

Micanopy Academy Policy Manual

(revised edition July 2024)

1. Foundation

(1.1) Mission Statement

Micanopy Academy is a broadly based, nonprofit community organization whose purpose is exclusively educational and charitable and is to secure and distribute contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations for the benefit of the students of the Charter School in Alachua County which it will operate. The specific purpose of the Corporation shall be (1) to operate exclusively for the benefit of and to carry out the purposes of a charter middle and high school within the Alachua County school district, (2) to solicit and raise funds, and to receive by way of gift, purchase, grant, devise, will, or otherwise, property, real, personal, or mixed, and to hold, use, maintain, lease, donate, pledge, encumber, loan, sell, convey, and otherwise dispose of all such property in furtherance of the objectives and purposes of this Corporation, (3) to do and perform any and all acts or services that may be incidental or necessary to carry out the above purposes, and (4) to engage in any lawful act or activity for which a not for profit corporation may be organized under the laws of Florida, subject to the restrictions set forth in the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws

(1.2) Organizational Philosophy

In carrying out its responsibilities, Micanopy Academy 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

Micanopy Academy 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 Principal consults with staff members in order to allow for the greatest possible staff participation in the decision making of the organization. The Principal 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 Principal'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.

1. 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 Principal, 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 directors 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 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 Budget. Corporate 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 Directors 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 Chairperson 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 Director 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 director, 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 Principal 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 Principal deems essential to an understanding of the operation of the organization.

The Principal 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 Principal 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 seven (7) calendar days 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 June or July 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:

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.

1. **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 Principal 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.

1. **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.

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.

1. **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 President of the Board, the presenter must state their name for the record.

1. **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.

1. **Time Limits**

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

1. **Public Record**

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

1. **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, on the School's website and when possible, in school publications such as newsletters. 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 Principal 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 director, 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 directors 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 directors 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 Director 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 director, 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 Principal is responsible for all faculty hiring and evaluations the Board sets guidelines for the qualifications of staff, terms of contracts, performance evaluation expectations, salary guidelines and budgets, administrative grievance procedures, non-renewal, and termination processes. All contracts for hiring must be presented to the Board for review and approval before being presented to the candidate.

(2.9.2) Individual Employment Matters

Most individual employment matters will be effectively handled by the Principal of the Organization. On occasion, should the Principal need additional advice or recommendations, the Principal 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

Micanopy Academy does not discriminate against anyone, regarding general operations of the organization prohibited by applicable law or regulation.

Micanopy Academy 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

Micanopy Academy 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

Micanopy Academy 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 Principal 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 Principal 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
 - Withholding allowance certificate (W-4)
 - Copy of Social Security Card
 - Benefits enrollment documentation
 - 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
- a. It is the responsibility of the employee to obtain and submit these documents, as applicable: **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.

(3.4.3.5) Worker’s Compensation

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

(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 certain activities upon recommendation of the Principal.

(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 Principal 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 Principal 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 Principal 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 T

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 15 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.

(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 Principal shall confer with the employee and shall make specific recommendations for an action plan the Principal believes should result in improvement. 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 Principal 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 Principal concerning the number of days taught by substitutes and the amount of funds expended. The Governing Board shall be informed concerning this data at periodic intervals.

(3.8) Employee Behavior

(3.8.1) Hours of Duty

(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 board members, 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 Principal 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 Principal or Board Chairperson may request a written explanation, which the employee shall be required to provide.

(3.8.2.3) Investigation

The Principal 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 Principal, 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 Principal 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 Principal 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 Principal. Whether such suspension will be with or without pay will be at the discretion of the Principal. The Principal (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 Principal, 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 directors of the Organization shall solicit students, employees, or the organization for the selling of goods and services, other than as part of a school or PTA/PTO 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 PTA/PTO.

Expenses for trips to evaluate products or equipment shall be paid by the Organization if previously approved by the Principal 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 Principal.

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 Principal (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 Principal (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 Principal 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 Principal.

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 Principal of the potentially controversial materials. It is the Principal'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 Principal 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 Principal, he or she shall report said legal infraction to the Chairman of the Board. Once a report has been made, the [Principal or the Board] 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 [Principal or Board] shall take such actions as are deemed necessary and/or legally required.

(3.8.11) Whistleblower Policy

The Organization requires its directors, 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 directors, 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 directors, 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 Principal 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 Principal's attention.

(3.8.13.1.2) Resolution with Assistance from Principal

1. If Step One is followed and no satisfactory resolution is achieved, then the employee may present the complaint, in writing, to the Principal.
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. The Principal 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.
4. If the issue is resolved, then a summary of the issues and resolution will be written up by the Principal, signed by each person, and copy maintained by the Principal.

(3.8.13.1.3) Resolution with Assistance from Board

1. If the policy for Resolution with Assistance from the Principal 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 may 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 Principal. 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 Principal. 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 Principal, 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 Principal 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 Principal 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 Principal, the employee shall be free to consider such a product as personal property. In the event the Principal 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 Principal, 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 Principal.
- **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 Principal.

- 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 Principal. 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 Principal, 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 Principal 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 Principal 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 their supervisor – Director?

(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 Principal, 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.

(3.10) 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 Principal, or in the case of the Principal to the Board, or when an employee is absent from work for three consecutive workdays and fails to contact his or her Principal (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 his or her Principal.
2. Upon receipt of an employee's resignation, the Principal will notify the human resource (HR) department, and if no HR department, the governing board chair, by sending a copy of the resignation letter and any other pertinent information (e.g., employee's reason for leaving, last day of work).
3. The HR department or the Principal 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.

(3.10.3) 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 Principal 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 Principal.
- The list is not exhaustive and discharge for cause remains at the Organization's discretion.

1. **Procedures**

- i. Prior to the termination of an employee, the Principal shall ensure proper paperwork is completed to ensure documentation of the incidents related to the termination.
- ii. In most circumstances, the decision to terminate may be made by the Principal. If the employee in question is the Principal the decision shall be made by the Governing Board.
- iii. Except in circumstances in which immediate termination is justified based on the health, safety, or welfare of students or staff within the Organization, the Principal should seek additional guidance and support on a termination decision with the governing board.
- iv. 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 Principal will notify the employee.
- v. The Principal should complete an employee change form and notify HR and payroll of the last day worked by the employee.

(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 Principal if the person making the request is the Principal. 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 Principal 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 Principal, 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 Principal 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.

Direct billing to the charter school from hotels, restaurants, etc. are not permitted.

(3.11.5) Local Travel Reimbursement

All local travel expenditures incurred by employees on behalf of the Organization are reimbursable with prior approval by the Principal.

Student Policies

(4.1) Admission of Students

The school operated by the Organization is a public charter school, and as such, will comply with all applicable requirements of state and Federal law (unless specifically exempt in Section 1002.33(16), Florida Statutes as well as its Charter. 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 on an ordered waiting list in which their name was selected.

(4.1.1.1) Enrollment Deadlines

The Principal 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 60 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 Principal 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 employee of the business partner of a charter school-in-the-workplace or a resident of the municipality in which such charter school is located; or
 - A resident or employee of a municipality that operates a charter school-in-a-municipality or allows a charter school to use a school facility or portion of land provided by the municipality for the operation of the charter school.
 - Students who have successfully completed a voluntary prekindergarten education program under ss. 1002.51-1002.79 provided by the charter school or the charter school's governing board during the previous year.
 - Students who are the children of an active-duty member of any branch of the United States Armed Forces.
 - Students who attended or are assigned to failing schools pursuant to s. 1002.38(2).

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 or within the racial/ethnic range of other public schools in the same school district.
- 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 Principal, 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 list in the order selected.

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 Principal 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 two (2) weeks 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 list in the rank order selected in the lottery process. If a waiting list exists prior to a student lottery being conducted, positions will first be filled by the existing waiting list. Students selected in lotteries subsequent to the first enrollment lottery will be added to the bottom of the waiting list in the order they were selected.

The school shall maintain the waiting list, and any time an opening becomes available, the School shall contact the next student on the waiting list 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 Principal).
- 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 Principal).
- c. Death in the immediate family of the student.
- a. Religious holiday of the student's faith. This requires a parent's note seventy-two (72) hours prior to the absence.
- a. Religious institutes, conferences, or workshops.
- a. Subpoena or forced absence by any law enforcement agency. A copy of the subpoena or summons shall be given to the School's Principal (or designee). This includes detention at a juvenile center in which the student continues his/her education.
- b. Mental health counseling for the student. A note on business stationery from the mental health facility or personnel may be requested by the Principal.
- c. A major weather disaster. Any absence, including those for field trips or other parental requests as judged appropriate by the Principal, provided that the request is submitted to the Principal forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the absence. The Principal may waive the requirement for advance notice if extenuating circumstances exist.

(4.2.3) Tardiness

Students are allowed to enter the building 15 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 Principal 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 Principal 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 work but should allow for at least a 24-hour 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

Principal 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 Principal 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 Principal.

(4.3) Behavioral

(4.3.1) Code of Student Conduct

The Organization will adhere to the School District's Code of Student Conduct. Copies of the organization's 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 an office until they are able to return to class safely and cooperatively. If necessary, the student may meet with the Principal (or designee) to discuss the concern and ways of remedying the situation. If necessary, the Principal (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 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.

(4.4) 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).

In order to report grades to the School district and for traditional transcript purposes, a student's scores for each standard shall be averaged together to determine a term grade for the course based on the following scale.

- A 3.00 - 4.00
- B 2.50 - 2.99
- C 2.00 - 2.49
- D 1.50 - 1.99
- F Below 1.5

(4.4.2) Honor Roll/Principal's List

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 "Principal's 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 Principal. If parents/guardians do not accept the decision of the Principal, 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. 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. If homework is turned in late the grade the student receives shall be reduced by one letter grade (10%). 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.

(4.4.4.3) Posting of Homework

All students will be required to use a daily agenda book to write their homework in, reinforcing the idea of teaching our students responsibility.

(4.5) Extra-Curricular Activities

(4.5.1) Attendance Required for Extracurricular Participation

Students participating in any school sponsored event must have attended school (not including in-school suspension) the day of the event, otherwise they will be disallowed from participating in the extracurricular 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 Principal 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 Principal 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 a referral, or has demonstrated unsafe behavior, the student's parent or guardian may be required to attend as a chaperone.
- End of the year class field trips are reserved for students who show responsibility during the school year and meet school expectations. Students who have been issued a suspension during the year will 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 staff behavioral team for an exception to this rule. They can present the reasons they feel their child should be allowed to attend. The staff behavioral team 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 must have an average GPA of 2.0 or better for the current quarter in order 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 Principal (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, emergency contact information to reach the School employee in charge, as well as students' parents if the need arises.

(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 Principal 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

Principal shall make available to all students and parents/legal guardians the required health records to satisfy any applicable government required immunization program.

(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 Principal 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.

(4.7) 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 Director 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=S 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 Principal) shall notify the Principal 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 Principal 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 Principal or designee will be present, and the interview will be conducted in private. The Principal 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 Principal 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 Principal will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student. The School Principal 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 Principal 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

The School expects student dress and grooming to be neat, clean and in keeping with community standards, so that each student may share in promoting a positive, healthy and safe atmosphere within the School. This expectation encompasses the School day and school sponsored extracurricular activities.

Students shall observe modes of dress and standards of personal grooming that are in conformity with the educational environment and necessary to maintain an orderly and safe atmosphere for all students. Apparel is expected to conform to reasonable student standards of modesty, and as such, no excessive or inappropriate areas of skin or undergarments may be exposed. No apparel or grooming which presents a safety concern is permitted. No apparel displaying messages that are gang-related, sexually explicit, vulgar, violent, or advocating illegal activities is permitted. Further, no clothing or personal grooming that disrupts, or can be forecasted to disrupt, the educational environment is permitted. The Principal 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.

(4.7.3b.1) Violations

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

- 1st offense - Warning and call home for change of clothes.
- 2nd offense - Detention and call home for change of clothes.
- 3rd offense - Detention, call home for change of clothes, and Parent Conference.
- 4th offense – In School Suspension.

(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, are not on academic probation, 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. Parents are encouraged to attend as chaperones on an as needed basis by the School.

(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 communication system, giving parents the option to opt- their students out of watching the video.

(4.7.7.3) Middle School Students

Students in grades six through eight 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 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.

(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

1. 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 Principal, through appointment of a faculty advisor, shall provide guidance to students in appropriate methods for preparing and producing publications. The Principal 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.