative who is a student attending the School, and there are no outstanding court orders barring that person from having contact with the child, the person may enter the School only with a staff member escort. The individual may not be left alone with any student on school property.
- If the person trying to gain entry has a relative who is a student attending the School, and there are restrictions on the visitation, the appropriate action will be taken as identified by the court documents. In most situations, the Police Department will be notified.
- If the person trying to gain entry does not have any relatives attending this school, they will not be permitted access to the building, and the Police Department will be notified.
- If the person trying to gain access is a volunteer, the person will not be granted entry until after their information has been entered into school district's volunteer background check system, and a clearance is given from the appropriate district offices.

(6.7.3) Student Supervision Background Checks

If an adult plans to volunteer with students (such as field trip chaperones, student tutoring, etc.) the individual must complete a volunteer registration form. If the adult will be responsible for student supervision (such as running an after-school club), the parent must go through a Level 2 background check, the cost of which the adult is responsible for. The

school district conducts the complete background check to ensure the individual is clear of anything in their past which would prevent them from working with children. The adult may not volunteer until the background check is received and approved in writing by the President.

(6.8) Computer, E-Mail, and Cell Phone Usage

(6.8.1) School Telephones

Telephones are provided for business use only. Personal use of telephone systems should be for emergency use only. Employees of the School shall refrain from making or receiving outside calls while they are responsible for the supervision or education of students.

(6.8.2) Bring Your Own Device

The use and possession of personal electronic devices are limited based on this policy. Personal devices shall include personal cell phones, tablets, and computers. The use of such devices may only be used for valid instructional purposes while on campus.

Student use of electronic devices are not allowed within the School building without the express permission of the administration prior to use of the electronic device. Staff members may only use personal devices for instructional purposes while responsible for the supervision or education of students. Staff may use personal cell phones during scheduled breaks, planning time, or other times when not actively required to supervise or educate students and are not on working hours.

(6.8.2.1) Connecting to School Networks

Only approved devices may be connected to the School's network. Prior to connecting said devices to the network, the user must agree to the acceptable use policy of the organization. The administration, in conjunction with the IT staff of the School, may institute limits on the minimum device requirements for devices to connect to the internal networks.

(6.8.2.2) Responsibility for Personal Devices

The purchase, maintenance, insurance, and safety of any personal technology devices is the responsibility of the student and their family. The School is not responsible for lost or broken devices. The Organization is not responsible for the security of personal belongings, including but not limited to personal electronic devices. Student personal devices must be powered off and kept in their book bag during school hours.

(6.8.2.3) Restriction of Usage

Devices brought on campus should be free of any material that may be deemed inappropriate. Pornography, gambling, gaming, and media piracy on devices is strictly prohibited while on school property. Any form of distribution of videos or pictures of other students and staff is forbidden.

Personal devices must not be used in violation of the technology policy. Excessive use of resources, or improper use of resources will result in loss of privileges. Any attempt to circumvent the Schools network security and/or filtering policies is forbidden. This includes downloading programs to bypass security or accessing and setting up proxies.

Students should not connect to any wireless service or network that is not operated by the School while on campus or participating in school activities. Proper log on credentials will be supplied by members of school staff as needed.

(6.8.2.4) Consequences for Misuse

If A Student Fails to Follow the Restrictions of Usage, above:

- First offense will result in the device being confiscated and the student receiving disciplinary action. The Parent/Guardian will be contacted and permitted to pick up the device at the end of the day.
- Second offense will result in confiscation of device and suspension of personal device access for a time limit to be established by the President. The device will be available for pickup by the parent/guardian at the end of the School day.
- Third offense, the student will no longer be permitted to bring their personal device to school.
- If evidence of illegal activity is found on a student's personal device the administration is required to notify proper authorities.

(6.8.3) Technology Acceptable Use Policy

All employees, students and volunteers of the organization may be granted access and usage of the organization's technology resources, including network and internet usage based on need and job/student status. All access to usage codes and/or devices is assigned to the individual and is not to be shared. Users are responsible for the security of their assigned devices. Users should log out/secure devices when not in use and report any unauthorized usage promptly. All care should be taken to honor intellectual properties including copyright and license restrictions. Respect should be given to other users. Spying, bullying and harassment will not be permitted in any fashion. General usage should be for the purposes of school business or classes only.

(6.8.3.1) Restrictions on usage:

Users may not do the following:

- Provide access to unauthorized users.
- Utilize accounts and other privileges that they no longer are authorized to access.
- Interfere with restrictions or security settings on any device or system on the organization's network.
- Harass, bully, or violate the privacy of other users on the system.
- Destroy, copy, or steal any information on the network without explicit permission from the creator or appropriate staff members.
- Introduce, propagate, or create malware of any type including but not limited to Trojan Horses, viruses, spyware, worms, etc.
- Damage computer or network systems by any means.
- Use knowledge of network to gain unauthorized access or resources.
- Deprive other authorized users' access of full system and network resources or degrade system performance.

- Chain and mass emails should be avoided except for official business, and source addresses should never be altered.
- Stream media without authorization for specific activities.
- Comment or act on behalf of the organization unless the individual has permission to do so.
- Use the organization's resources for private business or commercial enterprise.
- Conduct political activities without express permission of the organization's leadership.

(6.8.3.2) Copyright and Licenses:

Due to legal restrictions and penalties on software licenses software may not be copied or installed without approval from the organization's IT personnel or leadership. Illegal usage of software may result in criminal penalties up to and including imprisonment.

Software may not be copied from the organization's devices for personal access. If an employee is working remotely a device will be set up for use with properly licensed software necessary for use.

(6.8.3.3) Internet Usage

The organization offers Internet access for student and staff use at school and various online tools for staff, student, and parent use. This policy is the Acceptable Use Policy for your use of our online tools and Internet use at school. The Internet system and online tools have been established for a limited educational purpose to include classroom activities, career development, and limited high quality, self-discovery activities as well as research. It has not been established as a public access or public forum and the organization has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the material you accessed or post, the training you need to have before you are allowed to use the system, and enforce all rules set forth in the School code and the laws of the state of Florida. Further, you may not use this system for commercial purposes to offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the system or use the system for political lobbying. Access to the Internet is available through this school only with permission of the President or his or her designee. Passwords are not issued until users read and sign the Acceptable Use for Technology policy. This policy applies to the use on school equipment at school, or the use of services established or maintained by the School which may also be used off property. All internet usage on the organization's systems is monitored to ensure compliance.

(6.8.3.3.1) Acceptable Usage:

- Communications in the course of business or educational interactions and assigned responsibilities, including but not limited to: parents, students, coworkers, peers, business partners, etc.
- Acquiring or sharing information necessary or related to the performance of an individual's assigned responsibilities.
- Participating in educational or professional development activities
- Utilizing the Internet as an educational tool in the classroom.

(6.8.3.3.2) Internet Safety

Per Federal law, the organization's policy is to:

- prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications;
- prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity;
- prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and
- comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Public Law No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)]

(6.8.3.3.2.1) Definitions

Key terms are as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Technology Protection Measure. The term "technology protection measure" means a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access to visual depictions that are:

- Obscene, as that term is defined in section 1460 of title 18, United States Code;
- Child Pornography, as that term is defined in section 2256 of title 18, United States Code; or
- Sexual Contact. The terms "sexual act" and "sexual contact" have the meanings given to such terms in section 2246 of title 18, United States Code.
- Harmful to Minors. The term "harmful to minors" means any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that:
 - Taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion;
 - Depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and
 - Taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

(6.8.3.3.2.2) Supervision and Monitoring

All staff members are responsible to supervise and monitor online unsafe of the online computer network and internet access in accordance with this policy and the Children's Internet Protection Act.

(6.8.3.3.3) Personal Safety

Students should keep in mind and be explicitly taught personal safety guidelines for being online. For example:

- Students will not post contact information (e.g., address, phone number) about themselves or any other person.

- Students will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without parental approval. Any contact of this nature or the receipt of any message that could be inappropriate or makes the student feel uncomfortable should be reported to school authorities immediately.

(6.8.3.3.4) *User's Rights*

- **Free Speech.** Individuals have the right to free speech, as set forth in the School disciplinary code. This applies also to communication on the Internet. The Internet is considered a limited forum, similar to the School newspaper, and therefore the School may restrict your right to free speech for valid educational reasons. The school will not restrict right to free speech on the basis of its disagreement with the opinions expressed.
- **Search and Seizure.** Users should expect no privacy of the contents of your personal files on the School system. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to discovery that you have violated this policy, the School code, or the law. An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that you have violated this acceptable use policy, the School disciplinary code, or the law.
- **Due Process.** The school will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the organization's Internet system. In the event of a claim that a user has violated this policy, the School disciplinary code, or the law in the use of our system, the individual will be given written notice of suspected violations and an opportunity to present an explanation according to school code and/or state and federal law. Additional restrictions may be placed on user's access to the Internet account.

(6.8.3.3.5) *Inappropriate Use:*

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the organization's online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) preventing unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; and (b) preventing unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors. Disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measure that has been implemented for this purpose, constitutes a violation of CIPA.

The following list are examples of the type of information that would be deemed by the School to be inappropriate:

- Illegal or unlawful usage will not be permitted, including but not limited to: copyright infringement, obscenity, libel, slander, fraud, defamation, plagiarism, harassment, intimidation, forgery, impersonation, illegal gambling, soliciting for illegal pyramid schemes, and computer tampering (e.g., spreading computer viruses).
- Any internet use inconsistent with the rules, policies and mission of the organization is prohibited.

- Excessive personal internet use is prohibited.
- Individuals should not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any computer system or go beyond the authorized access by entering another person's user information or accessing another person's files.
- Individuals will not deliberately attempt to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means.
- Individuals shall not establish any school computers on a peer-to-peer network unless previously approved by management.
- Individuals may not view, copy, alter, or destroy data, software, documentation, or data communications on any school computer or network without authorized permission.
- Users should limit sharing, downloading, or storing large files or videos in order to maintain network performance.
- Pornography, gambling, gaming, and media piracy on school devices are strictly prohibited.
- Users will not use our system to engage in any other disruptive or illegal act, such as cyberbullying, arranging for a drug sale or the purchase of alcohol, engaging in criminal gang activity, threatening the safety of a person, etc.

(6.8.3.3.6) *Monitoring and Filtering for Inappropriate Materials*

The organization's equipment or accounts may be monitored for inappropriate usage. If activity is discovered, or reported, in violation of school policy or applicable laws, records retrieved may be used to document the wrongful content in accordance with due process.

- The organization's network should not be used to access material that is profane or obscene (pornography) or that advocates illegal acts of violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature). A special exception may be made for hate literature if the purpose of the access is to conduct research with both teacher and parental approval.
- If a user mistakenly accesses inappropriate information, the user should immediately report it to their teacher or direct supervisor. This will protect you against a claim of intentional violation of this policy.

(6.8.3.3.7) *Security*

Users may not share passwords or other access data with another person. In the event an account has been compromised, or a password lost, the user must contact the President or designee to request a reset password. Internet usage must be limited to approved purposes by approved users only.

(6.8.3.3.8) *Failure to Comply*

Allegations of misconduct will be adjudicated according to established procedures. Sanctions for inappropriate use of the Internet may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Temporary or permanent revocation of access to some or all computing and networking resources and facilities;

- Disciplinary action according to applicable school policies; and/or
- Legal action according to applicable laws.

(6.8.3.4) E-mail

(6.8.3.4.1) Account Activation/Termination

Staff will be assigned an email with individually established usernames and passwords. Account and password information are the responsibility of the user. Email access will be revoked if/when the user ceases association with the organization, and user email files will be locked. The organization will not maintain or forward emails to former staff and other associates.

(6.8.3.4.2) Expectations of Use

The organization will disseminate official communications via email. Employees are expected to monitor email regularly and provide appropriate responses, as necessary.

Emails sent from an account created by the organization shall reflect on the culture of the School. Please ensure courtesy in email usage. It is expected that all users will follow these policies and procedures as well as applicable laws in their use of the email system. E-mails sent through the School's system are subject to public records law and are subject to public document requests.

(6.8.3.4.3) Inappropriate Usage

Avoid sending large files (5 MB or above) via email, whenever possible use a shared drive system to transmit bulk files.

The following are prohibited on the organization's email system:

- Use of email for illegal or unlawful purposes, including copyright infringement, obscenity, libel, slander, fraud, defamation, plagiarism, harassment, intimidation, forgery, impersonation, soliciting for illegal pyramid schemes, and computer tampering (e.g., spreading of computer viruses).
- Altering, deleting, or otherwise tampering with emails or files belonging to the organization or other users.
- Opening email attachments or links within messages from unknown or unsigned sources. Users should always make sure that links and attachments are legitimate to avoid viruses, etc.
- Sharing passwords or attempting to obtain another user's password.
- Commercial, mass mailing, chain letters, and political emails.

(6.8.3.4.4) Monitoring and Confidentiality

The organization's email accounts and the systems they are built on are school property. All emails, even deleted emails, are subject to monitoring and archival for records maintenance. Users should be mindful of communication within their emails due to public record laws and confidentiality restrictions. No confidential information should be shared outside of the secured organization's system via email as email is an insecure

communication protocol.

(6.8.3.4.5) Reporting Misuse

Any and all misuse should be promptly reported to IT personnel and/or school leadership. If a concerning e-mail is received, do not interact with the e-mail and notify IT personnel immediately.

(6.8.3.4.6) Failure to Comply

Allegations of misconduct will be adjudicated according to established procedures. Sanctions for inappropriate use of email may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Temporary or permanent revocation of access to some or all computing and networking resources and facilities;
- Disciplinary action according to applicable school policies; and/or
- Legal action according to applicable laws.

(6.8.3.5) Server and Other Data Storage

In order to maximize storage capability only business or school related files should be saved on school servers. Personal files such as mp3's, pictures, and games should not be saved on shared server space. These files could also contain malware which endangers the whole school's infrastructure. Nonbusiness files may be deleted without notification.

(6.8.3.5.1) Storage Restrictions

Storage quotas may be implemented at any time. Employees will be notified when they near their storage quota. Requests for additional storage space must be presented to the IT department.

(6.8.3.6) Other Acknowledgements

The Organization makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the system will be error free or without defect. The organization will not be responsible for any damage you may suffer including, but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The school is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising from unauthorized use of the system.

(6.8.4) Social Media Policy

The organization has developed the following guideline to provide direction for instructional employees, students and the School community when participating in online social media activities. Whether or not an employee chooses to participate in a blog, wiki, online social network or any other form of online publishing or discussion is his or her own decision. Free speech protects educators who want to participate in social media, schools may discipline teachers if their speech, including online postings, disrupts regular School operations or is contrary to the Organization's mission. The organization's social media guidelines encourage employees to participate in online social activities. By accessing, creating or contributing to any blogs, wikis, or other social media for classroom or district use,

employees agree to abide by the guidelines established herein.

(6.8.4.1) Social Media Guidelines for Faculty & Staff (6.8.4.1.1)

Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, Digital Images & Video

(6.8.4.1.1.1) Personal Responsibility

- Organizational employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face.
- When posting to your blog you understand that the information is representative of your views and opinions and not necessarily the views and opinions of the organization (*See Blogging Rules*)
- Blogs, wikis, and podcasts are an extension of your classroom. What is inappropriate in your classroom should be deemed inappropriate online.
- You should ensure that content associated with you is consistent with your work at the organization.
- When contributing online do not post confidential student information and abide by all state and federal guidelines regarding the same.

(6.8.4.1.1.2) Disclaimers

- The Organization's employees must include disclaimers within their personal blogs that the views are their own and do not reflect on their employer. For example, "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent my organization's positions, strategies, opinions, or policies."
- Classroom blogs do not require a disclaimer, but teachers are encouraged to moderate content contributed by students.

(6.8.4.1.1.3) Copyright and Fair Use

- Respect copyright and fair use guidelines. See U.S. Copyright Office - Fair Use (<http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html>)
- A hyperlink to outside sources is recommended. Be sure not to plagiarize but give credit when required. When using a hyperlink, be sure that the content is appropriate and adheres to the organization's acceptable use policy.
- It is recommended that blogs be licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 United States License.

(6.8.4.1.1.4) Profiles and Identity

- Remember your association and responsibility with the Organization in online social environments. If you identify yourself as an organizational employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, parents, and students.
- No last names, addresses, or phone numbers should appear on blogs or

wikis.

- When uploading digital pictures or avatars that represent yourself make sure you select a school appropriate image. Images used in this manner should be available under Creative Commons or your own personally created image.

(6.8.4.1.2) *Personal Use of Social Media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.*

- The organization's employees are personally responsible for all comments/information they publish online.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face, and be in accordance with the highest professional Standards.
- Before posting photographs and videos, permission should be sought from the subject where possible. This is especially the case where photographs of professional colleagues are concerned.
- Posted photographs should reflect the level of professionalism required by the Organization.
- Photographs relating to alcohol, drug, or tobacco use may be deemed inappropriate and subject to discipline. Microblogging (Twitter etc.) Comments made using such media are not protected by privacy settings. Employees should be aware of the public and widespread nature of such media and again refrain from any comment that could be deemed unprofessional.

(6.8.4.1.3) *Social Bookmarking*

- Be aware that others can view the sites that you bookmark.
- Be aware of words used to tag or describe the bookmark.
- Be aware of URL shortening services. Verify the landing site to which they point before submitting a link as a bookmark. It would be best to utilize the original URL if not constrained by the number of characters as in microblogs -
- i.e. Twitter.
- Attempt to link directly to a page or resource if possible as you do not control what appears on landing pages in the future.

(6.8.4.1.4) *Instant Messaging*

The Organization's employees are required to get authorization to have instant messaging programs downloaded on their school computers for interaction with students and employees of the School.

- The organization's employees also recognize this same authorization is required for access to instant messaging programs that are available through web interfaces with no download.
- Avatar images and profile information should follow the same guidelines as the above Profiles and Identity section.
- A written request must be submitted to the President for approval to use instant messaging.
- When submitting a request to the President please include your name,

building, grade level, state curriculum standards or the student or teacher National Educational Technology Standards. and provide a statement explaining your instructional purposes for using the program.

(6.8.4.1.5) *Requests for Social Media Sites*

- The organization understands that 21st century learning is constantly changing technology and that many sites that are currently "blocked" by internet filter may have pedagogical significance for teacher and student use.
- If you would like to request that another online site be accessible to use for teaching and learning, please email the President to make such a request.
- Requests will be reviewed and the School's social media guidelines will be updated periodically throughout the school year.
- A description should be provided of the intended use of the site and what tools on the site match your needed criteria.
- A link to the site's privacy policy should be included if possible.

(6.8.4.2) *Social Media Guidelines for Students:*

Below are guidelines students enrolled with the Organization should adhere to when using Web tools in the classroom.

- Be aware of what you post online. Social media venues are very public. What you contribute leaves a digital footprint for all to see. Do not post anything you would not want friends, enemies, parents, teachers, or a future employer to see.
- Follow the School's code of conduct when writing online. It is acceptable to disagree with someone else's opinions, however, do it in a respectful way. Make sure that criticism is constructive and not hurtful. What is inappropriate in the classroom is inappropriate online.
- Be safe online. Never give out personal information, including, but not limited to, last names, phone numbers, addresses, exact birthdates, and pictures. Do not share your password with anyone besides your teachers and parents.
- Linking to other websites to support your thoughts and ideas is recommended. However, be sure to read the entire article prior to linking to ensure that all information is appropriate for a school setting.
- Do your own work! Do not use other people's intellectual property without their permission. It is a violation of copyright law to copy and paste other's thoughts. When paraphrasing another's idea(s) be sure to cite your source with the URL. It is good practice to hyperlink to your sources.
- Be aware that pictures may also be protected under copyright laws. Verify you have permission to use the image, or it is under Creative Commons attribution.
- How you represent yourself online is an extension of yourself. Do not misrepresent yourself by using someone else's identity.
- Blog and wiki posts should be well written. Follow writing conventions including proper grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. If you edit someone else's work be sure it is in the spirit of improving the writing.

- If you run across inappropriate material that makes you feel uncomfortable, or is not respectful, tell your teacher right away.
- Students who do not abide by these terms and conditions may lose their opportunity to take part in the project and/or access to future use of online tools.

(6.8.4.3) Social Media Guidelines for Parents:

The Organization encourages parents to view and participate by adding comments to classroom projects when appropriate. The following applies to parents or legal guardians interfacing with students on social media platforms utilized by the School:

- Parents should expect communication from teachers prior to their child’s involvement in any project using online social media applications, i.e., blogs, wikis, podcast, etc.
- Parents will not attempt to destroy or harm any information online.
- Parents will not use classroom social media sites for any illegal activity, including violation of data privacy laws.
- Parents are highly encouraged to read and/or participate in social media projects.
- Parents should not distribute any information that might be deemed personal about other students participating in the social media project.
- Parents should not upload or include any information that does not also meet the Student Guidelines.

(6.9)

Complaint Process

The Organization prides itself on the quality of the teaching and care provided to its students. All members of the School community should contribute to a respectful and inclusive environment. Staff, student, or parent/guardians can raise concerns about any issues that affect a student’s well-being and/or academic performance and work together to resolve them. In rare cases where the issue cannot be resolved informally, an official written complaint can be registered by a parent with the School management.

Although no member of the School community shall be denied the right to petition the Governing Board for redress of a grievance, the complaints will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Governing Board. Exceptions are complaints that concern Governing Board actions or operations.

The Board advises the School community that the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, or learning materials is as follows:

1. Teachers
2. Administrators/President
3. Parent Liaison
4. Governing Board

Any complaint about school personnel will be investigated by the Administration before

consideration and action by the Board of Directors.

(6.9.1) Stages for Resolution

(6.9.1.1) Informal Resolution

If there is concern about a student's progress, the teacher should be contacted. Instructional staff at the Organization are expected to assist parents and students with concerns regarding student success. If an immediate resolution is not determined, Lead teachers or other specialists may be consulted. If a solution is still not satisfactorily resolved, the President will work with the School staff to ensure that each student succeeds to the best of their ability.

Documentation of the complaint, investigation, and research shall be maintained as part of student records. If the situation is not resolved, it may be escalated to School leadership in the order described above.

(6.9.1.2) Formal Resolution with Official Complaint:

If the complaint has not been informally resolved, parents may make a formal written complaint to the President's office. Forms are available upon request.

The President, or their designee, will conduct any investigation necessary into the reported concern, including interviewing the complainant and the subject of concern as needed. The President will make every effort to satisfactorily resolve the complaint as soon as possible, but no more than five (5) days after receipt of the notification. The President shall send a written statement to the parent no more than two (2) days after the meeting and/or communication which reflects the School's response to the dispute or concern. For the purposes of this policy, "days" shall mean business days and exclude state, federal and School holidays.

If the person registering a complaint has suggestions to resolve the issue of concern, their advice is encouraged.

Once all relevant and discoverable facts are considered, a decision and action to resolve the complaint, including reasons for the decision, will be provided in writing to the parent/guardian regarding the findings and the School's decision.

(6.9.1.3) Appeal to the Board:

If successful resolution still has not been made by a formal investigation by the President, concerned parties may petition the Governing Board for appeal. A written appeal request may be made to the Governing Board's assigned parent liaison within five (5) days after the President's letter of non-resolution is received. The item will be forwarded to the Governing Board Chairperson to be added to the agenda of the next regularly scheduled board meeting. If the item is urgent, the Chairperson has the ability to call an emergency meeting of the Board. Within thirty (30) days after notification by the parent that the concern remains unresolved, the Board must either resolve the concern or provide a statement of the reasons for not resolving the concern. The President shall fully cooperate in the resolution procedures of the Board and comply with the District's decision for resolution of the complaint.

(6.9.1.4) Special Magistrate Request for Resolution:

If the concern is not resolved by the Board, a parent may pursue the remedies available under Fla. Stat. § 1001.42 (8)(c). A parent may request the Commissioner of Education to appoint a special magistrate. The parent shall use the Parental Request for Appointment of a Special Magistrate for Charter School Students, Form CSSM-1 6A-6.0791, which the President shall provide to the parent upon request. The special magistrate shall determine facts relating to the dispute over the School procedure or practice, consider information provided by the School and/or Board, and render a recommended decision for resolution to the State Board of Education within 30 days after receipt of the request by the parent. The State Board of Education must approve or reject the recommended decision at its next regularly scheduled meeting that is more than 7 calendar days and no more than 30 days after the date the recommended decision is transmitted.

All costs the Board incurs for reviewing and responding to a complaint lodged by a parent of a student enrolled in the School under this policy and Florida Board of Education Rule 6A-6.0791 is a service provided by the District to the School. Contracts for such services are limited to the Board's actual costs, unless mutually agreed to by the Board and the School.

The President shall be responsible for responding to inquiries by the Florida Department of Education regarding a request for appointment of a special magistrate and shall notify the Department of the principal's name and email address.

(6.9.1.4.1) *Annual Notice:*

The President shall notify parents of this policy on an annual basis.

(6.9.2) Conduct and Records

All concerns and complaints raised will be treated seriously, and confidentiality will be established and maintained wherever possible in accordance with relevant state and federal laws.

Written records will be maintained by the President and must include the dates of every resolution step and dates of resolution. Correspondence, Statements, and records will be kept confidential except where any other legal obligation prevails.

(6.10) Policy Against Bullying and Harassment

(6.10.1) Statement Prohibiting Bullying and Harassment

It is the policy of the organization that all of its students, employees, and volunteers learn and work in an environment that is safe, secure, and free from harassment and bullying of any kind. The organization will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment, as defined herein, is prohibited.

(6.10.2) Definition of Bullying and Definition of Harassment

Bullying or harassment shall have the meaning set forth in Section 1006.147, Florida Statutes and means intentionally and repetitively inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees and may involve but is not limited to:

- Teasing

- Social Exclusion
- Threat
- Intimidation
- Stalking, including cyber stalking as defined herein
- Physical violence
- Theft
- Sexual, religious, racial or gender orientation harassment
- Public humiliation
- Destruction of property

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or employee that:

- Places a student or employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities, or benefits.
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying and harassment also encompasses:

- Retaliation against a student or employee by another student or employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.
- Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by:
 - Incitement or coercion
 - Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the School
 - Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment
- Cyber stalking, which is defined as engaging in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person, and serving no legitimate purpose.

“Cyberbullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system, or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or the knowing impersonation of another

person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

(6.10.3) Expected Behavior

The Organization expects students to conduct themselves as appropriate for their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members. The Organization upholds that bullying of any student or employee is prohibited:

- During any education program or activity conducted by the School;
- During any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;
- On a school bus; or
- Through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system.

(6.10.4) Consequences for an Act of Bullying or Harassment

Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or reassignment, as outlined in School's policies. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for an employee found to have committed an act of bullying or harassment may be disciplined in accordance with school policies, procedures, and agreements. Additionally, egregious acts of harassment by certified educators may result in a sanction against an educator's state issued certificate. (See State Board of Education Rule 6B-1.006, FAC, The Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida.) Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have committed an act of bullying or harassment shall be determined by the School administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

Accusations made in good faith, even though subsequently determined to be false, shall not be subject to discipline consequences or remedial action as called for by this section.

(6.10.5) Consequences for Intentional Misreporting

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a student found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another as a means of bullying or harassment range from positive

behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or reassignment, as outlined in school's policies. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for an employee found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another as a means of bullying or harassment may be disciplined in accordance with school policies, procedures, and agreements. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another as a means of bullying or harassment shall be determined by the School administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

(6.10.6) Reporting an Act of Bullying or Harassment

The President or designee, is responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the President or designee. All other members of the School community, including students, parents/legal guardians, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy anonymously or in-person to the President or designee. In order to report incidents of bullying, individuals may meet with either the President or designee to make the report. Any report in person should be followed within one day with a written report or a written explanation to the School's office. Should the President wish, other forms of reporting may be created. The methods of reporting bullying will be prominently publicized to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians, as well as how the report will be acted upon. The victim of bullying, anyone who witnessed the bullying, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying has taken place may file a report of bullying. An employee, school volunteer, student, parent/legal guardian, or other persons who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying or harassment to the appropriate official and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in the School policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying or harassment will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, learning or working environment, or work assignments. Written and oral reports shall be considered official reports. Reports may be made anonymously but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

(6.10.7) Investigation of Whether a Reported Act is Within the Scope of the School A President (or designee) will initiate an investigation of whether an act of bullying or harassment occurred within the scope of the School's oversight. The trained designee(s) will provide a report on results of investigation with recommendations for the President to make a determination if an act of bullying or harassment falls within the scope of the district and will act according to the following protocols:

- If it is within the scope of the School, further investigation will commence in accordance with subsection (6.10.8) herein;
- If it is outside scope of the School, and determined a criminal act by appropriate law enforcement, refer to appropriate law enforcement for further investigation.
- If it is outside scope of the School, and determined not a criminal act, inform parents/legal guardians of all students involved.

(6.10.8) Prompt Investigation of a Report of Bullying or Harassment

The investigation of a reported act of bullying or harassment is deemed to be a school- related activity and begins with a report of such an act.

The Procedures for Investigating allegations of Bullying and/or Harassment, as defined herein include the following:

- The President (or designee employed by the School) will be assigned to initiate the investigation. The designee(s) may not be the accused perpetrator (harasser or bully) or victim.
- Each individual (victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses, as applicable) will be interviewed separately.
- The investigator shall collect and evaluate the facts including, but not limited to:
 - Description of incident including nature of the behavior and the context in which the alleged incident occurred;
 - How often the conduct occurred;
 - Whether there were past incidents or past continuing patterns of behavior;
 - The relationship between the parties involved;
 - The characteristics of parties involved (i.e., grade, age, etc.);
 - The identity of the perpetrator, including whether the perpetrator was in a position of power over the student allegedly subjected to bullying or harassment;
 - The number of alleged bullies/harassers;
 - The age(s) of the alleged bullies/harassers;
 - Where the bullying and/or harassment occurred; and
 - Whether the conduct adversely affected the student's education or educational environment; and
 - Any other factors or allegations necessary to complete a prompt and thorough investigation.
- Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances and includes:
 - Recommended remedial steps necessary to stop the bullying and/or harassing behavior
 - A written final report to the President.
 - A recommendation of whether the bullying or harassing behavior should be referred to appropriate law enforcement agency for further investigation and review.

When the victim is a student, according to the severity of the bullying or harassment, the President (or designee) shall promptly notify the parent/legal guardian of the victim via telephone, writing, or personal conference of any actions being taken to protect the victim. The frequency of notification will depend on the severity of the bullying incident.

(6.10.9) Determination of Consequences and Due Processes for a Perpetrator:

Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances, followed by the determination of disciplinary sanctions appropriate to the perpetrator's position within the School. The below list encompasses possible responses from the School or Organization in response to a finding that there is a violation of the Policy:

- Consequences and appropriate interventions for students who commit acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to, but not limited to suspension, or reassignment as outlined in the Organization's policies and school district's Code of Conduct.
- Consequences and appropriate interventions for an employee found to have committed an act of bullying will be instituted in accordance with school policy. Additionally, egregious acts of bullying by certified educators may result in a sanction against an educator's state issued certificate (Rule 6B- 1.006 F.A.C.).
- Consequences and appropriate intervention for a visitor or volunteer, found to have committed an act of bullying shall be determined by the School administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.
- These same actions will apply to persons, whether they are students, school employees, or visitors/volunteers/independent contractors, who are found to have made wrongful and intentional accusations of another as a means of bullying.
- If a complaint of bullying or harassment is made by the alleged victim during or after the commencement of an investigation into employee or student misconduct, it shall not be a defense to the allegations of employee or student misconduct but may be considered as a mitigating factor under school policy, if appropriate.

(6.10.10) Providing Immediate Notification to the Parents/Legal Guardians of a Student Victim:

The President, or designee, shall by telephone and/or in writing, report the occurrence of any incident of bullying or harassment as defined by this Policy to the parent or legal guardian of all students involved on the same day an investigation determines that an act of bullying or harassment in violation of the Policy has occurred. Notification shall be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

If the bullying or harassment violation results in the perpetrator being charged with a crime, the President, or designee, shall by telephone or in writing by first class mail, inform parents/legal guardian of the victim(s) involved in the bullying incident about the Unsafe School Choice Option (No Child Left Behind, Title IX, Part E, Subpart 2, Section 9532) that states "A student attending a persistently dangerous public elementary school or secondary school, as determined by the State in consultation with a representative sample of local

educational agencies, or a student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense, as determined by State law, while in or on the grounds of a public elementary school or secondary school that the student attends, be allowed to attend a safe public elementary school or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school.”

(6.10.11) Referral of Victims and Perpetrators of Bullying or Harassment for Counseling

After an investigation has determined that an act of bullying or harassment has occurred, as defined herein, the School shall discuss with both the victim’s and perpetrator’s parents/legal guardians, if students, options available for counseling. This may include referrals to community agencies or partner agencies the School has relationships with.

The President (or designee) shall also refer the perpetrator to the School’s Student Success Team in an attempt to develop strategies to be used within School to prevent the bullying or harassing behavior from continuing. The President (or designee) shall decide if a similar recommendation would be prudent for the victim.

(6.10.12) Providing Instruction Regarding Bullying and/or Harassment

The Organization will ensure that the School sustain healthy, positive, and safe learning environments for all students. Students, parents/legal guardians, all school staff, and school volunteers shall be offered instruction, at a minimum, on an annual basis on the School’s Policy and Regulations against bullying and harassment. The instruction shall include evidence-based methods of preventing bullying and harassment, as well as how to effectively identify and respond to bullying in schools.

(6.10.13) Publication of the Policy

At the beginning of each school year, the President shall, in writing, inform school staff, parents/legal guardians, or other persons responsible for the welfare of a student of this policy.

The President shall ensure the development of an annual process for discussing the policy on bullying and harassment with students in a student assembly or other reasonable format to ensure the Policy is accurately conveyed to all applicable parties

(6.11) Civility Policy

In order to ensure all individuals associated with the Organization behave civilly and with fairness and respect, several policies are in place to ensure proper behavior.

Students are obligated to meet School expectations as defined elsewhere in this policy. Adults are subject to the following civility policies:

(6.11.1) Civility of Staff

All employees of the organization shall behave with civility, fairness, and respect in dealing with fellow employees, students, parents, patrons, visitors, and anyone else having business with the School. Uncivil behaviors are prohibited. Uncivil behaviors shall be defined as any behavior that is physically or verbally threatening, either overtly or implicitly, as well as behaviors that are coercive, intimidating, violent, or harassing. Examples of uncivil behavior

include, but are not limited to: use of profanity; personally insulting remarks; attacks on a person's race, gender, nationality, religion, or sexual preference; or behavior that is out of control. Such interactions could occur in telephone conversations, voice mail messages, face-to-face conversations, or in written communication.

Any uncivil behavior should be reported to the immediate supervisor or the President. A record shall be made of the alleged incident and the action taken, which may include disciplinary action as defined in within this policy manual. Confidentiality shall be observed whenever possible to protect the complainant and the alleged offending person. Students and employees may be subject to additional action under other state statute or school policies. Retaliation against a person who reports a claim of uncivil behavior shall be prohibited. Nothing in this policy should be construed to limit open and frank discussions of issues.

(6.11.2) Civility of Parents and Patrons

All parents and patrons of the organization shall behave with civility, fairness, and respect in dealing with fellow parents, patrons, staff members, students, and anyone else having business with the School. Uncivil behaviors are prohibited. Uncivil behaviors shall be defined as any behavior that is physically or verbally threatening, either overtly or implicitly, as well as behaviors that are coercive, intimidating, violent, or harassing. Examples of uncivil behavior include, but are not limited to: use of profanity; personally insulting remarks; attacks on a person's race, gender, nationality, religion, or sexual preference; or behavior that is out of control. Such interactions could occur in telephone conversations, voice mail messages, face-to-face conversations, or in written communication.

Any uncivil behavior by parents or patrons shall be reported to school administration. A record shall be made of the alleged incident and the action taken. Confidentiality shall be observed whenever possible to protect the complainant and the alleged offending individual. Repeated incidents of uncivil behavior can result in the individual being banned from the School premises. Retaliation against a person who reports a claim of uncivil behavior is prohibited.

(6.12) Prohibition Against Firearms and Weapons

The presence of firearms or weapons poses a substantial risk of serious harm to organization students, staff, and community members. Therefore, possession of firearms or weapons is prohibited on school premises at all times except for law enforcement officials, Safe School Officers, or other such statutorily allowed exceptions. The unauthorized possession of a firearm or weapon on school premises may constitute a criminal act under Florida law and shall be reported as such to appropriate law enforcement agencies. As used in this policy, the phrase "school premises" includes all organization buildings, grounds, vehicles, and parking areas. This prohibition also extends to the sites of school activities, whether or not those school activities are conducted on organizational property.

Students found in violation of this policy will be disciplined up to and including reassignment as provided elsewhere within this policy manual. Law enforcement officials will be notified and the individual violating this policy will be directed to leave school premises immediately.

Non-students violating this policy will be barred from all school premises and school activities for a period of at least one (1) year. Subsequent violations by the same individual will result in a permanent bar from organizational properties and activities and referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Student participation in school sanctioned gun safety courses, student military or ROTC courses, or other school sponsored firearm related events does not constitute a violation of this policy, provided the student does not carry a firearm or other weapon into any school, school bus, or onto the premises of any other activity sponsored or sanctioned by school officials.

(6.13) Research Requests

Requests for research studies involving students and/or staff of the Organization must be submitted to the President for approval. Any research utilizing human subjects must be authenticated by the sponsoring university. Written permission from parents of the students to be involved must also be obtained as well as approval of the President.

The organization will provide the university with the necessary information and data to conduct research and make decisions to support and improve Charter Schools. Student privacy will be respected in all such matters.

(6.14) Parent Teacher Organization

***** NOTE ** This Sample Policy Manual offers two possible directions for the PTO. The Charter Support Unit highly recommends the first option, separating the legal entities of the School and PTO as separate corporate entities. This would entail requiring the PTO to incorporate as their own entity and applying for their own 501(c)(3) tax exemption. If a school were to opt not to have the PTO as a separate organization, all of the finances of the PTO would then fall under the purview of the School and be included in the audit and in the School's financial accountability models.***

Further Note, that there is often confusion between the terms PTA and PTO. PTA - refers to an organization that is part of the FL and National PTA organization. Most school organizations are PTOs which refer to organizations that are not members of the National Organization but work on behalf of the School alone.

(6.14.a1) Encouragement of Parent Teacher Organization

The organization strongly believes that a strong partnership between school staff, parents and the community at large is an essential component to effectively educating students. As such, the organization strongly encourages and will work to support the existence of an outside Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) to support the efforts of the charter school.

(6.14.b1) Operation of the Parent Teacher Organization

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) will be governed by the bylaws of the School and may not act in a manner that is contrary to the School's policies and procedures. The PTO will elect its own officers, manage its own budget in partnership with the President, and be

responsible to update its members as to changes in school policy that affect the workings of the PTO.

The PTO Board will consist of the officers and the President or his or her designee. The President and PTO will work together toward a mutual benefit for the School, communication being the key to the unit's success.

Membership in the PTO will be available to parents, the entire school staff (including administrators), businesses, neighbors and anyone who believes in the PTO mission and purposes.

PTO funds should always be used to further the mission of the School. Appropriate use of funds includes student-oriented programs in priority areas such as health, safety, juvenile protection, parent/family involvement, cultural arts, environmental education, and advocacy efforts on behalf of children and youth.

The PTO budget will be approved by the School Governing Board prior to being implemented. All funds raised by the PTO are part of the School's funds. Accounting practices of the PTO will align with the accounting policies and procedures adopted by the School. The school's office manager will have full access to the PTO accounts and records. The PTO will comply with all requests of the accounting department and will provide complete records at the close of each school year. The PTO treasurer will assist with any auditing questions that may arise.

(6.15) Mental Health Services

The **President** shall ensure that the school has a plan in place to address the Mental Health Assistance Allocation funds as described in Florida Statute 1011.62(15). The plan will ensure that a multitiered system of supports exists to provide evidence-based mental health assistance to students at the school. The plan shall detail the responsibilities of staff members as well as outside services providers. The plan should also address the early identification and programs to be provided to students who show signs of mental-health related issues. Any revisions to the plan must be approved by the Governing Board. The School is part of the District's Mental Health Services plan.

6.15.1 Contracted Service Providers

The President shall ensure contracts or interagency agreements are in place with one more local community behavioral health providers to which students can be referred for screenings and assessments and counseling as needed. The agreements can stipulate either on or off campus services as allowed in Florida Statute. The contracts must stipulate that students referred for screening be evaluated within 15 days of the referral, and that services be initiated within 30-days of the referral.

6.15.2 Mental Health Awareness and Assistance Training

The President shall ensure that all staff members participate in an approved mental health awareness and assistance training program as described by Florida Statutes 1012.584.

6.15.3

Contracted Service Providers

The President shall ensure contracts or interagency agreements are in place with one more local community behavioral health providers to which students can be referred for screenings and assessments and counseling as needed. The agreements can stipulate either on or off campus services as allowed in Florida Statute. The contracts must stipulate that students referred for screening be evaluated within 15 days of the referral, and that services be initiated within 30-days of the referral.

6.15.4

Mental Health Awareness and Assistance Training

The President shall ensure that all staff members participate in an approved mental health awareness and assistance training program as described by Florida Statutes 1012.584.

(6.16)

Complaints Regarding Student Health, Safety and Welfare

The President or designee shall notify a student's parent/guardian if there is a change in the student's services or monitoring related to the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being and the School's ability to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for the student. Parents have a fundamental right of making decisions regarding the upbringing and control of their children. School personnel shall encourage a student to discuss issues relating to his or her well-being with his or her parent(s) or facilitate discussion of the issue with the parent. The School may not prohibit parents from accessing any of their student's education and health records created, maintained or used by the School.

The President shall not prohibit School personnel from notifying a parent/guardian about his or her student's mental, emotional or physical health or well-being, or a change in related services or monitoring, or that encourage or have the effect of encouraging a student to withhold from a parent such information. School personnel may not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being. This does not prohibit the School from permitting School personnel to withhold such information from a parent if a reasonably prudent person would believe that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect, as those terms are defined in Fla. Stat. § 39.01.

(7) Business Operations

(7.1) General Office Procedures

(7.1.1) Handling of Mail

The Office Manager, or designee, will be responsible for checking the mailbox on a daily basis and receiving all incoming mail. All incoming mail will be date stamped before distribution and scanned when applicable.

A copy of all outgoing correspondence will be maintained in the appropriate office file.

(7.1.2) Correspondence

All official correspondence to or from the School should be routed through the school office where appropriate copies can be made, if necessary, as deemed appropriate by the President or Office Manager.

(7.1.3) Property and Supplies

Office equipment and supplies are to be used for official business only. All property and supplies should be stored in a secure location and should not leave School property.

The Office Manager will maintain an inventory of basic office supplies used. Request for supplies should be submitted to the office manager for approval through the President.

(7.2) Files and Record Management

The organization will retain records in an orderly fashion for time periods that comply with legal and governmental requirements and as needed for general business requirements.

(7.2.1) Filing System

To ensure efficient access, filing centers will be established. To reduce the amount of duplicate and unnecessary record retention, individual desk files should be avoided unless they are used in daily operations. All other records should be filed in central filing areas. Unless necessary, internal records should only be kept by the originator or sender and not by the receiver (unless original signatures are required) to avoid duplicate filing systems. The following guidelines should be adhered to optimize filing efficiency and records access:

- All file cabinets and files will follow recognized rules of order, such as Left to Right, Top to Bottom, Front to Back and in the case of chronological records, newest to oldest.
- File markers and label headings will always be placed at the beginning or front of a file or group of files.
- Alphabetical files should always be filed under broad topical categories. Files should never be filed under individual employee names (except personnel) to avoid confusion and refiling in the event of turnover. Files should always be filed under the

"proper" or charter school's name whenever appropriate. In the case of individuals, files should be maintained according to the person's "Last name", then "First name and Middle initial".

(7.2.2) Student Records

This section of this policy manual does not apply to student records. Student records shall be stored in accordance with Florida Statute and policy (6.2) of this manual.

(7.2.3) Record Retention and Long-Term Storage

The school will abide by the Records Retention Policy established by the Florida Department of State: Division of Library and Information Services section GS7 which currently can be found at: <https://dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/records-management/general-records-schedules/>. The records retention schedule establishes the minimum length of time that the record series must be retained. Records retention shall be the responsibility of the Office Manager and a records review will be conducted no less than annually to ensure compliance.

Storage of archived records will be maintained in the locked storage area of the organization or designated public storage facility. Access to this area will be limited to the President, treasurer, officers of the charter school and the Office Manager.

Non-permanent files will be stored in cardboard file boxes. Each file box will be labeled on the front with the contents, dates covered, and destruction date if applicable.

Permanent records will be maintained in metal fire-resistant file cabinets.

Files should be stored in boxes with similar items, dates, and retention periods. This will allow for easier access and purging of records. A general rule to keep in mind is that it is better to fill a file box only half than to file dissimilar types of files in the same box.

The Office Manager will be responsible for categorizing and maintaining a listing of records maintained and the location (i.e., by wall unit and shelf row number).

When possible, electronic records shall not be deleted. If the need arises, electronic records such as: e-mails, voice mails, electronic calendars, CD-ROMs, DVDs, tapes, thumb or flash drives, back-up drives, floppy disks, computer hard drives, the School's intranet and website(s), and other media for storing electronic records can be scheduled for routine deletion throughout the year or periodically backed up in compliance with the records-retention

(7.2.4) Retention Schedule.

The most common documents for retention are as follows (as of [Insert date this policy was last reviewed] - any item that is not listed can be found by visiting the Division of Library and Information Services section GS7.

Document	Holding Period in Years
● Accident Reports After Settlement	8
● Accounts Payable (Vouchers & Invoices)	6
● Bank Statements and Reconciliations	6
● Canceled Checks	6
● Cash Receipt Books	6
● Claim Files (Against Us)	6
● Claim Files (By Us)	6
● Contracts, Agreements & Leases after Expiration	6
● Credit Files	6
● Employee Records (Terminated)	6
● Financial Statements (internal)	5
● Financial Statements (External)	6
● General Ledgers and Journals	6
● Income and Other Tax Returns	6
● Insurance Claims After Settlement	6
● Patents and Licenses	17
● Payroll Registers and Time Sheets	6
● Payments and Reports to Government Agencies	6
● Physical Inventory Records	6
● Purchasing Correspondence	6
● Sales/Reimbursement Correspondence	2
● Sales/Reimbursement Invoices	6
● Student Records	12
● Travel and Expense Reports	6

(7.2.5) Record Destruction

Three to six months after each year-end, the Office Manager will proceed with the destruction of all files that have exceeded their recognized holding period. A listing of file categories to be destroyed will be circulated to all the applicable School administrators thirty days prior to destruction for review and comment. The actual listing of records destroyed will be maintained permanently for future reference. Destruction of the files will be by shredding. Disposal of records into the Organization's general trash service is not allowed.

(7.2.6) Digital Retention

Records stored electronically must follow the same retention rules as other non-electric records.

The President shall ensure that the School has established a file structure to be used that allows for the organized storage and retention of electronic records. The system must ensure that proper electronic backups are kept both on- and off-site utilizing local computers and cloud-based backup systems.

(7.2.7) Digital Communication Retention

The School will provide a platform for electronic communication such as Email, document storage or similar mediums. The President shall ensure that systems are in place to provide archival access to these communication systems. Such an archival system must allow the School to provide universal searches of communication for public records or legal discovery

purposes when applicable, often referred to as “eDiscovery”. The archival system must ensure that user data is backed up and searchable even in the event that a user deletes a message. Communications should be stored for a period of no less than ten (10) years.

(7.3) Public Records Request

It is the policy of the Organization that all public records made or received in connection with the official business of the agency be made available upon request of any person for inspection, examination, and copying in accordance with applicable law, including Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, and the following policy guidelines. This Policy is intended to supplement and hereby incorporates by reference the Florida Government- In-The-Sunshine Manual, prepared by the Office of the Attorney General, which may be found [http://myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/WF/MNOSB9QQ79/\\$file/SunshineManual.pdf](http://myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/WF/MNOSB9QQ79/$file/SunshineManual.pdf):

- All public records shall be available for inspection or copying under the supervision of the custodian (or designee) of the public records at reasonable times during normal office hours. All public records that are presently provided by law to be confidential or prohibited from being inspected by the public, whether by general or special law, are exempt from production.
- The President may from time-to-time direct that public records requests be handled in a specific manner in order to ensure that the public records are protected, that requests are complied with as expeditiously as is reasonably possible given the nature and scope of the request, and that confidential and exempt records are not disclosed except as required by law. Such directives must not be used in any way to hinder, delay, or circumvent a person's right of access to the public records.
- The President shall ensure a “Custodian of Public Records” is assigned who will be responsible for ensuring the School’s compliance with public records request. The name and contact information of that person shall be clearly identified on the School’s website.
- The fact that the originator of a public record asks or directs that it remains confidential does not in fact make that document confidential. Such record is still subject to disclosure unless the law makes it confidential or exempt from disclosure. Except in the case of student records, if a public record contains information that is confidential or exempt by law, a true and correct copy of the original record shall be made, the confidential or exempt portions of copy shall be redacted, and the redacted copy of the record shall be made available to the requesting party. In the case of student records, the entire record is confidential and exempt and shall not be disclosed except as required or permitted by applicable law.
- The requesting party need not demonstrate any special or legitimate interest in the requested public records. Requests for public records shall be complied with regardless of the motivation of the requesting party.
- No automatic waiting period shall be imposed. The only delay permitted is that which is reasonably necessary to allow the custodian to compile the requested

records and protect against disclosure of those records or portions of records that are confidential and exempt.

- Public records made or received by a third party pursuant to a contract or agreement with the agency shall be subject to disclosure to the same extent as public records in the physical custody of the agency.
- If a public records request is insufficient to identify the records sought, the requestor shall be promptly notified that more information is needed in order to produce the records. The agency shall offer reasonable assistance to the requestor in describing the nature and extent of such information.
- Exemption: There are various records and documents that are judicially or statutorily exempt from disclosure. A complete list of exempt documents is available in the Government-In-The-Sunshine Manual listed above and incorporated herein. Common examples include, but are not limited to
 - Social security numbers.
 - Personal financial information, such as credit card and bank account numbers.
 - Data processing software subject to licensing agreement.
 - Sealed bids or proposals received in response to invitations to bid until notice of the decision or intended decision is given or 10 days after bid or proposal opening, whichever is earlier.
 - Security system plans, threat response plans, emergency evacuation plans, sheltering arrangements, and manuals for security personnel, emergency equipment, or security training.
 - Building plans or diagrams that depict the internal layout and structural elements of a building, arena, stadium, water treatment facility, or other structure.
- If the public records request is anticipated to result in the duplication of more than 10 pages of paper or more than 15 minutes of staff member's time, the School shall prepare an estimate for the costs associated with completing the request. The estimate shall be provided to the requestor prior to filing the records request. The following costs and guidelines apply:
 - A cost of up to \$0.15 per page of duplicated materials will be assessed if the document(s) being requested are more than 10 pages in length.
 - Should complying with the request take more than 15 minutes, the requestor will be billed the hourly cost (in 15-minute increments) for the actual time required to comply with the request.
 - If a request is estimated to cost more than \$25, the School may request a down payment of 50% of the request prior to fulfilling the request. The balance will be due upon the delivery of the request.
- If the nature or volume of public records requested to be inspected or copied is such as to require extensive use of information technology resources or extensive clerical or supervisory assistance by personnel of the agency involved, or both, the School may charge, in addition to the actual cost of duplication, a special service charge, which shall be reasonable and shall be based on the cost incurred for such extensive use of information technology resources or the labor

cost of the personnel providing the service that is actually incurred by the agency or attributable to the agency for the clerical and supervisory assistance required, or both.

- **Definitions:**
 - **Public Records:** The term “public records” includes all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, data processing software, or other material, regardless of the physical form, characteristics, or means of transmission, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by the agency.
 - **Public Records Request:** The term “public records request” means a request by any person, whether written or verbal, for inspection, examination, or copying of public records.
 - **Request for Information:** A request for information, as distinguished from a public records request, is one in which the requested information does not already exist in public record form.

(7.4) Contractual Agreements

A limited number of employees and governing board officers will be authorized to sign contracts and legally bind the School, and there shall be no fewer than two individuals at all times. This policy applies to all regular contracts on behalf of the School.

(7.4.1) Contracts Require Board Approval

(7.4.2) Authorized Signers

The Board of Directors shall provide authorization to individuals to be able to sign contracts on behalf of the School. Such approvals will be documented in the meeting minutes. Any person who is no longer entitled to approve contracts on behalf of the School will be notified in writing.

(7.4.3) Signature Levels Required.

All contracts will require two signatures, the President and one designee contingent that contracts are within the approved budget line items. Contracts outside of budget line items must have board approval or have a board resolution with an updated budget affecting line items.

(8) Fiscal and Accounting Management

(8.1) Operational Safeguards

It is the purpose of the policies set forth in this section to provide adequate operational safeguards to ensure proper accounting and reliable security of the assets of the organization.

(8.1.1) Financial Stewardship

As a public charter school, the Organization realizes the importance of active as responsible stewards of public resources and shall ensure adequate safeguards, separation of duties, and processes are in place to ensure the Organization's finances and resources are utilized to fulfill the mission and vision of the Organization.

(8.1.2) Governing Board's Responsibilities

The Governing Board acknowledges that it has the ultimate responsibility to oversee, plan and direct the resources of the Organization to meeting the mission of the Organization. Even when the Governing Board elects to delegate some of the responsibilities for the accounting or day-to-day operations of the School's finances, it retains the responsibility to oversee such duties and to ensure proper reporting and adequate safeguards are in place to adequately account for all of the Organization's resources and assets.

(8.1.3) Segregation of Duties

Wherever possible the Governing Board and the President will work closely together to ensure processes are in place to ensure a proper separation of duties with regards to the School's financial management. Separation of duties is defined as the means by which no one person has sole authority over the lifespan of a transaction. It is the policy of the Organization that no one person shall be able to initiate, record, authorize and reconcile a transaction. The policy of the Organization is to ensure multiple people are involved in the life cycle of all financial transactions of the Organization to ensure that no one person could defraud the Organization or misuse any resources overseen by the Governing Board. An adequate system of checks and balances, as defined within this policy, shall be instituted by the President, and approved by the Governing Board to faithfully carry out the mission of this Organization in order to protect the non-profit status of the Organization and its charter agreements.

(8.2) Banking Policies

(8.2.1) Banking Policy and Relations

The President or designee, in conjunction with the appointed Governing Board Accountant, may invest excess capital funds of the Organization in certificates of deposit, money market funds, Treasury Notes, Bonds and bills, equities, mutual funds and professionally managed accounts as approved by the Governing Board. The Governing Board shall make the final determination for which accounts to open. Further, the organization will maintain positive relations with all sources of capital and banking service providers.

(8.2.1.1) Banking Relations

The President or designee will be the Organization's primary representative in dealing with financial institutions. The President or designee will be responsible for meeting with personnel of the primary financial institutions on an as needed basis to provide consistent financial information reporting and updates on the School's operations to financial institution officials. The President or designee will be responsible for promoting a positive working relationship between the financial institutions. The President or designee will also provide the institution officials with the School's anticipated capital needs or financial service requirements to provide institution officials adequate time to understand, approve and prepare for the School's needs.

The Board Treasurer or designee will also perform an ongoing evaluation of the institution's abilities to satisfy the needs of the organization and will make appropriate changes whenever necessary. Criteria to be used in the evaluating institutions can include:

- Institution Size (appropriate size to meet charter school needs while being small enough to be responsive)
- Financial safety and capital structure
- Reputation
- Location
- Flexibility and lending philosophy/attitudes
- Operating efficiency and accuracy (computerization, employee training, etc.)
- Previous work with public agencies, including but not limited to. Charter schools.

(8.2.1.2) Banking Policy and Arrangements

The charter school may establish separate accounts for each fund and/or account group (internal funds, Operating FTE funds, etc.) which will be used for all deposits and disbursements related to the fund.

All accounts opened at any financial institution in the name of the organization must be approved by the Governing Board.

(8.2.1.3) Authorized Signatories

A limited number of employees and board officers will be authorized signatories on file with the financial institution(s), and there shall be no fewer than three individuals at all times.

Authorized check signers must be approved in writing and require Governing Board authorization. The President will have check signing authority. Additional individuals with or without dollar limitations may be authorized, as necessary.

The Chairman may revoke check-signing authority at any time and for any reason. Any person who is no longer entitled to sign checks on behalf of the Organization will be notified in writing. The President will oversee the proper notification of the Organization's financial institutions whenever authorized signature changes are made.

(8.2.1.4) Online Access and Activity

The school may take advantage of online tools available from the financial institution to aide with the proper management of school funds. The President shall maintain a list of individuals who have access to the online account and will ensure that proper measures are taken to secure the login credentials to said accounts. Whenever possible and allowed for by the financial institution, each individual with access should have their own login credentials which can be revoked in the event that the individual's access needs to be terminated. If individual login credentials are not possible, in the event that an individual's access must be terminated, the credentials shall be changed and updated immediately. Unless specifically permitted and authorized by the Governing Board, any and all online access shall occur on Organization property. The President or designee shall monitor log-in credentials and access points on an as needed basis to ensure the safeguarding of assets.

Any electronic or online bill payments, money transfers, or other transaction initiated electronically are required to follow the same procedures as outlined elsewhere in these policies with regards to approval for transactions, purchases or fiscal operations prior to the transaction taking place.

(8.2.2) Bank Loan Applications

The Governing Board is responsible for developing the organization's financing plan for capital needs. In the event the Organization decides to borrow money, the Board Accountant and President shall work together to prepare for loan officer questions and materials to aid in negotiating loan rates and other terms with multiple lenders. The President or designee will prepare loan proposals according to established procedures. The Governing Board may institute a system of competitive bidding for financial institutions to submit sealed bids for the securing of loan proceeds if applicable.

(8.2.2.1) Assessment of Capital Requirements

The Chairman of the Governing Board will be responsible for directing the Board Accountant in developing borrowing and financial plans to meet the needs of the Organization's operations. These plans shall take into account current and projected business conditions and can include, but is not limited to, the following criteria:

- Capital requirements to satisfy the organization's growth in relation to risk.
- Ability of the organization to meet present obligations as well as new debt under worse case conditions.
- Appropriateness of capital or debt structure.
- Level or type of debt does not preclude future borrowing or funding capacity.
- Cost of capital in relation to return on investment from use of funds obtained.

(8.2.2.2) Preparation of Loan Application

Loan proposals will be drafted and presented to the Governing Board with the following information, if applicable. The Governing Board reserves the right to approve or deny any and all loan proposals if in the best interest of the Organization:

- **Date:** The proposal for each bank should be dated with the current date the proposal will be given to the bank.
- **Borrower:** The specific legal name of the intended borrowing entity should be listed.
- **Type of Loan:** The specific type of loan requested should be listed (i.e., equipment loan, line of credit, etc.).
- **Amount:** The amount of the loan requested should be determined and listed. It is very important to establish credibility with the loan officer and committees. All numbers should be carefully forecasted and supported with documentation.
- **Use of Proceeds:** As above, the use of proceeds should be listed and well supported by documentation in the organization's business plan and forecasts.
- **Term:** The desired term of the loan should be listed. If deemed possible, longer terms or automatic renewal terms should be requested to avoid the process of having to renew the loan frequently.
- **Closing Date:** Set a closing date. For renewals, approximately 30 days after application; for new bank or loan applications, approximately 60 days after application.
- **Takedown at Closing:** The amount of funds to be drawn immediately at closing of the loan should be listed.
- **Collateral:** Any assets (i.e., equipment, inventory, accounts receivable, etc.) to be used as collateral for the loan should be listed and appropriately reflect the type of loan. The Governing Board shall ensure that any asset used as collateral may properly be used as collateral to ensure the loan does not affect any requirement in the charter agreement with the sponsoring school district. This section should also incorporate Section 1002.33(8)(d), Florida Statutes which provides that, "When a charter is not renewed or is terminated, the School shall be dissolved under the provisions of law under which the School was organized, and any unencumbered public funds, except for capital outlay funds and federal charter school program grant funds, from the charter school shall revert to the sponsor. Capital outlay funds provided pursuant to s. 1013.62 and federal charter school program grant funds that are unencumbered shall revert to the department to be redistributed among eligible charter schools. In the event a charter school is dissolved or is otherwise terminated, all district school board property and improvements, furnishings, and equipment purchased with public funds shall automatically revert to full ownership by the district school board, subject to complete satisfaction of any lawful liens or encumbrances. Any unencumbered public funds from the charter school, district school board property and improvements, furnishings, and equipment purchased with public funds, or financial or other records pertaining to the charter school, in the possession of any person, entity, or holding company, other than the charter school, shall be held in trust upon the district school board's request, until any appeal status is resolved."

- **Guarantees:** This should normally be completed with "none." The Organization should always propose loans based upon the Organization's credit worthiness.
- **Rate:** For negotiating purposes, rather than have the bank "suggest" the interest rate, it is better to state a reasonable but fair market value rate. The rate should reflect the type of loan and the level of risk the School represents to the bank.
- **Repayment Schedule:** A realistic repayment schedule should be determined and should correspond to the charter school's business plan and financial forecasts.
- **Source of Funds for Repayment:** The specific source of cash flow to be used for repayment should be identified.
- **Alternate Source of Funds for Repayment:** To satisfy concerns by banks that in the event the organization does not meet financial projections, the plans on how the organization would meet the repayment schedule should be listed. For example, liquidating assets, etc., could be used to repay the loan.

(8.2.3) Corporate Credit Card policy

The Governing Board may approve the use of corporate credit cards for authorized employees and President. Cardholders shall be required to sign an agreement indicating the terms of credit card use are accepted. Individuals who do not adhere to these policies risk revocation of the credit card privileges and/or disciplinary action.

Only individuals authorized by the Governing Board may use corporate credit cards. The following policies shall be in place regarding the use of Corporate Credit Cards:

(8.2.3.1) Securing Corporate Credit Card

The President shall receive quotes from three separate financial institutions prior applying for a credit card. The credit card which will result in the lowest fees for the School shall be selected.

All credit applications made on behalf of the School must be signed by the Treasurer of the Governing Board and approved by the Governing Board.

The President may periodically search for alternative financial institutions to find the best credit offer available to the School.

(8.2.3.2) Individual Credit Card Use

- The use and authorization of the corporate credit card may only be granted by the Governing Board.
- Only the approved user may use or have access to the card.
- The credit card shall be kept in a secure location.
- Lost or stolen credit cards must be reported to the President immediately upon the recognition that the card is missing. The President shall ensure it is reported to the financial institution as soon as possible.
- Only purchases approved within the annual budget or by the Governing Board are allowed to be made with the credit card. The use of the credit card

should not circumvent other school policies regarding the proper approval of purchases.

- The credit card shall not be used for cash advances, personal or non-business-related purchases
- If the credit card is accidentally used to purchase personal items, the employee or President will be required to remit payment to the School for the amount of the purchase within two (2)-weeks of the close of the credit card statement period. If an employee fails to remit such payment, the Organization reserves all rights to pursue repayment in a court of law.
- The authorized employee or President must provide the vendor with the company's tax-exempt form, if applicable.
- Receipts for all credit card purchases must be retained and handed in to the Schools' President by the 15th and 30th of each month along with a receipt summary form indicating the authorizing source of any purchase.
- Failure to submit receipt and proper documentation for credit card purchases will result in the purchase being considered a personal expense, for which the employee or President must reimburse the School.
- In the event of transfer, separation from the School, or upon request of the President the approved user will surrender the card to the President.
- The President and accountant shall conduct monthly reviews of the credit card statement to ensure proper authorized use of the credit card by the authorized employee. The Governing Board reserves the right to revoke any and all credit card or credit card access at any time and for any reason.

(8.2.3.3) Credit Card Payments

Payments made to the financial institution for a credit card statement must be split into the appropriate function/object codes. Payments to the financial institution must be made prior to the due date to minimize and interest or late payment fees.

(8.2.3.4) Incentive Programs

Any incentive programs offered by the financial institution for the use of the credit card (i.e., cash back, purchase discounts, etc.) must be used for the benefit of the School. No individual employee or President may personally take advantage of these incentives if they are offered by the financial institution.

(8.2.3.5) Corporate Debit Cards

It is the policy of this Organization to discourage the use of a debit card which draws from the accounts of the organization. Debit cards lack the fraud protection available from credit cards and make the forecasting and management of the organization's cash flow significantly more complicated. Whenever possible, the Organization will attempt to obtain a corporate credit card to be used for purchases that require such.

In the event that a debit card must be used, the same policies that apply to a corporate credit card will also apply to the use of the debit card. Only signatories on the School's bank account will be allowed to use the School's debit card. Receipts from the use of a debit card

must be submitted to President or designee within seventy-two (72) hours of the purchase being made so they can be recorded in the School's financial records.

(8.3) Accounting Platform

(8.3.1) Software Selection

The President in collaboration with the Board Accountant shall ensure a software package is selected to manage the School's financial records which shall be approved by the Governing Board annually. The software package must allow the School to record financial transactions in a way that aligns with the Financial & Program Cost Accounting & Reporting for Florida Schools (Red Book) standards.

The software should enable the President, any designated financial employees, Governing Board members and the School's accountant to be able to access the Organization's accounting records and ensure proper accounting of the Organization's resources.

Care will be taken to ensure the software package is adequately secured against unauthorized access, as well as ensuring that proper safeguards are in place to provide for backing up and securing data in alignment with policy (7.2.4).

(8.3.2) Chart of Accounts

To facilitate the record keeping process for accounting, all ledger accounts will be assigned a descriptive account title and account number consistent with the Financial and Program Cost Accounting and Reporting for Florida Schools manual (The Red Book).

(8.3.3) General Ledger Management

(8.3.3.1) Recording Transactions in the General Ledger

The Office Manager or designee is responsible for the proper posting of journals and entries to the general ledger and for the maintenance of the accounts to ensure accuracy, validity, and reliability of financial records.

As such, the Office Manager may not be granted signatory access to the Organization's bank accounts to ensure proper separation of duties. In addition, the Office Manager may not complete the monthly account reconciliations.

(8.3.3.2) Posting Transactions and Journals

The accounting software aids in the maintenance of journals and posting of transactions to general ledger accounts. The following functions should be performed on a monthly basis to update the general ledger for the month's activities:

- All activities recorded in journals will be posted to the general ledger using the computerized posting feature. These journals include:
 - General Journal
 - Purchases Journal
 - Cash Receipts Journal
 - Cash Disbursements Journal - Payroll Journal

- The recurring adjusting journal entries will be posted via the general journal. Recurring journal entries will be established for adjustments that occur equally each monthly accounting period. Recurring journal entries can include the following:
 - Accruals of interest expense not paid during the accounting period.
Amortization of prepaid expenses Depreciation of fixed assets
 - Recurring journal entries will be reviewed monthly and adjusted accordingly.
- Adjusting journal entries will be prepared for transactions that have not been recorded in other journals or to correctly restate account balances to accurate amounts. The need to make adjusting journal entries may be due to the following:
 - Accrual of income and expense items
 - Correction of errors
 - Recording non-cash transactions

All journal entries will be reviewed and authorized by the President or designee before being posted. Adequate supporting documentation will be prepared for each journal entry. The Governing Board shall review the journal transaction summaries prepared by the President.

(8.3.3.3) Trial Balance

After posting all journals and adjusting entries, a trial balance will be printed. The trial balance will be reviewed to ensure that the general ledger is in balance. Next, all control accounts in the general ledger will be reconciled to subsidiary ledgers. Any differences will be investigated, and appropriate adjustments will be made.

The President or designee will make final review of the trial balance for accuracy and proper reflection of account balances before printing financial statements for review by the Governing Board.

(8.3.4) Bank Account Reconciliations

Errors or omissions can be made to the cash records due to the many transactions that occur. Therefore, it is necessary to prove periodically the balance shown in the general ledger. Cash on deposit with a bank or other financial institution is not available for count and is therefore proved through the preparation of a reconciliation of the Organization's record of cash in the bank/financial institution and the bank/financial institution's record of the organization's cash that is on deposit.

Monthly reconciliations of all bank accounts held by the Organization shall be completed by an individual who does not have check signing authority or money handling ability within the Organization. The reconciliation will indicate the balance shown on the bank/ financial institution statement and work to ensure the corrected balance is equal to the number currently indicated on the general ledger. The following procedures will be used to complete this process:

(8.3.4.1) Format

The Organization's format for monthly bank/financial institution reconciliations, is composed of two distinct sections. One section begins with the balance as shown on the bank/financial institution statement and works to a corrected balance. That is the

balance the bank/financial institution statement would show if all transactions were recorded by the bank (e.g., outstanding checks, deposits in transit, etc.).

The second section starts with the balance shown by the School records and also works to a corrected balance; the balance that should be shown in the organization's records after all transactions are properly recorded (e.g., bank charges, interest, etc.).

(8.3.4.2) Preparation and Reconciling Items

Upon receipt of the monthly bank/financial institution statement including cleared checks, deposit slips and any other transaction notifications, the monthly bank/financial institution reconciliation will be prepared by the accountant, Office Manager or designee utilizing the following process:

- The first section of the monthly reconciliation will be started with the ending balance per the bank/financial institution statement.
- Next, any deposits in transit that were made by the Organization but were not yet recorded by the bank/financial institution will be listed and added to the bank/financial institution balance.
- Next, any checks that were written on the account prior to month-end but which have not yet cleared the bank/financial institution, will be listed and deducted from the bank/financial institution balance.
- From these steps, the "corrected" ending balance will be derived for the first section.
- The second section of the monthly reconciliation will be started with the ending balance per the School's books.
- Next, any interest or any other bank/financial institution credit items will be listed and added to the balance.
- Next, any bank/financial institution charges, transfer fees, etc. will be listed and deducted from the balance.
- From these steps, the "corrected" ending balance will be derived for the second section and should equal the "corrected" balance for the first section.
- Any discrepancies between these two balances will require research and prompt investigation by the accountant, Office Manager, or designee to determine the cause, such as recording errors, omissions, mispostings, etc. This can also include recalculation of the bank/financial institution statement for any possible errors made by the bank/financial institution.

(8.3.4.3) Adjustments and Journal Entries

Any book reconciling items such as interest, bank/financial institution charges and any recording errors shall be summarized and drafted in journal entry form for recording in the general ledger. Further, any outstanding checks over six months old will be reviewed for disposition including write-off by journal entry.

(8.3.4.4) Review and Approval

The monthly bank/financial institution reconciliation for each account should be reviewed and approved by the President or designee (an individual who did not prepare

it), via signature and date on the completed forms and submitted for final review by the Governing Board.

(8.3.4.5) Reconciliation Process

- Upon receipt of the monthly bank/financial institution statement including cleared checks, deposit slips and any other transaction notifications, the monthly bank/financial institution reconciliation will be prepared by the accountant, Office Manager or designee.
- The accountant, Office Manager or designee shall utilize the reconciliation component of the accounting software to designate which transactions have and have not cleared the bank.
- Any discrepancies between these two balances will require research and prompt investigation by the accountant, Office Manager, or designee to determine the cause, such as recording errors, omissions, mispostings, etc. This can also include recalculation of the bank / financial institution statement for any possible errors made by the bank / financial institution.
- Any book reconciling items such as interest, bank/financial institution charges and any recording errors will be summarized and drafted in journal entry form for recording in the general ledger.
- Further, any outstanding checks over six months old will be reviewed for disposition including write-off by journal entry if necessary.
- The reconciliation report generated by the software along with a copy of the bank statement shall be generated, filed in the organization's accounting records, and forwarded to the School's President and the Governing Board for Board review.

(8.3.5) Year-End Closing

An orderly, timely and comprehensive closing of all accounts will be performed by the accountant, Office Manager, or designee to assure an accurate representation of the Organization's financial statements and to provide the necessary documentation for the Organization's independent auditors.

(8.3.5.1) Individuals Responsible

Year-end closings of all accounts held by the Organization shall be completed by an individual who does not have check signing authority or money handling ability within the organization. The following policies will be administered in the completion of the year-end closing:

(8.3.5.2) Assets

Assets should be accurately stated, generally at realizable amounts. Work papers should show the basis and when required, how the amounts were calculated.

- **Cash** - Prepare bank reconciliations for year-end. Balances for each bank account should match the bank balances for each account. Show original dates and descriptions of each reconciling item. Prepare necessary journal entries and adjust the reconciliations. Prepare a summary of all petty cash and change

funds. Totals must agree with the general ledger. Supplement with actual statements.

- **Investments** - Prepare a list of all securities on hand at year-end by location held such as broker or bank. Use full names and show the face amount or number of shares and date of acquisition. Determine cost and market values. Calculate accrued interest
- **Accounts Receivable** - Obtain aged trial balances and reconcile to general ledger. Calculate possible allowance for uncollectible accounts and obtain approval of treasurer. Adjust allowance to calculated amount. Write off any unallocated differences.
- **Other Receivables** - Prepare schedule of grants and other miscellaneous receivables and reconcile to general ledger. Comment on collectability, if applicable.
- **Inventories** - Prepare a summary of all properties held in inventory. Reconcile inventories from physical inventory to year-end balances. Explain material variations from prior year for either positive or negative inventory reports.
- **Fixed Assets** - Prepare a schedule of assets and related allowances for depreciation. Reconcile allowance additions to total depreciation expense. Trace disposals to capital gain and loss schedule or to expense if items were scrapped or discarded.

(8.3.5.3) Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities are shown as the amount to be paid in the subsequent period.

- **Accounts Payable** - Determine that all items paid through year-end are not shown on the accounts payable list. Accounts payable shall be kept open for 45 days after year-end in order to receive invoices and record in the accounts payable list. After this 45-day period, maintain a list of any items over \$1,000 that are received or paid that are not included in accounts payable but relate to that year-end period.
- **Accrued Payroll** - Calculate accrued payroll and vacation pay due by the number of days outstanding at year-end. Include any incentive bonuses or other special payroll payments.
- **Other Accrued Expenses** - Review accruals for payroll taxes, payroll deductions payable, interest expense on short term borrowings and long-term debt. Determine cost of audit and legal services through year-end and record.
- **Current Liabilities** - Prepare a schedule of debt and calculate and record the current portion due within one year and accrued interest.
- **Contingent Liabilities and Commitments** - Prepare a schedule of any outstanding litigation and possible loss. Prepare a schedule of all long-term rental agreements.
- **Net Assets** - Bring permanent file of all net asset accounts up to date.

(8.3.5.4) Revenues

Prepare a schedule of all revenues and compare amounts to prior year. Evaluate and comment on any material positive or negative revenue differences. Prepare a memorandum

on new revenue accounts. Also prepare a schedule of revenues by program for inclusion in the annual report.

(8.3.5.5) Expenses

Each expense total should be compared to the prior year and unusual variances reviewed and explained. Several expense items are directly related to asset or liability accounts and the worksheets for the related accounts should be prepared at the same time and shown on one schedule.

- **Payroll** - Prepare a schedule of all payroll and employer taxes and reconcile to payroll expense. Prepare a schedule of annual payroll and benefit levels for each organization employee for the auditors and annual report.
- **Legal and Professional Fees** - Prepare a schedule of all legal invoices with the amount and brief description of services rendered. Reconcile total to Legal expense.
- **Bad Debt Expense** - Prepare a list of all accounts written off during the year. Note specifically any additions to the allowance for uncollectible accounts.
- **Interest Expense** - Prepare a schedule of interest expense by source. Reconcile amounts to short-term borrowing and long-term debt.

(8.4) Purchasing

The President shall ensure proper processes are in place to document, approve, and track all purchases made by the Organization. The President must approve all purchases and abide by the following policies:

(8.4.1) Must Be Within Budget or Board Approved

All purchases must be within alignment of the approved annual budget. Any purchase which would cause a deviation of more than one percent from the annual budget must first be approved by the Governing Board prior to the approval.

(8.4.2) Price Comparisons

As responsible stewards of public resources, the Organization shall make it a practice to compare prices for items before making purchases. The President shall ensure a process is in place to record price comparisons for any item greater than \$1000:

(8.4.2.1) Micro Purchases (Under \$10,000)

Unless the item is a Sole-Source Procurement (as defined below), at least three vendors should be consulted, and copies (preferably digital copies) of the price comparison shall be stored to justify the price comparison prior to making a purchase as defined in this section.

If the item is being purchased through the use of the sponsoring school district's price quote system, price comparisons will not be required, as it is assumed that the sponsoring school district has completed necessary price comparisons as part of including the item in their system.

In the event the lowest priced item is not selected, written justification must be included with

the price comparison about why the specific vendor or item was selected over the lower cost item. The Governing Board retains the sole authority to approve any purchase under this section.

(8.4.2.2) Simplified Acquisition (\$10,000 - \$250,000)

Purchases exceeding \$10,000 require at least three price comparisons unless the item is a Sole-Source Procurement. Formal quotes are preferred, but can be waived in lieu of on-line price comparisons by the President which shall be appropriately documented. At the President's discretion a request for proposals (RFP) may also be used to solicit bids and comparisons from multiple vendors, but is not required under this section. The Governing Board retains the sole authority to approve any purchase under this section.

(8.4.2.3) Competitive Proposals (+\$250,000)

Purchases exceeding \$250,000 shall require a competitive bid process. The President shall develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) and publicize the RFP on the website for at least two weeks prior making a decision. The RFP may also be distributed to vendors who provide appropriate services. The RFP shall include the methodology that will be used to evaluate the received proposals. Price need not be the sole factor for consideration of a proposal. The evaluation criteria should clearly articulate the factors that will be considered, and weight given to each. The Governing Board retains the sole authority to approve any purchase under this section.

(8.4.2.4) Sole-Source Procurements

Some items may only be available from a single source provider, and comparable items may not be available from other vendors. For example, a specific textbook may only be available from the publisher of the book. In this case, this will be considered a sole- source procurement.

When making a purchase of a sole-source procurement, written justification of why the particular item is required and that it is only available from the specific vendor. The President or designee must approve this documentation (if prepared by someone other than the President or designee) and it must be maintained with the purchase paperwork.

(8.4.2.5) Retention of Purchase Documentation

The President shall ensure a filing system is in place to document the processes used to obtain price quotes and approvals for purchases. The documents may be stored electronically, and in alignment with the records retention policy 7.2.

(8.4.3) Approval Process

All purchases must receive proper approvals before the purchases are made. The President shall ensure a process is in place to document the approval of the appropriate parties through electronic approval system or through physical signatures prior to purchases being made.

Purchases that are less than \$1,000 must be approved by the President. Purchases greater

than \$1,000 must be approved by both the President and the Governing Board through the annual budget.

Reimbursements or payments to the President require the approval of the Governing Board.

(8.4.4) Use of Purchase Orders

The Organization does not require the use of purchase orders prior to making a purchase, so long as the adequate approval is documented in some way. However, in the event a formal purchase order is requested or used, the purchase order will signify the date at which a purchase was incurred. Purchase orders shall include, but is not limited to:

- Date
- Purchase order numbers
- Vendor Name
- Vendor Telephone Number
- General Description
- Amount (Estimated)
- Preparer's Signature and Date

(8.5) Accounting Processes

(8.5.1) Accounts Payable, Cash Disbursements and Accrued Expenses

Proper internal control will be followed to ensure that only valid and authorized payables are recorded and paid. Accounting procedures will be implemented to ensure the accuracy of amounts, coding of general ledger accounts and appropriate timing of payments.

(8.5.1.1) Internal Controls

(8.5.1.1.1) Documenting Accounts Payable

After being stamped with the "date received" stamp, all Purchase Orders with purchase requisition, if applicable, and Vendor invoices will be placed in an accounts payable file or scanned to an appropriate electronic file.

(8.5.1.1.2) Recording of Invoices and Check Requests

- The invoices will be matched to the purchase request.
- All invoices will identify the bank account and other special instructions for payment, if applicable.
- The President will approve all invoices before payment is processed.
- Approved invoices and check request will be entered into the accounting system for proper coding and payment by the Office Manager.

(8.5.1.1.3) Payment of Accounts Payable

Weekly accounts payable invoices will be selected for payment according to their payment terms unless otherwise determined by the President or designee. Any credit balances (amounts owed to the organization) should be applied to the invoice amount when determining payment.

After the checks are printed, a copy will be made to attached to each invoice. The original checks will be paper clipped to the copied check and invoice. The original checks and all backup materials will be sent to the President for final approval and signature.

Original checks will be mailed as assigned by the President, while the attached backup will be returned to the administration office for filing. Scanning of all documentation shall be used when appropriate and applicable.

(8.5.1.1.4) *Accrued Expenses*

The President will ensure that at the end of each month records are prepared for accrued expenses. Accrued expenses represent amounts due for services or benefits that the School has received but are not yet payable. Once all amounts have been determined, the accrued expenses will be recorded in the accounting system.

(8.5.1.2) *Check Requests*

To ensure efficient processing and record keeping, all manual check requests will be prepared on a check request form or through the electronic system utilized by the School.

(8.5.1.2.1) *Origination*

Whenever an employee requires a manual check to be issued, such as picking up items or for cash on delivery items, a Check Request form should be completed with all pertinent information and receive appropriate approval.

(8.5.1.2.2) *Processing*

The completed Check Request Form should then be forwarded to the Office Manager for check preparation and signature by the authorized check signers. If a check is to be mailed directly to the vendor, any applicable documentation, such as order forms, etc., should be attached to the form.

(8.5.1.3) *Check Signing Authority*

(8.5.1.3.1) *Signature Levels Required*

The following approval / signature levels will be required according to the dollar amount of the payment. If the School is sending paper checks, the checks should have these signatures. If the School is using an electronic payment system, the transaction should document the relevant approvals based on the following outside of the approved Operating Budget line item:

Less than \$5,000 - A check issued for an amount less than \$5000 requires only one signature, typically by the President.

Less than \$10,000 - A check issued for an amount less than \$10,000 requires two different authorized signatures.

Greater than \$10,000 - A check issued for greater than \$10,000 requires two signatures, one of which must be that of the Treasurer of the Governing Board. The second signature can be that of any authorized check signer.

(8.5.1.3.2) Prohibition from Reconciliation

Individuals who are authorized check signers on any school bank account shall not be permitted to conduct the monthly bank reconciliation.

(8.5.2) Petty Cash

To facilitate minor business expenses, a petty cash fund will be available to select employees as described below.

(8.5.2.1) Fund Control

The Office Manager will maintain control of the cash box, petty cash journal and all petty cash transactions. The petty cash fund will be set up in the amount of \$100 for authorized out-of-pocket expenses and advances for minor business expenses.

Advances or reimbursements from petty cash will be limited to amounts of \$25.00 or less. If an employee requires funds in a greater amount, the employee should request a check.

(8.5.2.2) Draws

When an employee requests a petty cash draw, the cashier will record the amount disbursed, date of disbursement, reason for the disbursement and the name of the employee receiving the disbursement.

The employee should, by the next business day, return the receipt(s) and any change to the cashier. A petty cash voucher will then be completed with the receipt(s) attached.

(8.5.2.3) Replenishment

At the end of each month or whenever the petty cash fund drops below a balance of \$25.00, the cashier will complete the reimbursement paperwork from the journal with itemized descriptions of expenses and attach all vouchers. The cashier will then be issued a check in the amount of the reimbursement and will be responsible for obtaining cash from the bank to replenish the cash box.

(8.5.3) Accounts Receivable

(8.5.3.1) Reducing Cash Receivables

In order to reduce the possibility of theft or accounting errors, the President will ensure processes are in place to, as much as possible, eliminate the use of cash receipts to the School. When funds must be collected the use of electronic payments or payments by check should be encouraged as much as is feasible. Parents will be notified on a regular basis (at least annually) of this policy and asked not to send cash to the School.

(8.5.3.2) Receipts

Funds may be received in person, by mail, or submitted electronically on the internet through secure sites. Unless a special exception is made, such as for field trips and lunch money collection described below, payments made at the School they will only be received within the main administrative office. In-person payments may be accepted only during regular office hours, and only by authorized personnel who have been trained in the process.

(8.5.3.2.1)

Authorization

The President shall authorize office staff who are allowed to accept funds. An authorized receiver shall not be involved in the fund posting or accounts receivable process. The authorized receivers may include the secretary, receptionist, and other staff members trained and authorized by the President. The President shall make the Governing Board aware of those authorized office staff members.

(8.5.3.2.2)

Receipt Log

Each person authorized to collect funds on behalf of the School shall be provided with a multi-part, sequentially numbered receipt book. It is expected that staff members shall store the books securely.

When funds are received, the staff member must record payments in the book and the original receipt is given or mailed to the payer. The first receipt copy is bundled with funds received that day and placed in a secure temporary location. The second receipt copy remains in the receipt book.

If a receipt is made unusable for any reason, it shall be voided. One copy of the voided receipt shall remain in the receipt book with the word VOID clearly written across it. The other two copies shall be shredded and discarded.

(8.5.3.2.3)

In-Person Payments

The office staff member who has been authorized by the President shall accept in-person payments and shall verify any funds presented while the payer is present. The payment shall be recorded on the appropriate Receipts Log (i.e., lunch log, field trip log, event log, etc.). A receipt shall be provided to the payer. The funds shall be stored in a secure location.

(8.5.3.2.4)

Mailed Payments

The office staff member authorized to open the mail shall endorse each check immediately by stamping "For Deposit Only" on the back. The individual shall prepare a fund receipt and mail it to the payer not later than the next day. The payment shall be recorded on the appropriate Receipts Log. The funds shall be stored in a secure temporary location.

(8.5.3.2.5)

Classroom Collections

The President may train and authorize classroom teachers to collect funds for specific purposes within the classroom during morning attendance time. These collections should be for limited specific purposes as defined by the President such as school lunch, or field trips.

For each approved collection purpose, the teacher will be provided with a log to record the payments, and an envelope to store the funds in. When the funds are collected, a receipt should be issued, and the funds should be recorded on the log. At the earliest possible time, the teacher should hand deliver the envelope and log to the designated office staff person.

The designated office staff person will ensure the amount in the envelope matches the logged amount, make a copy of the log, and return the log and envelope to the teacher.

(8.5.3.3) Posting Funds

The Office Manager shall, at least three times per week, ensure that all funds received are entered into the general ledger and that deposits are prepared. All funds collected, that are stored in the secure location will be reviewed and matched against the logs provided and entered into the general ledger.

At the end of each month, the Office Manager shall prepare a monthly fund posting report and reconcile it to the daily posting reports for that month. He or she shall sign and date it and provide the report to the President for approval. Unusual findings shall be reported to the President immediately. This report will be provided to the accountant to be included in the School's official financial records.

(8.5.3.4) Depositing Funds

Only the President, the Office Manager, or staff members authorized by the President may make bank deposits. The person physically depositing the funds to the bank may not be the same person who receives the funds, nor the person completing monthly bank reconciliations. All receipts shall be regularly deposited to the bank.

(8.5.3.4.1) Electronic Deposits

In the event the selected financial institution allows for electronic deposits, the Organization may utilize such tools. Check will be scanned and deposited to the online system. The checks shall be endorsed with the statement "Electronically deposited" and maintained along with a verification report provided by the financial institution as evidence of the deposit.

(8.5.3.4.2) Manual Deposits

Checks that are manually deposited to the bank shall be grouped together by batch based on the number of items allowed by the financial institution. Each batch shall be photocopied along with the deposit slip and total being used for said batch and the copy stored with the Organization's financial records. Once the deposit is prepared, it should be reviewed by another staff member and signed off to indicate who prepared and who received each deposit.

An authorized staff member shall than physically deliver the deposit to the financial institution for deposit and retain a copy of the deposit slip provided by the financial institution for storage with the photocopies as evidence of the deposit.

(8.5.3.4.3) Delayed Deposits

If, in unusual cases, the deposit cannot be made weekly, the deposit shall be stored in a secure location in the office and deposited the next business day. The President shall be notified whenever funds are to be left in the office and direction shall be given to immediately deposit the funds on the next available business day.

(8.5.3.4.4) Deposit Validation

A deposit slip, validated by the bank, or a copy of the online deposit report, must be obtained for every deposit. The President shall investigate any failure to receive a validated receipt and take appropriate corrective action.

(8.5.4) Bad/NSF Checks

Checks returned by the bank and designated uncollectible are to be processed in a method to avoid confronting or embarrassing clients/donors while ensuring that the funds will be collected.

(8.5.4.1) Returned Checks

A returned check for less than \$500 or stamped "uncollected funds," should be re-deposited the following day, or when the next deposit is made.

For returned checks in amounts greater than \$500, the bank that the check is drawn against should be telephoned and requested to provide if the check amount will clear the client/donor's account. If sufficient funds exist, the check should be re-deposited.

(8.5.4.2) Redeposited Checks

In the event a re-deposited check is returned or if sufficient funds do not exist to cover the check, the check should be turned over to the President immediately.

Further, when more than one bad check is issued by the same party within any three-month period, notify the President. Do not redeposit the check unless instructed to do so.

The President or designee should contact the issuer by phone to report the problem and discuss how the matter will be resolved. At the President's discretion, a check may be re-deposited. Whenever a check is returned for insufficient funds, a handling fee should be charged to the issuer based on any fees incurred by the Organization.

(8.5.5) Asset Management

(8.5.5.1) Capitalization & Depreciation of Fixed Assets

Assets acquisitions with a useful life expectancy of greater than one year and with a material unit cost of over \$1,000.00 will be capitalized by the Organization and depreciated. The Organization's accountant shall review any and all assets covered under this section to ensure proper filing.

(8.5.5.1.1) Capitalization

Capitalization is the process of recording the purchase of a fixed asset that is generally recorded individually on an asset schedule. Examples of capital expenditures are purchases of land, buildings, machinery, office equipment, leasehold improvements, computer software and vehicles.

All assets with a useful life of greater than one year and a material unit cost of over \$1,000.00 will be capitalized and (except for land) will be recorded in the depreciation records. Any asset that does not meet the above criteria will be expensed such as small tools and equipment or repairs and maintenance.

The cost basis of furniture and equipment assets will include all charges relating to the purchase of the asset including the purchase price, freight charges and installation if applicable.

Leasehold improvements are to be capitalized if they relate to the occupancy of a new location or a major renovation of an existing location. Expenditures incurred in connection with maintaining an existing facility in good working order should be expensed as a repair.

The cost of buildings should include all expenditures related directly to their acquisition or construction. These costs include materials, labor and overhead incurred during construction and fees, such as attorneys, architects and building permits.

(8.5.5.1.2) Depreciation

Depreciation represents the write-down or write-off of the cost of the asset over its estimated useful life.

In general, the depreciation methods/lives for assets should be selected for consistent financial reporting and tax purposes. The following depreciation methods and useful lives should be used for the following asset classifications for financial reporting purposes:

Asset Class	Useful Life	Method
Vehicles	Five Years	Straight Line
Office Equipment and Computers	Five Years	Straight Line
Furniture and Line Machinery	Seven Years	Straight Line
Leasehold Improvements	Remaining Life of Lease Term, Including Option Renewals	Straight Line
Buildings	Thirty Years	Straight Line

The lowest life permitted by tax regulations for asset classes should be selected to optimize depreciation deductions.

(8.5.5.2) Fixed Asset Control

Proper control procedures will be followed for all capital asset acquisitions, transfers and dispositions in order to provide internal control of capital equipment and to assist in reporting. The President is responsible and accountable for furniture, equipment, machinery, and any other capital assets and will maintain control over capital assets at the direction of the Governing Board. The President or designee will assist and evaluate the capital asset control procedures.

(8.5.5.2.1) Acquisitions

A Capital Asset Requisition form must be completed and approved for all purchases. This form is to be attached to all purchase orders or check authorization forms submitted to the Office Manager. Management may source the vendor for the purchase of the capital asset or can submit the request to solicit bids to the Governing Board for assets costing \$1,000 or more.

All purchases for items over \$1,000.00 must include a completed purchase order, with the

form indicating that the item is a capital purchase. When the Office Manager is entering the records into the accounting system, the item will be recorded in the official school inventory documentation as well.

Any internally constructed or donated equipment will be reported to the Office Manager if the item cost or has a FMV of \$1000.00 or more. A complete description of the property, date manufactured or received, number of items, cost or estimated value and a statement that it was internally constructed or donated will be included on the organization's in-kind contributions log/records.

(8.5.5.2.2) Dispositions

Capital assets may be sold or traded-in on new equipment. An Asset Disposition form is to be completed and approved by the President.

Upon approval, the School may advertise the property for sale or submit a list to the Office Manager for sale and disposition. After completion of the sale, the Asset Disposition form will be submitted to the accountant, and the item will be transferred out of the inventory records. The accountant will delete the item from the asset records and record any gain or loss on the disposition.

Worn-out or obsolete property with no cash value will be reported to the Office Manager on the Asset Disposition form with description, serial number, and condition. The Office Manager will inspect all worn-out or obsolete property before it is removed from the charter school and discarded. The asset will then be removed from the asset records.

Any asset that is missing or has been stolen will be reported in writing as soon as possible. The description, serial number, and other information about the lost item should be included in the report. The President will determine the proper course of action and will notify the charter school's insurance carrier and any outside authorities if deemed appropriate. If not recovered, the asset will then be removed from the asset records.

(8.5.5.2.3) Asset Records

Upon any asset acquisition, the Office Manager or designee is responsible for assigning and attaching asset number labels to the property where it can be readily located. The Office Manager will then maintain a detailed Tangible Asset Log. Each asset that receives an asset label will be recorded on the log. This log will display the asset label number assigned to the asset, the date the asset was purchased, the date the asset was labeled, the cost or FMV of the asset, the location of the asset, the description of the asset and the date the asset was disposed of, if applicable.

On an annual basis, the Tangible Asset Log should be reviewed to verify the accuracy of the log. Any discrepancies noted should be reported to the Office Manager to be resolved.

(8.5.5.2.4) Inventory of CSP Grant Purchases

Pursuant to Section 1002.33(17)c, Florida Statutes, all items purchased with Charter School Programs (CSP) grant funds must be logged and inventoried upon receipt, and then inventory must be checked at least twice annually and reported as required by law. All

capital outlay purchases (all line items with 600 series object codes) must be labeled with an inventory label that includes the following wording:

Property of the School District of Polk, Berkley Accelerated
[Inventory ID / Serial Number] Purchased with Federal CSP Funds

The school shall institute an inventory system to tag and track all capitalized materials and items purchased with federal funds as well as other specific grant sources. The items identified on the inventory label must match the identification number of the inventory system, and each item must be listed individually. The inventory must also include the following information for each item:

- Item/ID Serial Number
- Funding Source
- Item Description
- Date Acquired
- Date Inventoried
- Item Condition (new, used, damaged, lost/stolen, sold, etc.)

In the event the School wishes to dispose of any items purchased with CSP funds, in addition to the Organization's disposition policy, the School will also notify the sponsor. This provision remains in effect throughout the life of the equipment even after the CSP grant expires.

(8.6) Payroll Processes

(8.6.1) Payroll Records and Procedures

Payroll will be processed to ensure accuracy; validity of transactions and proper internal control procedures will be maintained to assure that all disbursements are for valid services performed.

(8.6.2) Personnel Records, Management and Changes

Payroll processing will be performed in conjunction with the following related personnel procedures:

- Employee Hiring and New Employee Orientation
- Paid and Unpaid Time Off - Pay and Payroll matters
- Performance Appraisals and Salary/Wage Adjustments - Resignations and Terminations

(8.6.3) Payroll Processing

The Office Manager will receive completed and approved timesheets from the President or designee(s) according to the procedures outlined elsewhere within this policy manual.

Once timesheets have been received, the Office Manager or designee will review them for completeness and then perform calculations for payroll, payroll deductions and other

accruals. The Office Manager or designee will then prepare summary worksheets of payroll information and present them along with supporting documentation to the President for review and approval.

Once the summary has been approved, the Office Manager or designee will enter the information into the computer for processing. A payroll report will be printed before printing checks to verify accuracy and completeness. If correct, checks should be printed. If incorrect, the necessary corrections should be made and reviewed (validated). Validated payroll checks will then be presented for signing and distribution.

Payroll tax deposits will be determined and timely submitted to the Department of Treasury (IRS), as required, using Form 8109 "Federal Tax Deposit Coupon" or the Electronic Tax Payment System.

All payroll related returns will be prepared by the accountant or designee and approved/signed by the President or any board officer.

(8.6.4) Payroll Returns

Quarterly prepare Form 941 - Employers Quarterly Federal Tax Return, found at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f941.pdf>, and file with the Internal Revenue Service, which is due on the last day of the month following the end of the quarter being filed (i.e., the first report Form 941 is for the period January 1 through March 31 and is due April 30).

If the organization has four (4) or more employees, then Form UCT-6, Employer's Quarterly Tax Report is required to be filed with the Florida Department of Labor and is due on the last day of the month following the end of the quarter being filed.

At the end of the calendar year, Forms W-3, Transmittal of Wage and Tax Statement and Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement are to be completed for all employees and submitted to the Social Security Administration.

(8.6.5) ACA Compliance

Schools with 50+ Full-Time employees must abide by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). ACA compliance will be reviewed no less than quarterly to ensure affordable health care coverage is offered to Full-Time and Variable-hour employees whose hours are equivalent to one full-time employee. Abnormalities found will be investigated and adjusted to ensure accurate reporting.

(8.7) Financial Reporting

(8.7.1) Preparation of Governing Board Financial Reports

The President, in consultation with the Board Accountant, should ensure that financial reports are regularly prepared and presented to the Governing Board for review. At each regularly scheduled Governing Board meeting the, the Board should, at a minimum, be provided with the following reports:

- **Balance Sheet** – a financial statement that reports the organization's assets, liabilities and equity at a specific point in time. The end of the most recently closed

month should be used as the date for which this report is created.

- **Profit and Loss** – a financial statement that summarizes the revenues, costs and expenditures incurred thus far during the current fiscal year.
- **Budget Versus Actual** – a comparison of the organization’s planned financial transactions thus far during the current fiscal year as compared to the most recently approved annual budget.

The board may periodically define additional financial reports or summaries it wishes to see on a regular basis.

(8.7.2) Preparation of School District Financial Reports

In accordance with the charter agreement with the sponsor the President shall ensure the Organization prepares and submit to the sponsor a monthly (or if the School is currently classified as a high performing school, quarter), a financial statement which contains a concise, uniform, monthly financial statement summary sheet that contains a balance sheet and a statement of revenue, expenditures, and changes in fund balance. The statements shall be in the format provided by the Department of Education.

(8.7.3) Annual Financial Audit and Financial Statements

In accordance with Florida Statute 1002.33(9)(j)2, the Governing Board shall ensure the Organization retains the services of a certified public accountant or auditor to complete the annual financial audit. The auditor shall be selected using the RFP process described in this policy. The annual audit shall be submitted to the Governing Board for approval, and for submission to the sponsor.

(8.8) Financial Conditions

(8.8.1) Deteriorating Financial Condition or Financial Emergencies

Berkley Accelerated Middle School’s Governing Board is dedicated to sound and efficient financial management. It is the intent of the Board that the Organization’s finances will be managed in such a way as to ensure fiscal stability for the organization. However, in the event that the School has been determined to be in a state of deteriorating financial condition or within a financial emergency, as described by Florida Statute and Administrative Codes, the following policies will be implemented.

(8.8.1.1) Determination

Consistent with Florida Statute 218.503(1) and Administrative Code 6A-1.0081 the School’s sponsor or auditor may determine that the School is in a deteriorating financial condition based on the criteria outlined in Administrative Code 6A-1.0081. Florida Statute 1002.345(2) provides the Commissioner of Education the ability to declare the School in a financial emergency.

(8.8.1.2) Developing Corrective Action Plan

If a corrective action plan is required, the Governing Board’s Treasurer and the President shall meet with the School’s Accountant within fourteen (14) days of the notice to clearly define the conditions which have caused the deteriorating financial condition or

confirm a deteriorating financial condition actually exists, and to recommend actions to be taken to resolve these conditions. These recommendations will become the draft corrective action plan to be presented to the Governing Board and must include:

- Clearly defined cause for the condition;
- Description of actions to be taken to correct the condition, including specific deadlines;
- A list of procedures for monitoring the implementation of the actions to be taken;
- A schedule for providing reports to the sponsor; and
- Any other information or plans as deemed necessary to address the condition.

Within fourteen (14) days of the development of the draft plan the Governing Board shall hold a meeting to discuss, finalize and approve the plan.

(8.8.1.3) Submission of Plan

Once approved, the corrective action plan shall be submitted to the sponsor within two (2) days. In the event that the Commissioner has declared a state of financial emergency, the plan shall also be submitted to the Commissioner.

(8.8.1.4) Monitoring the Corrective Action Plan

Until the financial condition which caused the concern has been resolved and the finances show a healthy, fiscal trajectory, the Governing Board shall meet at least monthly to review financial reports, monitor the progress of the plan, and provide any necessary reports to the Sponsor and/or Commissioner.

Copies of the Corrective Action Plan, and any monitoring reports and data shall be retained by the School for inclusion in the School's annual report and be made available for public inspection if requested.

(8.9) General Financial Matters

(8.9.1) Property Tax Assessments

All non-exempt property tax assessments will be reviewed for accuracy and proper assessed valuations to ensure minimum property tax costs to the organization.

Pursuant to Section 1002.33(18)c, Florida Statutes, any facility, or portion thereof, used to house a charter school whose charter has been approved by the sponsor and the governing board, shall be exempt from ad valorem taxes pursuant to Section 196.1983, Florida Statutes.

(8.9.1.1) Review of Assessments

All assessments are to be promptly reviewed. Any qualified properties used by the organization for its exempt purpose should apply for exemption annually. Many jurisdictions only allow a challenge to an assessment within 30 days after the annual notice as assessed value is sent. It is the Policy of the Organization to begin the analysis process prior to receiving the assessment notice.

When reviewing an assessment, the first step is to find out how the property was assessed. Ask for a full explanation of how the assessed value was derived.

(8.9.1.2) *Appealing of Assessments*

If upon review of the assessment and all other factors, the Organization believes a downward adjustment to the property assessment is appropriate, an appeal should be prepared by the Organization's attorney. Once the case is prepared, an appeal can be sought by simply calling the local assessor's office and asking for an appointment to discuss the assessment.

(8.9.2) *Release of Financial Information*

The release of financial, personnel, statistical or other information that may be of a confidential nature will be controlled and every request will be referred to the President or Treasurer and in accordance with the public records laws under Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

(8.9.3) *Expense Reimbursement Policy*

This policy provides a uniformed system of reimbursement for approved expenditure made on behalf of the organization by individuals. The failure to follow the policies laid out within this policy may result in the denial of a reimbursement request.

(8.9.3.1) *Approval and Responsibilities*

The individual wishing to receive reimbursement must receive permission before the expenses are made on behalf of the School operation. All approval requirements described elsewhere within the organization's policies apply to prior approval for reimbursements.

Sales tax will not be reimbursed. Employees should obtain a tax-exempt certificate from the administration to provide to the vendors to ensure sales tax is not charged.

It is the responsibility of each employee to complete an expense report for timely submission. The expense report with attached receipts must be submitted to the President within thirty (30) days of incurring the expense. The report must be signed and all receipts which match the totals listed on the expense report must be provided. All receipts should clearly list the date of purchase and the business name and location.

Reimbursement shall be effective within fifteen (15) days after an approved request.

(8.9.3.2) *Rules Relating to Specific Reimbursement*

(8.9.3.2.1) *Lodging*

Judgment should be used in selecting appropriate accommodations. The school will only reimburse rates up to the rates defined by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) current Per Diem Rates for the location to which is being traveled to. The approved rates are accessible from the GSA website.

Suite accommodations are not permitted; the organization pays only for single rooms. An

upgrade to a security room is a personal expense unless the hotel is in a place or a city that is designated to be a risk to all travelers.

If late arrival is guaranteed and the reservation must be canceled, the cancellation must be made within the time allowed. The organization will not pay for no-shows. All charges shown on the expense report form should be itemized to show hotel charges, meals, telephone charges, etc. In-room movies and use of mini-bars are considered personal expenses and therefore not reimbursable.

(8.9.3.2.2) Vehicle Transportation

Every effort should be made to use the lowest priced transportation available. Reimbursement will be made for the following modes of transportation:

- Commercial airline travel will only be reimbursed for coach class unless approved by the organization.
- Rental cars. Additional insurance may not be purchased without approval by School Officials. Personal auto used for business will be reimbursed at the prevailing IRS mileage allowance. The mileage reimbursement rate covers all vehicle expenses including gas, insurance, and depreciation.
- Cost of taxi or bus to hotels or airports from place of business or residence.

(8.9.3.2.3) Meals

For out of county travel, employees shall be allowed reimbursement for subsistence. Subsistence allowances for meals shall be paid in accordance with the rates defined by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) current Per Diem Rates for the location to which the individual is traveling. The approved rates are accessible from the GSA website. The meal plus no more than 20% for gratuity will be reimbursable if approved.

(8.9.3.2.4) Training, Conferences and Seminars

Registration fees or similar expenses for approved training courses, conferences, seminars, and conventions are reimbursable if approved in accordance with school administration's expectations.

(8.9.3.2.5) Donations or Contributions

Donations or contributions are not reimbursable expense items.

(9) Facilities

(9.1) Facilities Rental

The organization may rent its facilities not in use for educational purposes to other organizations from time to time so long as such rental does not interfere with any School function or purpose and is permitted under any lease agreement or charter agreement with the authorizing sponsor. The following policies are in place regarding such rentals:

- The President shall create administrative policies, forms, and price schedules to ensure for equitable use of the facilities.
- The President may refuse the use of school facilities for any reason.
- A member of the organization's staff is required to be present during the entire rental of the facility, payment of such staff shall be incorporated into the pricing schedules.
- The President shall be allowed the option of charging a security deposit if deemed appropriate.
- Charter School Sponsored Programs and Parent Teacher Organization Activities:
 - Parent Teacher Organizations and school related activities shall be granted free use of the facilities for school-related activities. Such activities may include: performances, fund raising events, etc.
 - Activities must be approved by the President prior to notice of the event being distributed.
 - The President reserves the right to charge a cleaning fee if the facility is not left in the state it was found.
- Charitable and Non-Profit Use
 - The rental of the facilities for charitable purposes by organizations which have been identified by the IRS as being a not-for-profit agency shall be offered rates representing only the cost for additional facility operation.
- The President shall ensure that party renting space has completed a Building Use Agreement and pays appropriate fees.
- Disputes between the President and the party requesting or renting the facility may be appealed to the Governing Board.
- The party renting space shall be responsible for all damages or loss of school property.
- Parties renting space shall provide a certificate of insurance for liability and property

damage before the event and name the School as an additional insured. Such certificate shall be for at least one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence. The President shall have the ability to waive this requirement in rare, necessary circumstances.

- The party renting the facilities is subject to adherence to applicable standards of behavior and law.
- The School's attorney shall review all lease agreements to ensure compliance with state law, the lease agreement with the School's landlord (if applicable), the charter agreement, and any other applicable rule or regulation.

(9.2) Animals in School

(9.2.1) Special Events

Special events involving animals must be approved by the President at least two weeks prior to the event. If such an event is approved, a list of all animals to be present must be sent home to parents so as to ensure that no students will have allergies to the animals. If a student has allergies to an animal, the teacher is responsible for finding another environment for that student and providing opportunities to gain from the learning experience as other students who do not have allergies.

(9.2.2) Classroom Pets

Teachers will be allowed to have classroom pets, if such pets pertain to the curriculum the teacher is offering. The teacher will be responsible for the care, clean up and wellbeing of classroom pets. Prior to bringing the pet into the classroom, the President must approve of the proposed animal, then signed consent forms must be obtained from the parent/guardian of each student who would access the classroom. These forms must be submitted to the President prior to bringing the animal into the School. The President has the right to ask that the animal be removed at any time.

(9.3) Classroom Decor

(9.3.1) Custom Paintings/Murals

Prior to any staff member permanently affixing any design or color to a classroom wall (i.e., painting, permanent markers, etc.), a plan for the design must be submitted to the President for approval. The Staff member should also be prepared to paint over any designs should the President deem they are a distraction or no longer appropriate for the classroom.

(9.3.2) Affixing Items to Walls

Methods for affixing any items to common school areas, such as hallway walls, etc., shall be prior approved by the President. Methods of affixing requiring approval include, but are not limited to, staples, nails, tacks, or any objects requiring repairing, patching, or rebuilding surface areas to restore ready for painting.

(9.4) Hazardous Materials

The President shall ensure that all chemicals and materials used in the care and

maintenance of the School's building are stored and recorded in an appropriate manner. The President will ensure that appropriate documentation will be kept of the purchase, use, storage, and disposal of substances designated as hazardous by local, state, and federal authorities.

(9.5)

Key Distribution and Control

Keys will be issued to employees at the beginning of the school year and will be collected at the termination of the school year. Employees are responsible for their keys, and if an employee loses a key, they may be responsible for the cost of rekeying the locks on the building as well as the cost of additional keys. When utilizing keys to enter the building during non-business hours, the employee is responsible for ensuring the building is properly secured.

(10) Transportation

(10.1) Definitions

For the purposes of section 10 of this policy manual, the following terms and definitions may be used:

- **Operator** – Third party vendor contracted by the organization provide transportation services to the students at the School.
- **Reasonable Distance** – The organization defines a reasonable distance as those students who live more than 2 miles walking distance from the School, and less than 4 miles from the School. Reasonable Distance shall also have the definition established in the charter agreement.

(10.2) Student Transportation Services

The Organization, in accordance with state law, shall provide free transportation for eligible students attending the Organization's schools. The President shall ensure that the transportation services of the School meet all of the guidelines established by the State of Florida, as well as the policies that pertain directly to the qualifications of bus operators and operational procedures adopted by the organization. This policy shall be read in conjunction with the "Charter Schools Transportation Resource Guide" published by the Florida Department of Education which may be found:

https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-4117/t_07_09att1.pdf

(10.2.1) Eligibility

Students who live within a reasonable distance from the School, or whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP) requires transportation will be eligible for transportation. The School will attempt to incorporate students who live beyond a reasonable distance and express an interest in transportation only if doing so will not negatively impact those who do live within a reasonable distance and if it is economically feasible to do so.

(10.2.2) Special Education Transportation

All eligible students with disabilities will be provided bus transportation by the Organization between home and the special education program. Transportation for a student with disabilities will be provided between schools if the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team determines that such transportation is necessary as a related service due to the student's disability. Eligibility must be stated in the student's IEP.

(10.2.3) Routes and Schedules

The administration will prepare and monitor organization's bus routes and schedules with the Operator. The President will initially approve all bus routes each school year; the final bus routes must be approved by July 30 of each school year. Buses will be routed with student safety, efficiency, and economy as the controlling factors.

(10.3) School Bus Safety

Safe transportation of students shall be the paramount obligation of the transportation staff. All procedures and rules developed by the administration shall be governed by this requirement. State and local laws pertaining to the operation of buses and vehicles used to transport students will be observed by drivers, students, and staff. The primary form of transportation used for the organization will be through the use of certified and approved school busses.

(10.3.1) Florida School Bus Specifications

Only busses which meet the most recently posted Florida School Bus Specifications requirements are allowed to be used for transporting students for the organization. The specifications can be found on the Florida Department of Education's website at: <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/healthy-schools/transportation/>.

(10.3.2) Inspection

The President shall work with the bus operator to ensure a schedule of regular inspections is established and adhered to. The schedule must ensure that all buses shall be inspected before use with students and at a maximum interval of thirty (30) school days, and that documentation of said inspections are provided to the School.

Inspections will be completed by certified technicians according to the rules set forth by the Florida Department of Education in Florida Administrative Code 6A-3.0171.

(10.3.3) Occupant Protection Systems

Students may be transported only in designated seating and must use the occupant crash protection system provided by the manufacturer, which must comply with the Florida School Bus Specifications.

(10.3.4) Use of school buses

School buses will be used only for the transportation of students to and from school or for School educational purposes.

(10.3.5) Exceptions to using School Busses.

While the primary method of transportation will usually be by school bus, the Organization may in rare circumstances, as approved by the President, utilize alternative transportation if it aligns with the exceptions founds within Florida Statute 1006.22.

(10.3.5.1) Private Vehicle Approval

Any private vehicle used to transport students under this policy shall be currently registered in the State of Florida, be insured for personal injury protection and property damage liability in at least the minimum amounts required by law and be in good working order. An employee, parent, or other adult wishing to transport students in a private vehicle will request approval by submitting his/her driver's license, vehicle registration, and insurance ID card along with any necessary documentation to the President in a reasonable amount of time before the planned travel. The President will determine whether approval of the request to transport students in a private vehicle is appropriate.

(10.3.5.2) Restrictions While Using Private Vehicles

Student transportation in private vehicles may only be authorized for trips within the State of Florida. When transportation is authorized in a private vehicle, students are required to use the occupant crash protection system provided by the vehicle manufacturer. A student who is transported to an activity in a private vehicle approved under this policy shall return from the activity in the same vehicle unless the student is released to his/her parent.

(10.3.5.3) Insurance Requirements

Employees of the organization will be covered by the organization's liability insurance when they are transporting students as part of their assigned or related duties. Benefits due from private vehicle insurance will be primary, except for workers' compensation, in accordance with State law. However, parents or other adults are not covered by the organization's liability program when they are transporting students and, therefore, must have adequate insurance during the time that the vehicle is being used to transport students.

(10.3.5.4) Emergency Situations

Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, in an emergency situation which constitutes an imminent threat to student health or safety, school personnel may take whatever action is necessary under the circumstances to protect students.

(10.4) Drivers

The safety and welfare of our students is of paramount importance to the Organization. Accordingly, no person shall operate a school bus unless the person possesses a valid school bus permit and has complied with the regulations of the State of Florida and other regulatory agencies. In addition to the health certificate required for each current school term, the Board may require evidence of continued good health from individual drivers at any time it deems necessary.

The President will work with the operator to ensure that copies of all certificates, health inspections, and drug tests are provided to the School and kept on file to ensure driver requirements are met. Further, all drivers must be registered in accordance with the Jessica Lunsford Act.

(10.5) General

(10.5.1) Prohibition of The Use of Passenger Vans

The Organization prohibits the use of passenger vans or any passenger vehicle that does not meet the Florida School Bus Specifications which has a capacity of ten or more people.

(10.5.2) Behavioral Policies Apply

All behavioral policies within this manual also are applicable to students while on school provided transportation. Transportation rules and regulations will be distributed annually to parents/guardians. Students will receive instruction for the safe loading, riding, unloading and emergency evacuation procedures.

(10.5.3) Trespassing

The Organization will file criminal charges of trespass against any person who unlawfully

enters a school bus where entry is not approved by Governing Board policy or where the individual does not have prior written approval of the Organization.

(11) Food Service Program

(11.1) Wellness Policy

The Organization recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activities affect the health and well-being of all students. Furthermore, research suggests that there is a positive correlation between a student's health and well-being and his/her ability to learn. Moreover, schools can play an important role in the developmental process by which students establish their health and nutrition habits by providing nutritious meals and snacks through the Schools' meal programs, supporting the development of good eating habits, and promoting increased physical activities both in and out of school.

The Organization is committed to creating school environments that promote and protect the overall well-being of all students and staff. The guidelines listed below encourage a comprehensive wellness approach that is sensitive to both individual and community needs.

(11.1.1) Local School Wellness Policy Leadership

The Organization shall assemble a representative wellness committee that will meet annually to monitor and set goals for the development and implementation of its local school wellness policy. As required by K-20 Education Code 1003.453 the policy shall be reviewed annually and updated according to United States Department of Agriculture Wellness Policy Compliance Checklist. A copy of the updated policy shall be made available for public access.

- The Wellness Policy Coordinator, as defined herein, shall ensure compliance with the local school wellness policy, and report any findings or necessary changes to the sponsoring school district's coordinator.
- Parents, students, representatives of the School food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the School board, school administrators and the general public shall be permitted to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the local school wellness policy.

(11.1.1.1) Wellness Coordinator

The President shall appoint a staff member to serve as the School's Wellness Coordinator. This person will be responsible for:

- Establishing goals and overseeing school health and safety policies and programs. This includes development, implementation, and periodic review, and provide an update to the School's administration
- Establishing a relationship with stakeholders who will help to maintain the wellness plan at each site. These stakeholders include but are not limited to local dietitians, business representatives, health care professionals or community or civil leaders.

(11.1.1.2) Healthy School Team

The organization will establish an ongoing Healthy School Team that will meet bi- annually to ensure compliance and to facilitate the implementation of the wellness policy. This team will incorporate the expertise of a wide cross section of stake holders including but not limited to parents, students, school food service program representatives, school administrators, school health professionals, physical education teachers and the public.

- The President and School staff shall have the responsibility to ensure the School complies with federal and state regulations as they relate to the wellness policy.
- The Plan Committee Chair will be responsible for establishing the Healthy School Team that will ensure compliance with the policy.
- The Healthy School Team is responsible for:
 - Ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations for competitive food and beverage items sold on the School campus (7 CFR 210.11 and FAC 5P-1.003);
 - And reporting its school’s compliance of the regulations to the School Administration who is responsible for ensuring overall compliance with the School’s wellness policy.

The Organization will review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques in establishing goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity and other school-based activities that promote student wellness to include, at a minimum, a review of Smarter Lunchroom tools and techniques.

(11.1.2) Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion can positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by creating food environments that encourage healthy choices and encourage participation in the School meal programs.

The School environment, including the cafeteria and classrooms, shall provide clear and consistent messages that promote and reinforce healthy eating.

(11.1.3) Nutrition Education

Academic performance and quality of life issues are affected by the choice and availability of nutritious foods in our schools. Healthy foods support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability, and ability to learn.

The nutrition benchmarks under the Florida Standards for Physical Education shall be integrated within the comprehensive health education curriculum in each grade level, or integrated into other core subjects, such as math, science, language arts and social sciences.

(11.1.4) Physical Activity

The Organization shall ensure that physical activity is an essential element of each school’s instructional program. The program shall provide the opportunity for all students to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to participate in a lifetime of physical activity.

Students will have the opportunity to be involved in physical activity through physical education

programs, before and after school activities or other activity programs.

Students will be encouraged to participate in community-offered fitness and athletic programs.

- All students in grades K-5 shall receive 150 minutes per week of instructionally relevant physical education. Students will have at least 20 minutes of daily recess. The school will provide space, equipment, and an environment conducive to safe and enjoyable play.
- For middle school physical education in grades 6-8, all students shall receive a minimum of one semester of physical education in each of the three years unless a physical education waiver is received.
- In grades 9-12, students shall receive a minimum of one credit of physical education in senior high school as required. One semester shall be personal fitness while the second semester may be any physical education course offered by the School with the approved state course codes.

(11.1.5) Other School-Based Activities

The School will integrate wellness activities across the entire School setting. These initiatives will include nutrition, physical activity, and other wellness components so that all efforts work towards the same set of goals and objectives used to promote student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes.

(11.1.5.1) General Guidelines

- The goals outlined by the wellness policy will be considered in planning all school-based activities which include but not limited to school events, field trips, dances, and assemblies.
- Afterschool programs will encourage healthy snacking and physical activity.
- The organization shall be in compliance with drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free policies.

(11.1.5.2) Eating Environment

- Students will be provided an adequate amount of time to consume their meal with a minimum of 20 minutes after receiving their food from the line.
- Each school will provide nutritious, and fresh, food provided by the Fresh Food from Florida food distribution program.
- Convenient access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene will be available during meal periods.
- Clean running water shall be available to all students from a water fountain in the cafeteria. Water cups are available on demand for refilling.

(11.1.5.3) Recycling

- The School shall maximize the reduction of waste by recycling, reusing, composting and purchasing recycled products.

(11.1.5.4) Health Services

A coordinated program of accessible health services shall be provided to students and staff

and shall include, but not be limited to, violence prevention, school safety, communicable disease prevention, health screening, including body mass index, community health referrals, immunizations, parenting skills and first aid/CPR training.

(11.1.5.5) Behavior Management

- The Organization is committed to prohibiting the use of food as a reward, unless incorporated into an activity that promotes positive nutrition messages (such as a guest chef or field trip to a farm).
- Teachers and other school personnel will not deny or require physical activity as a means of punishment.

(11.1.6) Guidelines for All Foods and Beverages Available During the School Day

The Organization shall operate and provide food service in accordance with USDA’s National School Lunch Program (NSLP) standards and applicable laws and regulation of the state of Florida. The guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by USDA. Any third-party food service provider selected by the School shall abide by the guidelines established under the NLSP. Any contract for third-party food service providers shall require this compliance and provide for indemnification to the School and/or Organization for the third-party food service provider’s failure to adhere to this requirement and guideline.

(11.1.6.1) General Guidelines

- All reimbursable meals will meet nutrition standards mandated by USDA, as well as any additional state nutrition standards that go beyond USDA requirements.
- School meals will include a variety of nutrient-dense foods, including whole grains and fiber-rich fruits and vegetables, while accommodating special dietary needs and ethnic and cultural food preferences.
- To the maximum extent possible, the School will participate in available federal school meal programs, including the SBP (School Breakfast Program), NSLP (National School Lunch Program), and SFSP (Summer Food Service Program).
- Unless being sold by the organization’s food service program, it is impermissible for any competitive food item sold to students during the School day to consist of ready-to-eat combination foods of meat or meat alternate and grain products, as defined in 7 CFR 210.10 and 210.11. (FAC 5P- 1.003). The most current regulations can be found on the USDA website at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/nutrition-standards-school-meals>

(11.1.6.2) Nutrient standards for competitive foods:

Beverages	Elementary	Middle	High
Plain water	unlimited	unlimited	unlimited
Unflavored low-fat milk	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.

Unflavored or flavored fat-free milk	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
100% fruit or vegetable juice	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water but no added sweeteners	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain 5 calories or less per 8 fl. oz., or 10 calories or less per 20 fl. oz.	Not allowed	Not allowed	20 fl. oz.
Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain 40 calorie or less per 8 fl. oz. or 60 calories or less per 12 fl. oz.)	Not allowed	Not allowed	12 fl. oz.

Portion sizes listed are the maximum that can be offered above the beverages chart.

For elementary and middle school students: foods and beverages must be caffeine-free with the exception of trace amounts of naturally occurring caffeine substances. Food and beverages for high school students may contain caffeine.

(11.1.6.3) Standards for food and beverages available during the School day that are not sold to students:

Schools will limit celebrations that involve food during the School day to no more than one party per class per month.

School Type	Maximum Number of School Days to Conduct Exempted Fundraisers
Elementary Schools	5 days
Middle School/Junior High Schools	10 days
Senior High Schools	15 days
Combination Schools	10 days

The school’s Healthy School Team will maintain a school calendar identifying the dates when exempted competitive food fundraisers will occur. (FAC 5P-1.003)

All foods and beverages sold on the School campus to students outside of reimbursable school meals are considered “competitive foods,” and must comply with the nutrition standards for competitive food as defined and required in 7 CFR 210.11; and

To be allowable, all competitive food items sold to students must meet general nutrition requirements and nutrient standards (see Nutrient Standards for Competitive Foods table).

The organization’s nutrition department’s replacement and purchasing decisions will reflect the marketing guidelines mentioned above.

(11.1.7) Policy for Food and Beverage Marketing

School-based marketing will be consistent with policies for nutrition education and health promotion. As such, the following guidelines apply:

Schools will only be allowed to market and advertise those foods and beverages that meet or exceed USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors are encouraged. Examples may include: vending machine covers promoting water, pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines, sales of fruit for fundraisers and coupons for discounted gym memberships.

(11.1.8) Evaluation and Measurement of the Implementation of the Wellness Policy

The Organization's wellness committee will update and make modifications to the wellness policy based on the results of the annual review and/or as local priorities change, community needs change, wellness goals are met, new health information and technology emerges and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed as indicated at least every three years following the annual assessment.

(11.1.8.1) Annual Progress Assessments

The Organization shall conduct an assessment of the School's wellness policy to measure wellness policy compliance at least once per year. This assessment will measure the implementation of the local school wellness policy, and include:

- The extent to which the School is in compliance with the local school wellness policy;
- The extent to which the local school wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies; and
- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the local school wellness policy.

(11.1.9) Informing the Public

The Organization will ensure the wellness policy and assessments are available to the public at all times. The School will also actively notify households on an annual basis about any updates made to the wellness policy and the availability of the assessment results, as well as provide information to the community about the School nutrition environment.

- The School will ensure the most updated version of the wellness policy and assessments are always available on the School website for the public to view.
- The School will present wellness policy updates, as applicable, during meetings with the Parent Teacher Organization, Governing Board, school administration, health and wellness committee and other interested groups or stakeholders.
- Wellness updates will be provided to students, parents, and staff, as applicable, in the form of handouts, the organization's website, to ensure that the community is informed, and that public input is encouraged.

(11.1.10) Community Involvement

The Organization is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The School will actively communicate ways in which parents, students, representatives of the School food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the local school board, school administrators and the general public can participate in the development, implementation, and annual review of the local school wellness policy through a variety of means, including:

- The Organization will consider student needs in planning for a healthy nutrition environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of surveys and attention will be given to their comments.
- The School will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the School's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of any updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy.

(11.1.11) Record Keeping

Records to document compliance with the requirements of the local school wellness policy will include, but is not limited to the following:

- The written local school wellness policy;
- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including requirements to make the local school wellness policy and triennial assessments available to the public as consistent with the section on informing and updating the public; and
- Documentation of the annual assessment of the local school wellness policy.

(11.2) Food Service Management

The President or designee will develop and implement procedures for operating a food services program. In addition, the President or designee will monitor the quality and efficiency of the School's food service program.

The School's food service program will comply with all state and federal regulations for food quality and financial reimbursement.

The organization may elect to contract with a food service management company to manage the School's food service program.

The duration of contracts with food service management companies will be limited to one (1) year with no more than four (4) annual renewals.

(11.3) Uniform Policy for Free and Reduced-Price Meals

The Organization will participate in the National School Lunch Program. Eligible students will be identified for participation in the free and reduced-price lunch program based upon federal and state guidelines.

Information concerning the eligibility standards will be distributed annually within the School. The identification of student participants in the program will be confidential with such information disclosed to staff members on a strict as-needed basis.

(11.4) Food Safety

The purpose of Organization's food safety program is to ensure the delivery of safe foods to children in the School meals program by controlling hazards that may occur or be introduced into foods anywhere along the flow of food from receiving to service.

Serving safe food is a critical responsibility for school food service and is a key aspect of a healthy school environment. Keeping foods safe is a vital part of healthy eating. When properly implemented, the School's food safety program will help ensure the safety of school meals served to School students.

In order to carry out these goals and comply with federal law, the School's Food Safety Program will include written plans for each school and will be consistent with Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles.

The School's Food Safety Program will focus on three (3) key points.

- Food preparation areas will be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner. This includes ensuring that workers hands, utensils, and food contact areas are clean and sanitary so as to avoid cross contamination.
- Temperature controls will be strictly adhered to. Food will be cooked and served at the proper temperature.
- Standard Operation Procedures should be developed to ensure sanitation; to ensure that food is maintained at the proper temperatures, and to facilitate other safety aspects of the food service program.

(11.5) Unpaid Meal Policy

This policy presents the approved procedure to handle situations when children eligible for reduced-price or full-price meal benefits have insufficient funds to pay for School meals; as well as for the collection of unpaid meal charges and delinquent account debt. This policy details how students will be charged for meals, as well as offering alternate meals, limits on meal charges, or allowing neither meal charges nor alternate meals when a student's account has insufficient funds.

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are integral in ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals to support their academic success. It is also imperative to protect the financial stability of school nutrition program.

- Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal even if they have accrued a negative balance on their cafeteria account.
- Students who have money to pay for a reduced-price or full price meal at the time of service are provided a meal. If the student intended to use the money for that day's meal, the School will not use the money to repay a negative balance or other unpaid meal charge debt.

- Students are allowed to charge 3 days of meals, both breakfast and lunch or the dollar equivalent to the days of breakfast and lunch.
- Students who charge a meal will receive a reimbursable meal/alternate breakfast or lunch.
- Alternative breakfast and meal options will be available, and they will comply with the requirements of the NSLP and USDA meal pattern requirements.

(11.5.1) Communicating the Policy

- The written meal charge policy will be available on the School’s website, included in the student information packet distributed on the first day of school and to all transfer students during the school year, and attached to the Meal Benefits Application.
- The written meal charge policy will be communicated to all cafeteria staff prior to the first day of school.
- Child Nutrition Program staff will receive training on meal charge policy and record of training will be maintained as part of the professional development portfolio.
- Documentation of the communication and training plan will be maintained for the Federal Program Administrative Review.

(11.5.2) Notifying the Household of Low or Negative Balance In Student Cafeteria Account

- The student’s household will be notified when a student’s cafeteria account falls below \$15.00 OR the equivalent of three day’s meals, breakfast, and lunch.
- The School will notify households of low or negative balances. Letters via US mail, email, or a notification letter will be sent home by the student and addressed to the parent or legal guardian.
- Notifications to households will include the amount of unpaid meal charges, expected payment dates, the consequences of non-payment and where to go for questions or assistance.
- The consequences of non-payment will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- The persons responsible for managing unpaid meal charges are:
 - The Cafeteria Manager
 - The Program President/Business Manager

Bad debt is defined as delinquent debt that is deemed uncollectible at the end of the school year. Students with a bad debt account will not be carried over to the next school year. However, available non-federal fund sources will be engaged to offset the debts

At the end of the school year, the Business Manager will evaluate all delinquent debt for conversion to bad debt. Bad debt will be restored to the School from the general fund prior to the end of the same fiscal year.

Efforts to collect delinquent and/or bad debt will be handled by the following

- Send First and Second Letters
- Phone calls

- Consequence - students may be removed from extracurricular such including but not limited to field trips

(11.5.3) Assistance to Households

Households with questions or needing assistance may contact the school office and all requests will be treated with confidentiality within the confines of Florida law.

(12) Before and After Care (If Applicable)

(12.1) General

(12.1.1) Hours of Operation

The Governing Board, as implemented by the President, will establish and post the hours of operation for the before and after care program annually. Parents may drop off and pick up their students within the posted times.

(12.1.2) Fees

The President shall annually develop a fee schedule to be used for the before and after care program as part of the annual budgeting process, and these fees and budget should be incorporated into the budget assumptions and approved by the Governing Board.

(12.1.3) Emergency closings/delays

If school is delayed, released, or canceled due to severe weather or emergencies, after-care will also be canceled. If severe weather develops after after-care has begun, parents will be expected to make arrangements to pick up children as soon as possible.

(12.1.4) Registration

Students wishing to enroll in before or after-care must complete a registration form which documents important information which may be needed by Before and After Care. These forms must be completed prior to the student started the program.

(12.1.5) Consistent Use

When a family signs up for Before and After Care, they are expected to have consistent use of the service. Each child will have fifteen (15) days throughout the year, taken in one-week increments, where they are able to not use the service and not be charged.

However, should students fail to utilize more than fifteen (15) days, the student may either lose their spot or pay for the service not used.

(12.2) Student Expectations

(12.2.1) Student Rules

Students are required to follow the rules of the Before and After Care program that will be distributed at the commencement of the school year and signed by the student and the parent(s). All policies and procedures contained in the Policy also apply to the Before and After Care program.

(12.2.2) Consequences for Misbehavior

Students who disregard the rules shall receive consequences within the program that will be identified on the rules that are distributed. Should the student's behavior not improve, the parents shall be given written warning advising them that the student is at risk of no longer being allowed to utilize the Before and After Care services should their behavior not improve. The President retains to right to use the School's discipline policies as described within this

policy manual for student misbehavior.

(12.3)

Staffing

Before and After Care shall always have the legally required number of staff persons on duty while children are present. The staff will ensure that all children are supervised at all times. Procedures in effect during the normal school day regarding the supervision, safety, and accountability of staff and students remain in effect for Before and After Care.

Employee Acknowledgement

As an employee of Berkley Accelerated Middle School, Inc. I acknowledge that I have received my copy of the Corporate Policy Manual which includes the organization's employee policies. The policy manual outlines the instructions of the Governing Board with regards to the operation of the organization.

The employee policies describe important information about the organization, and I understand that I should consult the President regarding any questions not answered in the manual. I have entered into my employment relationship with the organization voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. Accordingly, either I or the organization can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time, so long as there is not violation of applicable federal or state law.

This manual and the policies and procedures contained herein supersede any and all prior practices, oral or written representations, or statements regarding the terms and conditions of your employment with the organization. By distributing this manual, the Organization expressly revokes any and all previous policies and procedures which are inconsistent with those contained herein.

I understand that, except for employment at-will status, any and all policies and practices may be changed at any time by the Governing Board, and the Organization reserves the right to change my hours, wages and working conditions at any time. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Governing Board has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

I understand and agree that nothing in the manual creates, or is intended to create, a promise or representation of continued employment and that employment at the Organization is employment at-will, which may be terminated at the will of either the Organization or myself. Furthermore, I acknowledge that this manual is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I understand and agree that employment and compensation may be terminated with or without cause and with or without notice at any time by the Organization or myself.

In addition, I specially acknowledge the following policies contained within the policy manual (Please initial each item):

_____ I understand that employment at the Organization is at-will.

_____ I acknowledge that I have received and understand the Conflict of Interest Policy (3.8.6).

_____ I acknowledge that I have received and understand the Organization's Employment Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment (3.2)

_____ I acknowledge that I have received and understand the Organization's Social Media Policy (6.8.4)

EMPLOYEE NAME (PRINTED)	EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE	DATE SIGNED