

Policies and Procedures Manual



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Policy Manual

(1) Foundation

(1.1) Mission Statement

The mission of AMIkids Maritime Academy is to empower young people to achieve their full potential. Our vision is to use the ocean as our classroom to prepare our students to be leaders for the future and responsible stewards of our environment.

(1.2) Organizational Philosophy

In carrying out its responsibilities, AMIkids Maritime 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

AMIkids Maritime Academy is a not-for-profit school 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/Administrator consults with staff members in order to allow for the greatest possible staff participation in the decision making of the organization. The Principal/Administrator 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/Administrator's responsibility to ensure these policies are carried out, and to develop a system that ensures the input of staff, students and community.

(1.5) Non-Discrimination

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

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

The school shall admit students to programs and classes without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, marital status, disability or handicap or sexual orientation.

(2) Governing Board

(2.1) Governing Board Foundation

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

(2.2) General Powers

All affairs of the AMIkids Maritime Academy 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/Administrator, 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 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 documents have been adopted and are updated as necessary to define the proper operation and management of the organization. The following 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 Bylaws are the legally binding set of rules made by the organization to control the operation of the Governing Board and the school 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 school. All staff members of the organization should become familiar with and follow 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) Budget

The Budget shall be the plan by which the expenditures of the organization's resources shall be approved. All expenditure of the organization's funds must align with the approved Budget. 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 along with a 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 names of the initial Board members are set forth in the Certificate of Incorporation. All successor Board members shall be elected by a majority vote of the Board of Directors (present or all board members) at an election held each year at the annual meeting. The positions of those Board members whose terms have expired shall be open, nominations made by the nominating committee, and to be filled by those Board members eligible to vote. In the event of a tie vote for a position, a second ballot will be cast for that position only, with only the tied candidates participating on the ballot. Should a second tie vote occur, a result shall be obtained by flipping a coin with the person whose name is earliest in the alphabet calling a coin side first. Newly elected Board members shall assume office at the first Board of Directors meeting following their election.

(2.4.4) Board Member Resignations and Removal

A Board member may resign by submitting his or her resignation in writing to the President of the Board of Directors. A Board member may be removed for cause at a meeting of Board members by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the full membership of the remaining Board of Directors at any regular meeting or special meeting called for that purpose. Board members being considered for removal shall receive at least two weeks' notice of such proposed action and shall have the opportunity to address the Board regarding such action prior to any vote on such removal, and shall be entitled to appear before and be heard by the Board of Directors at such meeting.

(2.4.5) Operational Procedures

Upon the election or appointment of new board members, the Principal/Administrator 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 School, the current Charter contract, current annual budget, and any other documents the Principal/Administrator deems essential to an understanding of the operation of the organization.

The Principal/Administrator shall set aside such time as is necessary to answer any questions arising from the study of these documents 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 members with 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 the Florida Government in the Sunshine laws. The agenda will be prepared by the Principal/Administrator 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 a 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 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

An annual meeting of the Board of Directors for the election of Board members and such other business as may come before the meeting shall be held in May of each year or such other month in the year as designated by the Board. Prior written notice shall be given not less than 10 days of the time, place, and purposes of the meeting. The meeting shall be held at the principle location of the school or such other place as shall be specified in the meeting notice.

(2.5.3) Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least once a quarter. For the purposes of this Section, the Annual Meeting shall be considered a Regular Meeting. Timely notice of all such regular meetings shall be provided. So long as the school is in a charter contract, at least two meetings of the Board shall be held each year in the county in which the charter school is located, and notices will be posted and provided as set forth in said charter contract and Florida law.

(2.5.4) Special and Emergency Meetings

Special meetings of the Board of Directors for any purpose or purposes may be called at any time by any member of the Board of Directors. Such meetings shall be held upon not less than two business days' notice given personally or by telephone, facsimile, or electronic. Such notice shall specify the time and place of the meeting. So long as the school is in a charter contract, such notice will also be posted and provided as set forth in said charter contract and Florida law. Emergency meetings may be called by the Board Chair and held upon notice as required by law.

(2.5.5) Electronic Meetings

Pursuant to Section 1002.33(9)(p)(3), Florida Statutes and Section 120.54(5), Florida Statutes the Governing Board may elect to hold meetings through the means of "Communication Media Technology." Governing Board members attending a meeting by means of Communications Media Technology shall be counted towards the quorum and shall be considered present for quorum and voting purposes. In the event this method is chosen for use by the Board, the following requirements will be met:

2.5.5.1

Access

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

2.5.5.2

Access Points

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

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

2.5.5.3

Meeting Notice

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

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

(2.5.6)

Public Comments at Board Meetings

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

2.5.6.1 *Conduct*

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

2.5.6.2 *Notification*

Any person or group who wants to publicly comment on an Agenda item during a public meeting is required to follow the procedures set forth in Section 2.5.5.3 prior to the start of the meeting by supplying the agenda item they wish to comment on, or if no agenda item, submit a general request for public comment. Such a request can be made at the meeting itself using a Public Comment Form which will be made available to visitors as they arrive at the access point. If written materials are to be distributed, a copy of such must accompany the request. When recognized by the President of the Board, the presenter must state their name for the record.

2.5.6.3 *Timing of Public Comments*

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

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

2.5.6.4 *Time Limits*

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

2.5.6.5 *Public Record*

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

2.5.6.6 *Accommodations*

The Board will provide 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*

Voting by any written consent or proxy is prohibited so long as the school is in a charter contract.

(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 Secretary shall cause notices of all meetings to be served to all members of the Board of Directors and shall keep or cause to be kept the minutes of all meetings of the Board, including the time and place, the names of those present, the actions taken, and the votes on such actions. The Secretary shall present the minutes of the previous meeting at the subsequent meeting to be voted on by the Board and duly noted in the minutes of the instant meeting.

(2.6) Committees

(2.6.1) Development of Committees

The Board of Directors may establish and appoint members to such standing committees and/or ad hoc committees as it thinks necessary for the effective governing of the school. The permitted activities and scope of each such committee shall be established by the Board at the inception of each such committee and may be amended by the Board from time to time. Committee may be made up of Board members and non-Board members. Committee member terms shall be established upon appointment and shall be one year or less. Committee terms may be renewed. The Board shall appoint a chair for each committee unless otherwise provided in the Bylaws.

(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/Administrator 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 Policy of the school is intended to supersede and replace all prior conflict of interest policies of the school. The purpose of this Conflict-of-Interest Policy is to protect this school's tax-exempt 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 school 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 school'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 school 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: An "Interested Person" is any person serving as a member of the Governing Board of this Organization who, as of the date of discussion or action by the Board, either: (i) has a direct or indirect Financial Interest; (ii) intends, or understands it to be more probable than not, that he or she will acquire such a direct or indirect Financial Interest at any time during the pendency of the proposed transaction or arrangement; (iii) has an Other Interest that qualifies as a Conflict of Interest, as defined below.

Financial Interest: A "Financial Interest" is an interest, whether through business, investment, or relative, which can be described as one or more of the following:

- 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.

Other Interest: An “Other Interest,” for purposes of this Policy, is any circumstance in which an Interested Person may be influenced, or may appear to be influenced, either in whole or in part by any purpose or motive other than the success and well-being of the Organization as a whole and the achievement of its tax-exempt purposes. An example of such an “Other Interest” would include, without limitation of the foregoing, if an Interested Person is a parent or grandparent of a student impacted by a decision by the Board, and the Interested Person does not believe that he/she could vote or participate in a discussion by the Board giving precedence of the well-being of the Organization as a whole over his/her personal interests or the interests of his/her child or grandchild.

Relative: A “relative” has the definition and 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 Arrangement: A “Compensation Arrangement” is any agreement or understanding pursuant to which a person may or shall receive either directly or indirectly, money or property from another person or organization, irrespective of whether such money or property is paid in consideration for the performance of services or the provision of other value.

(2.7.2) Procedure

(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) Disclosure of Financial or Other Interest

If, at any time, an Interested Person becomes aware that the Board may or shall discuss or act upon any transaction or arrangement which may have any bearing of any kind upon, or may relate in any manner to, a Financial or Other Interest of the Interested Person, such Interested Person shall disclose such Financial or Other Interest to the Board as follows:

- The Interested Person shall provide to the Board, in advance of such discussion or action by the Board, written (electronic or hard copy) disclosure of the existence, nature and extent of the Interested Person’s Financial or Other Interest, or
- The Interested Person shall verbally inform the Board of the existence, nature and extent of the Interested Person’s Financial or Other Interest during the Board meeting in advance of such discussion or action by the Board.

- Any and all written or verbal disclosures of Financial or Other Interests shall be made a formal part of the minutes of the Board. In the event that an Interested Person provides written disclosure of such Interested Person's Financial or Other Interest, no member of the Board may respond to such disclosure, either in writing or orally, except in a meeting that meets the requirements of Florida's Sunshine Law.

(2.7.2.3) *Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists*

Where an Interested Person has provided advance written disclosure of a Financial or Other Interest but has not voluntarily recused himself or herself from discussion of or action upon the proposed transaction or arrangement, the Board shall, prior to commencing its discussion or taking action, determine whether the Financial or Other Interest creates a Conflict of Interest. The Interested Person shall not participate in any discussions or vote related to this determination except to the extent necessary to fully explain the Financial or Other Interest and the manner in which the proposed transaction or arrangement to be discussed or acted upon by the Board may or will bear upon or relate to the Financial or Other Interest.

(2.7.2.4) *Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest*

In circumstances where the Board has determined that a Conflict of Interest exists, the Interested Person shall not participate in any discussion or vote regarding the transaction or arrangement at issue. With respect to any transaction or arrangement with regard to which the Board has determined that a Conflict of Interest exists, the Board shall discuss such transaction or arrangement as appropriate, but shall not formally approve such transaction or arrangement unless and until the non-interested members of the Board have decided, by majority vote, that the transaction or arrangement is in the best interests of, and for the benefit of, the Organization, and is fair and reasonable thereto in all respects. The Board shall recognize that, under certain circumstances, a decision made pursuant to this Section may necessitate an investigation of alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and/or a determination as to whether a more advantageous transaction or arrangement might be obtained with reasonable efforts under the circumstances.

(2.7.2.5) *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*

- No member of the Board shall solicit or accept anything of value to the Board member, including a gift, loan, reward, promise of future employment, favor, or service, based upon any understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the Board member would be influenced thereby.
- 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

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

(2.9.2) Individual Employment Matters

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

(3) Student Policies

(3.1) Admission of Students

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

(3.1.1) 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.

(3.1.1.1)

Enrollment Deadlines

The Principal/Administrator shall develop an enrollment schedule each year to establish the enrolment deadlines. The initial student selection lottery will be conducted in the spring prior to the opening of the school year. The initial enrolment window must be at least 60 days and be advertised on the school's website and through other methods allowed for within the Budget.

After the initial enrollment period, the Principal/Administrator 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.

(3.1.1.2)

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.

(3.1.1.3)

Student Preferences

The following students will be given 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 an active-duty member of any branch of the United States Armed Forces
- Students who are the children of an employee of the charter school

(3.1.1.4)

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 enrolment schedule, the school shall abide by the following selection process:

(3.1.1.4.1) 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.

(3.1.1.4.2) Determine Openings

The Principal/Administrator, 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.

(3.1.1.4.3) 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.

(3.1.1.4.4) 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.

(3.1.1.4.5) Parent Notification

After the lottery has been conducted, the Principal/Administrator 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 notified.

(3.1.1.5) 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 10 calendar days from the date of notification to respond to the school to confirm or decline the position at the school. If a parent does not respond in the given time allotment, the students will be moved to the bottom of the waitlist.

(3.1.1.6) 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. 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.

(3.1.2) 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.

(3.1.3) 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.

(3.2) 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.

(3.2.1) 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.

(3.2.2) Excused Absences

The following absences will be considered excused:

- The 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/Administrator).
- 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/Administrator).
- Death in the immediate family of the student.
- Religious holiday of the student's faith. This requires a parent's note seventy-two (72) hours prior to the absence.
- Religious institutes, conferences, or workshops.
- Subpoena or forced absence by any law enforcement agency. A copy of the subpoena or summons shall be given to the School's

Principal/Administrator (or designee). This includes detention at a juvenile center in which the student continues his/her education.

- Mental health counseling for the student. A note on business stationery from the mental health facility or personnel may be requested by the Principal/Administrator.
- A major weather disaster. Any absence, including those for field trips or other parental requests as judged appropriate by the Principal/Administrator, provided that the request is submitted to the Principal/Administrator forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the absence. The Principal/Administrator may waive the requirement for advance notice if extenuating circumstances exist.
- Approved family leave. If a student plans to miss school due a family vacation, the parent/guardian must provide a written request to the Principal five (5) days in advance. The student must have a C average or high in all classes for the grading period. **Non-emergency family leave will not be granted during exam or state assessment days.** The Principal has the authority to not approve leave requests. Should the parent choose to still take the child out of school it will be considered an unexcused absence.

(3.2.3) 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:

- Students who are not in class at the time class begins will be considered tardy.
- For the legal purposes of truancy, numerous tardies can be equated to absences. If a student is excessively tardy (defined as an hour or more late for school), three (3) such events will equate to a single absence. Six (6) occurrences of tardiness less than one hour will equate to a single absence. The Principal/Administrator 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.

(3.2.4) 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 earn one (1) absence. Six (6) occurrences of being removed from school less than an hour will equate to a single absence.

(3.2.4.1) 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/Administrator may make exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis.

(3.2.5)

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 suspension. It is the student's responsibility to request all missed work upon return to school. If a student will be absent for a prolonged period of time parents/students may contact the school to request work but should allow for at least a 24-hour response from the school to prepare such materials.

	On-Time	Late
Excused Absence	No penalty	-10 points
Unexcused Absence	-10 points	Student will receive a "0"
In School Suspension	No penalty	Student will receive a "0"
Out of School Suspension	-10 points	Student will receive a "0"

(3.2.6)

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/Administrator 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/Administrator 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/Administrator.

(3.3) Behavioral

(3.3.1) 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 upon enrollment and on an annual basis thereafter.

(3.3.2) 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.

(3.3.3) 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. Should a situation arise that a student requires removal from class, the student may be issued a temporary removal. The student will be placed in the administrative office until they are able to return to class safely and cooperatively. If necessary, the student may meet with the Principal/Administrator (or designee) to discuss the concern and ways of remedying the situation. If necessary, the Principal/Administrator (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.

(3.3.4) 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.

(3.3.5) Behavioral Consequences

The Organization will adhere to the School District's Code of Student Conduct which outlines behavioral consequences for any infraction. Copies of the organization's student policies and the District's Code of Conduct will be made available to all parents and students upon enrollment and on an annual basis thereafter.

(3.3.6)

Teen Dating Violence and Abuse

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

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

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

(3.3.6.1)

Definition of Teen Dating Violence or Abuse

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

(3.3.6.2)

Reporting an act of teen dating violence or abuse

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

teen victim, certain suspicions of abuse must be reported to the Florida Abuse Hotline or local law enforcement pursuant to Section 39.201, Florida Statutes.

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

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

(3.3.6.3)

Prompt investigation and disciplinary action

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

- The Principal/Administrator or designee selects a designee(s), employed by the school, trained in investigative procedures to initiate the investigation. The designee(s) may not be a relative of the accused perpetrator or victim.
- Documented interviews of the victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses are conducted privately, separately, and are confidential. Each individual (victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses) will be interviewed separately and at no time will the alleged perpetrator and victim be interviewed together.
- The investigator shall collect and evaluate the facts including, but not limited to:
 - a. Description of incident(s) including nature of the behavior; context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred, etc.
 - b. How often the conduct occurred;
 - c. Whether there were past incidents or past continuing patterns of behavior;d. The relationship between the parties involved;
 - e. The characteristics of parties involved (i.e., grade, age, etc.)

- f. The identity and number of individuals who participated in teen dating violence and abuse behavior;
- g. Where the alleged incident(s) occurred;
- h. Whether the conduct adversely affected the student's education or educational environment;
- i. Whether the alleged victim felt or perceived an imbalance of power as a result of the reported incident; and
- j. The date, time, and method in which the parents/legal guardians of all parties involved were contacted.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) of youth involved in a dating violence or abuse complaint may be notified of the complaint, except if such notification is not in the best interest or impairs the safety of the students involved.
- The maximum of 10 school days after the complaint shall be the limit between the initial filing of incidents and completion of the investigative procedural steps. The highest level of confidentiality possible will be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or a report of teen violence and/or abuse, and the investigative procedures that follow.
- School employees shall refrain from sharing confidential student information with other school employees, students, or community members, unless disclosure is required by law or is necessary to protect the student's safety. Any notification made must be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).
- Immediate action will be taken to eliminate the behavior. Disciplinary action will be taken immediately, based on the circumstances of the behavior(s).
- If a crime has been committed, the police will be immediately notified.
- If the alleged act in violation of this policy is also the subject of an investigation by law enforcement, the investigation by the school shall proceed in full cooperation, and without interference, with the criminal investigation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

(3.3.6.5) Provide instruction and reasonable accommodations to the victim

Requests for accommodation may be made orally or in writing to any school employee and these requests should be taken to the

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

All accommodations under this policy are voluntary; the student may choose to decline or rescind any accommodations at any time by notifying the Principal/Administrator or designee. The student shall not be subject to any retribution or disciplinary action for such a decision and shall not lose the right to request and receive future accommodation.

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

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

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

- Information and assistance in securing intervention which includes assistance and support provided to parents/guardians, if deemed necessary and appropriate.
- Other actions determined appropriate under the circumstances.

(3.3.6.6) *Providing instruction to students in comprehensive health education including teen dating violence or abuse components*

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

(3.3.6.7) *Providing training for teachers, staff, and school administrators*

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

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

(3.3.6.8) *Victim’s Rights:*

- Right to be treated with respect and dignity. This includes not being blamed by staff and/or students (referred to as victim blaming), and not spreading rumors or retaliating against the victim.
- Right to be informed of his/her options with regard to notifying law enforcement authorities, and to be assisted in notifying such authorities. To the extent state and federal law allow,

victims must make a voluntary and informed decision to notify authorities.

- Right to not have parents/guardians notified if such notification would endanger the student(s). In some cases, parental notification will endanger the student(s) and prevent the student(s) from obtaining important services. In these cases, guardians/parents should not be notified unless the victim voluntarily consents in writing.
- Right to be free from pressure not to report crimes to civil or criminal authorities. This includes the right to be free from pressure to report a crime as a lesser offense than the victim perceives, and the right to be free from any suggestion that a victim somehow contributed to his or her own victimization by contributory negligence, or by assuming the risk of being assaulted, or by otherwise sharing the responsibility for what is alleged to have occurred.
- Right to have any violence committed against him/her investigated by the proper civil and criminal authorities. This right is in addition to, and independent of, school disciplinary proceedings.
- Right to full and prompt cooperation from school personnel in obtaining and securing evidence necessary for any potential criminal/civil proceedings. Failure to fully and promptly cooperate to the extent possible may be considered a form of retaliation against the victim.
- Right to be informed of any disciplinary actions taken against the offender. Knowing about subsequent disciplinary actions, such as suspension or expulsion, helps victims with safety planning.
- Right to attend classes and to work in an environment free from unwanted contact or proximity with alleged assailants insofar as the school is able to provide. To the extent possible, victims and alleged perpetrators should be separated on campus. This might involve changing class schedules or having the parties agree to stay a certain number of feet away from each other in a Stay-Away-Agreement.
- Right to be free from violence at school. All students have the right to an education in a safe school environment. The school will take affirmative steps to prevent and respond to dating violence or abuse that occurs both on and off campus.
- Right to transfer from school. Victims of teen dating violence or abuse have a right to transfer to another school. A victim's decision to transfer to another school must be informed and

voluntary. The offender will generally be required to transfer whenever there is a choice between transferring the victim or the offender.

- Right to be free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. All students have the right to be free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment at school. Dating violence or abuse are forms of sexual harassment.
- Right to referrals for services. Victims of teen dating violence or abuse have the right to have access to counseling, medical services, and victim support services both on and off-campus. The school shall refer the victim of teen dating violence or abuse to a community-based advocate. The school will maintain a list of domestic violence/dating violence/sexual assault agencies and services in the community and make this list available to victims. Participation in any referral program is voluntary for victims.
- Right to have a support person present.

(3.3.6.9)

Other violations

Individuals who knowingly make a false report or complaint of teen dating violence and abuse, or individuals who retaliate against a person who has made such a report or was a witness in such an investigation, shall be subject to disciplinary actions. Additionally, any employee of the Organization who does not inform the Principal/Administrator or the designee of a report or suspicion of teen dating violence and abuse shall be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to immediate suspension and or termination.

(3.3.6.10)

Confidentiality

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

(3.3.7)

Student Participation in Secret Organizations and Gangs

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

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

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

(3.3.8)

Student Conflict Resolution Policy

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

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

(3.3.8.1)

Steps for Resolution Between Individuals

Step 1: Talk directly to the person with whom you are having the problem.

Step 2: If the problem still exists, talk to a teacher or administrator who is not the person with whom you are having the problem.

Step 3: If you still feel the problem is unresolved; you can file a GRIEVANCE FORM with the principal. Grievance forms are available on the school's website.

- o Ask your teacher or any other staff member for a grievance form.

- o Fill out the form completely. If you need help, ask a staff member to assist you.
- o Give your completed form to the principal, who will schedule an appointment with you within 72 hours to discuss the problem.

Step 4: If you feel you still need help, you can request a meeting with the Academy's Board liaison. The liaison or another representative of the Board will respond to you within 72 hours.

Step 5: If you still feel that your problem has still not been properly addressed, you may request in writing that the entire Board consider the grievance at a regular meeting. The Board retains discretion to hear any grievance, though all persons may address the Board during public comment.

(3.4) Academic

(3.4.1) 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.

(3.4.1.1) 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

(3.4.1.2) 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 1.50

(3.4.2) 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."

(3.4.3) Graduation and Promotion Requirements

(3.4.3.1) Adoption of District Progression Plan

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

(3.4.3.2) Grade Level Retention

The purpose of promotions and retentions 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.

Promotion Requirements

9th Grade:

To be promoted to the 10th grade, the student MUST have earned at least 5 credits. Earning 6 credits would mean a student is fully on track to graduate on time.

10th Grade:

To be promoted to the 11th grade, the student MUST have earned at least 11 credits. Earning 12 credits would mean a student is fully on track to graduate on time.

11th Grade:

To be promoted to the 12th grade, the student MUST have earned at least 17 credits. Earning 18 credits would mean a student is fully on track to graduate on time.

Graduate:

Students must earn 24 credits total, a minimum of 2.0 GPA, and pass all required testing for that year's class. Within the 24 credits, there are certain requirements that must be met. Please refer to the graduation requirements for the year entered 9th grade.

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

(3.4.4)

Homework Policy

The organization believes that homework 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.

(3.4.4.1)

Approximate Time Guidelines

In general, the organization attempts to assign approximately 15 minutes of homework per subject to students. While we strive to use these guidelines, we acknowledge 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.

(3.4.4.2)

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.

(3.4.5) Dual Enrollment

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

(3.4.5.1) Florida Virtual School

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

(3.4.5.2) Extracurricular Activities

Students attending the school for academic classes may be allowed to request Dual Enrollment at other schools for extracurricular activities including sports if not offered at the school.

(3.5) Extra-Curricular Activities

(3.5.1) 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.

(3.5.2) 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.

(3.5.2.1) 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 expectations of the club. A copy of the club's expectations will be provided to students joining an individual club. Clubs must be sponsored and supervised by a school staff member.

(3.5.2.2) 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.

(3.5.3) 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.

(3.5.3.1) Approval

All trips off school property must be approved by the Principal/Administrator 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/Administrator requests. Students will follow the specific itinerary provided to the administration on the field trip request.

(3.5.3.2) 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.

(3.5.3.3) *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/Administrator (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.

(3.5.3.4) *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.

(3.5.3.5) *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.

(3.5.3.6) *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.

(3.5.3.7) *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 roll call of all students to ensure all students are accounted for. The chaperone will also conduct a head count before leaving the

destination and returning to the school. Each staff member and chaperone shall know the number of students for which they are responsible.

(3.6) Medical Policies

(3.6.1) 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 receiving unexcused absences, until proof of compliance is provided.

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

(3.6.2) Medication Administration at School

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

(3.6.2.1) Staff and Training

- The Principal/Administrator shall designate appropriate personnel as being responsible for medication administration.
- All designated individuals must obtain appropriate medication administration training prior to dispensing, accepting, or answering any questions regarding medication administration at the school.
- The designated personnel responsible for the oversight of any medical administration at the school must complete appropriate training on medication administration.

(3.6.2.2) Submission and Required Documentation

- All medications must be personally brought into the school by the student's parent/guardian accompanied by the appropriate required medical paperwork.
- All prescription medications require written Authorization for Medication Administration, with original signature by the parent

and health care provider before the school shall accept the medication.

- Medication may not be disbursed until the written Authorization for Medication Administration form contains the date of the current prescription, the expiration date of the prescription and the frequency by the medication is to be administered.
- Prescription Medication/Treatment must be received in a pharmacy labeled container with the student's name, healthcare provider's name, name of pharmacy and phone number, name of medication, directions for dosage and date of prescription.
- School personnel shall not administer medication if there is a change in type, dosage, or frequency unless a new written Authorization for Medication Administration with original signature by the parent and health care provider is presented to the school official.
- When medication is delivered to the school, the designated employees shall count the exact quantity of the medication being delivered and log the medication into the Medication Administration Log.
- Students who require the use of an MDI (Metered Dose Inhaler) may be given permission to carry the medication with them only if a completed Authorization to Carry and Self Administer MDI form is submitted to the school with both the parent/guardian and physician signature.
- All medications kept at the school must be kept in a locked cabinet or refrigerator stored away from general population areas where students will not independently have access to the storage.
- Over-the-counter (OTC) medication must be received in the original, unopened container and labelled with the student's name and accompanied by an Authorization for Medication Administration. OTC medications will be administered by Authorized school staff. No OTC medications should be administered by students. OTC medications do not require the signature of a health care provider.

(3.6.2.3)

Administration

- All employees shall adhere to the universal medication safety precaution of "The Six Rights of Medication Administration". Specifically, each time medication is administered the employee should verify:
 - The right patient/student
 - The right drug
 - The right dose
 - The right route (method of administration)
 - The right time
 - The right documentation

- All designees shall be approved by the school and/or legal guardian to administer any medication to a student prior to such administration
- All designees shall wash their hands before and after administering the medication.
- All designees shall direct any questions and concerns regarding the medication to the parent/guardian or health service provider whose signature is on the Authorization for Medication Administration.
- Each and every time medication is administered, the proper notation must be made on the Medication Administration Log.
- If a student is receiving more than one medication at school, separate student medication records must be maintained for each medication.
- The school designee must maintain a Medication Administration Log in alphabetical order.
- The Florida Records Retention Schedule requires that the Medication Administration Logs be maintained for seven years.

(3.6.2.4) Medication Errors

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

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

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

(3.6.2.5) Miscellaneous

- Narcotic medications are not to be administered by school staff.
- Medications including, but not limited to, inhalers for bronchial disorder, are not to be transported on a school bus unless the student is accompanied by a trained official or is authorized to self- medicate. A written self-medication authorization must be signed by the parent/guardian or health care provider and presented to the school.
- In the event of expired medication or the end of the school year, the school’s employees will contact parents to ask them to pick up the medication. Medications may not be given to students for transport home. If medications are not picked up by parents, they should be properly disposed of according to location requirements. Medication disposal should be witnessed by a second person and documented by both people involved.

(3.6.3)

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/Administrator 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.

(3.6.4)

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 has 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.

(3.6.5)

Medical Marijuana

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

(3.6.5.1)

Definitions

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

(3.6.5.2)

Guidelines

- Upon written permission, a Caregiver may possess and administer Marijuana on the grounds of the School during the School Day to a student provided the student is a Qualified Patient and the Caregiver's possession of the Marijuana is for the sole purpose of administering it to the Qualified Patient. A parent/guardian of a Qualified Patient must submit a written request to the Principal/Administrator at least ten school days in advance requesting authorization to administer Marijuana pursuant to this policy.
- The Caregiver must provide written documentation to the school that (1) he/she is the licensed Caregiver for the student; (2) the student has a valid patient identification card indicating that he/she has been added to the state medical marijuana use registry by a qualified physician.
- The Caregiver, parent or guardian must provide the school with written documentation from a qualified physician that the student must have the drug administered during School hours as opposed to before or after School. The school will prepare, with input from the student's parent/guardian, a written plan that identifies the form, amount, possible side effects, designated time and location, identification of Caregiver, and any other instructions or relevant information regarding the administration of Marijuana. The school shall keep photocopies of the Qualified Patient identification card and Caregiver identification card on file with the written plan. All parties shall sign the written plan. If there are any changes to the type and form of medication the plan shall be updated.
- Marijuana may only be possessed by the Caregiver and only for the purpose of administering it to the student at School. It cannot be given to, held by, or administered by any School employee, student, or other person at the school.
- Upon receiving notice that a student meets the requirements of this policy, the parent/guardian, Caregiver, student and Principal/Administrator or the Principal/Administrator's designee shall meet to coordinate an appropriate time and place for the administration of the drug. Marijuana must be administered only at the designated place and time coordinated with the school.
- The student may not possess Marijuana at any time or place except during the time of its consumption, at the designated time and location and under the supervision of the Caregiver.
- Marijuana shall not be stored on School grounds and must be removed by the Caregiver after administering the drug.

- This policy conveys no right to any student or the student's parent/guardian or other Caregiver to demand access to any location on School property, a school bus or at a School-sponsored event. The parent/guardian/Caregiver shall be provided with a copy of this policy.
- Permission to administer Marijuana to a Qualified Patient may be limited or revoked if the Qualified Patient and/or Caregiver violates this policy or demonstrates an inability to responsibly follow this policy's parameters. At no time shall the Qualified Patient have Marijuana in his/her possession except during the administration process, as dispensed by the Caregiver.
- Student possession or use of Marijuana or marijuana derivatives inconsistent with this policy may be subject to disciplinary consequences, including suspension or dismissal, in accordance with the School's Code of Student Conduct. In addition, local law enforcement may be contacted.

(3.6.5.3)

Termination of Policy

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

(3.7)

General

(3.7.1)

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 Principal shall also notify the Florida Department of Children and Families, informing them of the matter.

(3.7.2)

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.

(3.7.2.1) 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/Administrator) shall notify the Principal/Administrator 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/Administrator 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.

(3.7.2.2) 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/Administrator or designee will be present, and the interview will be conducted in private.

The Principal/Administrator 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/Administrator 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/Administrator will verify the official's authority to take custody of the student. The School Principal/Administrator will attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian that the student is being removed from school.

(3.7.2.3) 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/Administrator 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.

(3.7.3) Dress Code

A higher standard of dress encourages greater respect for individual students and others and results in a higher standard of behavior. It also prepares students for the dress code requirements of the workforce. Adherence to the dress code policy is mandatory unless the Principal/Administrator designates a special day or occasion to promote school spirit and/or to improve school climate.

All students are required to always abide by the School Dress Code, including while attending school or any school sponsored activity.

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

- Clothing must be the appropriate size for the student, not oversized or undersized.
- Clothing that is torn, has holes, or frayed is not allowed.

- All headgear (hats, scarves, bandanas etc.) is prohibited unless a cultural or religious exception is requested by the students' parents.
- Jewelry or accessories that may be used as a weapon, such as chains, spiked jewelry, dog collars, arm bands, large hair picks or any other jewelry/accessories that pose a safety concern are not permitted.
- **Upper Garments**
 - All shirts must cover midriff, back and sides always; shirts should be fastened with no visible cleavage or undergarments visible. Shirts may be short or long sleeved. The straps on sleeveless garments must be a minimum of 1½ inch in width.
- **Lower Garments:**
 - The following types of lower garments are allowed: pants, capris, shorts, skirts and jumpers. When standing up, the length of skirts/shorts/jumpers/dresses may be no shorter than mid-thigh.
- **Shoes**
 - Shoes must be worn that cover both the toes and the heels of the feet and must be worn at all times. Shoes should not inhibit the student from performing required educational tasks/assignments.
 - Students must wear tennis shoes (athletic sneakers) while participating in PE class.
 - Footwear that is commonly considered "Beach Attire", e.g., flip-flops, Crocs, etc., is prohibited.
- **Hair**
 - No designs or styles that will cause undue attention or distraction from the educational environment, as determined by administration, will be permitted. Symbols, shapes, or signs shaved into the hair are prohibited.

(3.7.3.1)

Violations

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

- 1st and 2nd offense - Notification of parent or guardian; change of inappropriate attire;

- Subsequent offenses may include one or more of the following at the discretion of the principal:
 - Notification of parent or guardian;
 - Change of inappropriate attire;
 - One to three days of in-school or out-of-school suspension; or three days after school detention, if available.
- 4th and subsequent offenses are willful disobedience which will result in further disciplinary action, which may include out of school suspension or withdraw of student invitation;

Any absence resulting from a violation of the Student Dress Code will be considered an unexcused absence.

(3.7.4) 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.

(3.7.5) 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.

(3.7.6) 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 follow the rules of conduct set forth by the school. 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.

(3.7.7) 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

(3.7.7.1) “R” Rated Movies:

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

(3.7.7.2) Copyright

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

(3.7.8) 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 disapprove 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 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 their 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.

(3.7.9)

Student Publications

The Organization encourages student production and distribution of publications which can provide opportunities for practical journalistic experience and for the written expression of differing opinions. The Organization recognizes that freedom of speech and press bring corresponding responsibilities. The Principal/Administrator, through appointment of a faculty advisor, shall provide guidance to students in appropriate methods for preparing and producing publications. The Principal/Administrator 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.

(3.7.10)

Outdoor Safety Procedures

The organization operates where students, staff and public safety are the responsibility of everyone in the organization. Activities centered around the water, outdoors or ropes course can be inherently dangerous and students and staff should adhere to a set of guidelines designed to maximize safety. Teachers and staff will refer to the AMIkids Safety and Supervision of Youth Guide pertaining to safety while conducting outdoor activities. This guide is designed to provide a safe experience for both students and staff. Heat index and advisories, aquatics safety policies and procedures and ropes course safety policy and procedures are included in the guide.

(4) Teaching and Learning

(4.1)

Curriculum Development

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

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

(4.1.1) Curriculum Research

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

(4.1.2) Curriculum Map

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

(4.2) Textbook Adoption

The Principal/Administrator or designee will consult ESP and teachers to review textbook offerings in specific instructional areas. The Principal/Administrator will consider the committee's report and make a recommendation to the Governing Board for final approval.

(4.2.1) Standards Alignment

The organization shall ensure that all textbook and curricular materials utilized by the school will align with Florida's BEST State Standards.

(4.2.2) Challenged Materials

The Governing Board has the ultimate responsibility for establishing the curriculum and for purchasing instructional and/or media materials to be used in the school. While the Board recognizes the right of students to free access to the many different types of books and instructional materials, the Board also recognizes the right of teachers and administrators to select books and other materials in accordance with current trends in education and the established curriculum.

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

will be appropriate to the community's values and the students' abilities and maturity levels.

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

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

(4.3) Teacher's Lesson Plans

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

(4.4) Reporting Student Progress

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

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

(4.5) Exceptional Student Education (ESE)

(4.5.1) Acceptance of Students

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

ESE services may need to be provided at alternative locations based on the needs of the students and the district's special education delivery model.

(4.5.2)

LEA (Local Education Agency)

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

(4.5.3)

Limitation of Services

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

(4.6)

Section 504

(4.6.1)

Section 504 Plans

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

(4.6.2)

When a 504 Plan will be Considered

The organization will consider a 504 plan for accommodations if a School Based Leadership Team feels that the child may have a disability which would meet the criteria for such a plan. This can occur when a teacher identifies a student who is having difficulties, a parent requests a team to consider the needs of a student, or if a medical report has been submitted identifying a student as having a disability.

(4.6.3)

Meeting to consider 504 Plan

If the School Based Leadership Team recommends a student be considered for a 504 plan, the Principal/Administrator or designee will coordinate a meeting among the student's teachers and school specialist. The teacher will also ensure the parents have been notified

and invited to the meeting. While at the meeting, the team members will consider whether the student's disabilities qualify them for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If so, the team will identify the accommodations necessary to allow the student to be successful within the school environment. The authorizing School District's forms will be used for both determination and the actual 504 Plan.

(4.6.4.) Eligibility

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

(4.7) School Based Leadership Team (MTSS)

(4.7.1) Purpose

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

(4.7.2) Membership

The Principal/Administrator shall, at the start of each school year, assign members to the School Based Leadership Team. Membership will consist of the Principal/Administrator, ESE Coordinator(s), and a careful selection of other staff members who represent a variety of backgrounds and expertise. Members shall serve for the entire school year. Additionally, the specific team of teachers who work with an individual student will be requested to attend when that specific student is being discussed.

(4.7.3) Procedure

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

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

(4.8) English as a Second Language

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

(4.8.1) Home Language Assessment

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

(4.8.2) Services

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

(4.8.3) Adherence to District Policies Regarding ESOL

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

(4.9) Instructional Time

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

(5) School Management

(5.1) Students

(5.1.1) Supervision of Students

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

(5.2) School Records

(5.2.1) Security of Student Records

All student information is considered confidential and will be maintained as such in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including FERPA. Such information shall be available to the parent or guardian or to the student him or herself who has attained the age of eighteen (18) years. Professionally competent personnel shall be available for interpreting any data with the student's cumulative folder. Copies of such content shall also be made available to parents/students at cost, within the limitations of copying facilities.

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

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

- The consent must be given by the student's parent or guardian except when a student reaches the age of eighteen (18) or is married, at which time his consent and not that of his parents shall be obtained in order to release the information; and a student who meets the foregoing requirements shall consent to parental access to his records.
- The consent shall be written and shall specify the records to be released and to whom they are to be released. Each request for consent shall be handled separately; blanket permission for the release of information shall not be acceptable.
- Under compulsion of law: courts, law enforcement agencies, agencies subpoenaing such records.

- When data for outside purposes is released in such form that no individual student is identifiable.
- When the Principal/Administrator determines the release of specific information as described by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 it is in the best interests of the student, provided such information has not been disallowed by the parents.

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

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

(5.2.2)

Up-To-Date Records

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

(5.2.3)

Record Storage

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

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

(5.2.4)

Records Retention

The school will abide by the Records Retention Policy established by the FL Department of State: Division of Library and Information Services section GS7 which currently can be found at:

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

Storage of archived records will be maintained in the locked storage area of the organization or designated public storage facility. Access to this area will be limited to the Principal/Administrator, treasurer, officers of the charter school and the Administrative Assistant.

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

Files should be stored in boxes with similar items, dates, and retention periods. This will allow for easier access and purging of records.

The school will proceed with the destruction of all files that have exceeded their recognized holding period. A listing of file categories to be destroyed will be circulated to all the officers thirty days prior to destruction for review and comment. The actual listing of records destroyed will be maintained permanently for future reference. Destruction of the files will be by shredding. Disposal of records into the organization's general trash service is not allowed.

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

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

Clinic Log	7 anniversary years.
Discipline Records: Student (Major Offense)	3 school years.
Discipline Records: Student (Minor Offense)	Retain until the end of school year.
E-Rate Program Records	10 fiscal years after completion of program or last day of service delivered in the funding year, whichever occurs later.
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Records	5 fiscal years after completion of or withdrawal/transfer from program.
Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Records	5 fiscal years after graduation, transfer out of program, refusal of admittance to the program, or withdrawal from school district.
Expulsion Records	5 fiscal years after final disposition.
Food Service Records	5 fiscal years.
Full-Time Equivalency Records	3 fiscal years.
Grade Records: Final Grades	Retain until posted to permanent record.
Grade Records: Teacher Grade Books	3 fiscal years.
Health Immunization Certification	Permanent
In-Service Education Records	5 fiscal years.
Registrations: K-12	3 fiscal years.
School Demographic Reports	Permanent.
Student Education Records: Category A	Permanent
Truancy Case Files	5 anniversary years after case closed.
Yearbooks	Permanent

(5.3) School Safety

(5.3.1) School Safety Plan

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

Pursuant to Section 1006.07, Florida Statutes the plan must include how the school will consult with public safety agencies, for emergency drills

and for actual emergencies, including, but not limited to, fires, natural disasters, active shooter and hostage situations, and bomb threats. The plan shall include plans for regularly conducting drills for active shooter and hostage situations, which shall be conducted at least monthly.

(5.3.2)

School Safety Specialist

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

(5.3.3)

Safe-School Officer

The school shall comply with Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes and provide a Safe-School Officer. The school should consult with the sponsoring school district and determine if the sponsoring school district will establish or assign a Safe-School Officer. This individual will be on campus whenever students are present for school related activities. The Governing Board shall select one of the four (4) available options available in Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes to meet this requirement (School Resource Officer, School Safety Officer, School Guardian, or School Security Guard). The Board shall ensure contracts, insurance and budgets are set aside to adequately support the selected option.

(5.3.4)

Fortify FL

The school will ensure to adequately promote the use of Fortify FL, the mobile suspicious activity reporting tool operated by the State of Florida. The Principal/Administrator will ensure that there is a link on the school's website, that at least two newsletters per year will refer to the service, posters will be made available on the community bulletin board. In addition, the application will be installed on all mobile devices issued to students, and the site will be bookmarked on all computer devices issued to students.

(5.3.5)

Mobile Panic Alert System

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

(5.3.6)

Fire Drill Procedures

The School Safety Plan will clearly document the procedures and details for fire drills and emergency evacuations. All students and staff members shall be made aware of the plan, and maps highlighting the escape

routes will be posted in all school rooms and provided to students and staff if requested. Fire drills will be conducted at least once per month. Drills will be held at various times throughout the day and will test various types of fire emergencies. Documentation of the drills will be maintained by the organization for review.

(5.3.7) Tornado Drill Procedures

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

(5.3.8) Hurricane Closures

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

(5.3.9) Threat Assessments

In the event a student appears to pose a threat of violence or physical harm to him or herself or others, the staff member with concerns should immediately notify the Principal/Administrator. The Principal/Administrator will activate the Threat Assessment team who shall make a preliminary determination about whether the student poses such a threat. The Principal/Administrator shall immediately attempt to notify the student's parent or legal guardian. Nothing in this subsection shall preclude School personnel from acting immediately to address an imminent threat, including contacting local law enforcement.

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

(5.4) Fund Raising

The Organization is incorporated as a nonprofit organization which relies on governmental funds and contributions to effectively educate our students. As a result, fundraising is necessary to help support the educational programs offered. The Principal/Administrator shall approve all fundraising activities and ensure that families are not being asked to contribute excessively at any given time. All fundraisers will identify the

purpose for the money raised. Fundraising is not a prerequisite or on-going requirement for any student or family to attend a public charter school.

(5.5) Photographs of Students

(5.5.1) Portraits

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

(5.5.2) Snapshots

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

(5.6) Gifts

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

(5.7) Volunteers:

(5.7.1) Background Checks

All individuals who are not employed by the Organization must enter through the main office. Should they wish to go beyond the main office, their identification must be scanned by the background check system which will print a badge to wear, identifying that the volunteer has properly checked in through the office with proper protocols followed. It is

the responsibility of all staff members to help monitor the halls to ensure that all visitors have properly checked into the office. Any individual who does not have an appropriate name badge must be walked back to the office to ensure they are signed in properly.

(5.7.2)

Background Check Concern

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

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

(5.7.3)

Student Supervision Background Checks

If an adult plans to volunteer with students (such as field trip chaperones, student tutoring, etc.) the individual must complete a volunteer registration form. If the adult will be responsible for student supervision (such as running an after-school club), the parent must go through a Level 2 background check, the cost of which the adult is responsible for. The school district conducts a complete background check to ensure the individual is clear of anything in their past which would prevent them from working with children.

(5.8)

Computer, E-Mail, and Cell Phone Usage

(5.8.1)

School Telephones

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

(5.8.2)

Bring Your Own Device

The use and possession of personal electronic devices are limited based on this policy. Personal devices shall include personal cell phones, tablets, and computers. The use of such devices may only be used for valid instructional purposes while on campus. Student use of electronic devices are not allowed within the school building without the express permission of the administration prior to use of the electronic device. Teachers are allowed to permit electronic device usage for educational purposes. Staff members may only use personal devices for instructional purposes while responsible for the supervision or education of students. Staff may use personal cell phones during scheduled breaks, planning time, or other times when not actively required to supervise or educate students and are not on working hours.

(5.8.2.1)

Connecting to School Networks

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

(5.8.2.2)

Responsibility for Personal Devices

The purchase, maintenance, insurance, and safety of any personal technology devices is the responsibility of the student and their family. All personal devices must be charged daily and checked for any viruses or other malware that may endanger the school's network. These checks must be completed before bringing the device to school. Damaged or defective devices should not be brought to school. The school is not responsible for lost or broken devices. The Organization is not responsible for the security of personal belongings, including but not limited to personal electronic devices. It is recommended that students always keep their belongings with them, and properly locked with a secure passcode.

(5.8.2.3)

Restriction of Usage

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

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

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

(5.8.2.4) Consequences for Misuse

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

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

(5.8.3) Technology Acceptable Use Policy

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

(5.8.3.1) Restrictions on usage:

Users may not do the following:

- Provide access to unauthorized users.

- Utilize accounts and other privileges that they no longer are authorized to access.
- Interfere with restrictions or security settings on any device or system on the organization's network.
- Harass, bully, or violate the privacy of other users on the system.
- Destroy, copy, or steal any information on the network without explicit permission from the creator or appropriate staff members.
- Introduce, propagate, or create malware of any type including but not limited to Trojan Horses, viruses, spyware, worms, etc.
- Damage computer or network systems by any means.
- Use knowledge of network to gain unauthorized access or resources.
- Deprive other authorized users' access of full system and network resources or degrade system performance.
- Chain and mass emails should be avoided except for official business, and source addresses should never be altered.
- Stream media without authorization for specific activities.
- Comment or act on behalf of the organization unless the individual has permission to do so.
- Use the organization's resources for private business or commercial enterprise.
- Conduct political activities without express permission of the organization's leadership.

(5.8.3.2)

Copyright and Licenses:

Due to legal restrictions and penalties on software licenses software may not be copied or installed without approval from the organization's IT personnel or leadership. Illegal usage of software may result in criminal penalties up to and including imprisonment. Software may not be copied from the organization's devices for personal access. If an employee is working remotely a device will be set up for use with properly licensed software necessary for use.

(5.8.3.3)

Internet Usage

The organization offers Internet access for students and staff use at school and various online tools for staff, student, and parent use. This policy is the Acceptable Use Policy for your use of our online tools and Internet use at school. The Internet system and online tools have been

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

(5.8.3.3.1) Acceptable Usage:

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

(5.8.3.3.2) Internet Safety

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

- Prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications;
- Prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity;
- Prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and
- Comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (Public Law No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)) (6.8.3.3.2.1) Definitions

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

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

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

(5.8.3.3.2) Supervision and Monitoring

All staff members are responsible for supervising and monitoring online safety of the online computer network and internet access in accordance with this policy and the Children’s Internet Protection Act.

(5.8.3.3.3) Personal Safety

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

- Students will not post contact information (e.g., address, phone number) about themselves or any other person.
- Students will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without parental approval. Any contact of this nature or the receipt of any message that could be inappropriate or makes the student feel uncomfortable should be reported to school authorities immediately.

(5.8.3.3.4) User’s Rights

- **Free Speech.** Individuals have the right to free speech, as set forth in the school disciplinary code. This applies also to communication on the Internet. The Internet is considered a

limited forum, similar to the school newspaper, and therefore the school may restrict your right to free speech for valid educational reasons. The school will not restrict the right to free speech on the basis of its disagreement with the opinions expressed.

- **Search and Seizure.** Users should expect no privacy of the contents of your personal files on the school system. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to the discovery that you have violated this policy, the school code, or the law. An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that you have violated this acceptable use policy, the school disciplinary code, or the law.
- **Due Process.** The school will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the organization's Internet system. In the event of a claim that a user has violated this policy, the school disciplinary code, or the law in the use of our system, the individual will be given written notice of suspected violations and an opportunity to present an explanation according to school code and/or state and federal law. Additional restrictions may be placed on the user's access to the Internet account.

(5.8.3.3.5) *Inappropriate Use:*

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

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

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

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

(5.8.3.3.6) *Monitoring and Filtering for Inappropriate Materials*

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

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

(5.8.3.3.7) *Security*

Users may not share passwords or other access data with another person. In the event an account has been compromised, or a password lost, the user must contact the IT department to request a reset

password. Internet usage must be limited to approved purposes by approved users only.

(5.8.3.3.8) Failure to Comply

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

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

(5.8.3.4) E-mail

(5.8.3.4.1) Account Activation/Termination

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

(5.8.3.4.2) Expectations of Use

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

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

(5.8.3.4.3) Inappropriate Usage

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

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

- Use of email for illegal or unlawful purposes, including copyright infringement, obscenity, libel, slander, fraud, defamation, plagiarism, harassment, intimidation, forgery, impersonation, soliciting for illegal pyramid schemes, and computer tampering (e.g., spreading of computer viruses).

- Altering, deleting, or otherwise tampering with emails or files belonging to the organization or other users.
- Opening email attachments or links within messages from unknown or unsigned sources. Users should always make sure that links and attachments are legitimate to avoid viruses, etc.
- Sharing passwords or attempting to obtain another user's password.
- Commercial, mass mailing, chain letters, and political e-mails.

(5.8.3.4.4) *Monitoring and Confidentiality*

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

(5.8.3.4.5) *Reporting Misuse*

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

(5.8.3.4.6) *Failure to Comply*

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

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

(5.8.3.5) *Server and Other Data Storage*

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

(5.8.3.5.1) *Storage Restrictions*

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

(5.8.3.6) Other Acknowledgements

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

(5.8.4) Social Media Policy

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

(5.8.4.1) Social Media Guidelines for Faculty & Staff

(5.8.4.1.1) Blogs, Wikis, Podcasts, Digital Images & Video

(5.8.4.1.1.1) Personal Responsibility

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

(5.8.4.1.1.2) Disclaimers

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

(5.8.4.1.1.3) Copyright and Fair Use

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

(5.8.4.1.1.4) Profiles and Identity

- Remember your association and responsibility with the Organization in online social environments. If you identify yourself as an organizational employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues, parents, and students.
- No last names, addresses, or phone numbers should appear on blogs or wikis.
- When uploading digital pictures or avatars that represent yourself make sure you select a school appropriate image. Images used in this manner should be available under Creative Commons or your own personally created image.

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

- The organization's employees are personally responsible for all comments/information they publish online.
- Your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, and consideration that you use face-to-face, and be in accordance with the highest professional Standards.
- Before posting photographs and videos, permission should be sought from the subject where possible. This is especially the case where photographs of professional colleagues are concerned.

- Posted photographs should reflect the level of professionalism required by the Organization.
- Photographs relating to alcohol, drug, or tobacco use may be deemed inappropriate and subject to discipline. Microblogging (Twitter etc.) Comments made using such media are not protected by privacy settings. Employees should be aware of the public and widespread nature of such media and again refrain from any comment that could be deemed unprofessional.

(5.8.4.1.3) Social Bookmarking

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

(5.8.4.1.4) Instant Messaging

- The Organization's employees are required to get authorization to have instant messaging programs downloaded on their school computers for interaction with students and employees of the school.
- The organization's employees also recognize this same authorization is required for access to instant messaging programs that are available through web interfaces with no download.
- Avatar images and profile information should follow the same guidelines as the above Profiles and Identity section.
- A written request must be submitted to the Principal/Administrator for approval to use instant messaging.
- When submitting a request to the Principal/Administrator please include your name, building, grade level, state curriculum standards or the student or teacher National Educational Technology Standards and provide a statement explaining your instructional purposes for using the program.

(5.8.4.1.5) Requests for Social Media Sites

- The organization understands that 21st century learning is constantly changing technology and that many sites that are currently "blocked" by internet filter may have pedagogical significance for teacher and student use.

- If you would like to request that another online site, be accessible to use for teaching and learning, please email the Principal/Administrator to make such a request.
- Requests will be reviewed and the school's social media guidelines will be updated periodically throughout the school year.
- A description should be provided of the intended use of the site and what tools on the site match your needed criteria.
- A link to the site's privacy policy should be included if possible.

(5.8.4.2)

Social Media Guidelines for Students:

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

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

- Blog and wiki posts should be well written. Follow writing conventions including proper grammar, capitalization, and punctuation. If you edit someone else's work be sure it is in the spirit of improving the writing.
- If you run across inappropriate material that makes you feel uncomfortable, or is not respectful, tell your teacher right away.
- Students who do not abide by these terms and conditions may lose their opportunity to take part in the project and/or access to future use of online tools.

(5.8.4.3)

Social Media Guidelines for Parents:

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

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

(5.9)

Complaint Process

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

Although no member of the school community shall be denied the right to petition the Governing Board for redress of a grievance, the

complaints will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Governing Board. Exceptions are complaints that concern Governing Board actions or operations.

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

- Teachers
- Principal/Administrator
- Parent Liaison
- Governing Board

Any complaint about school personnel will be investigated by the Administration before consideration and action by the Board of Directors.

(5.9.1) Stages for Resolution

(5.9.1.1) *Informal Resolution*

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

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

(5.9.1.2) *Formal Resolution with Official Complaint:*

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

The Principal/Administrator, or their designee, will conduct any investigation necessary into the reported concern, including interviewing the complainant and the subject of concern as needed. The Principal/Administrator will make every effort to satisfactorily resolve the complaint in a reasonable time period.

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

Once all relevant and discoverable facts are considered, a decision and action to resolve the complaint, including reasons for the decision, will be

provided in writing to the parent/guardian regarding the findings and the school's decision.

(5.9.1.3) Appeal to the Board:

If a successful resolution still has not been made by a formal investigation by the Principal/Administrator, concerned parties may petition the Governing Board for appeal. A written appeal request may be made to the Governing Board's assigned parent liaison within five (5) days after the Principal/Administrator's letter of non-resolution is received. The item will be forwarded to the Governing Board Chairperson to be added to the agenda of the next regularly scheduled board meeting. If the item is urgent, the Chairperson has the ability to call an emergency meeting of the Board.

(5.9.2) Conduct and Records

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

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

(5.10) Policy Against Bullying and Harassment

(5.10.1) Statement Prohibiting Bullying and Harassment

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

(5.10.2) Definition of Bullying and Definition of Harassment

Bullying includes cyberbullying and means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation; and may involve but is not limited to:

- Teasing
- Social Exclusion
- Threat

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

This definition is inclusive of, but not limited to, behaviors which are motivated by the victim's sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability (physical, mental, or educational), marital status, socioeconomic background, ancestry, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, linguistic preference, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or social/family background, or any such traits the harasser attributes to the victim based upon the harasser's perception of the victim.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system, or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

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

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

Bullying and harassment also encompasses:

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

(5.10.3)

Expected Behavior

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

The school believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents/legal guardians, staff, and community members producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members. Since students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers will demonstrate appropriate behavior, treat others with civility and respect, and refuse to tolerate bullying or harassment.

The Organization upholds that bullying, harassment, and cyberstalking of any student or employee is prohibited:

- During any educational program or activity conducted by the school;

- During any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;
- Through the use of any electronic device or data while on school grounds or on a computer system, or computer network of the school, meaning regardless of ownership, any computer, computer system, or computer network that is physically located on school property or at a school-related or school-sponsored program or activity. The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this section;
- Through the use of data or computer software that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school, if the bullying substantially interferes with or limits the victim's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school or substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school;
- Through threats using the above to be carried out on school grounds. This includes threats made outside of school hours, which are intended to be carried out during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;

All administrators, faculty, and staff, in collaboration with parents, students, and community members, will incorporate systemic methods for student and staff recognition through positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, good citizenship, and academic success, as seen in the required school plan to address positive school culture and behavior.

Student rights shall be explained as outlined in this policy and in the Student Code of Conduct.

Proper prevention and intervention steps shall be taken based on the level of severity of infraction as outlined in this policy and in the Student Code of Conduct.

(5.10.4) Consequences for an Act of Bullying or Harassment and/or Intentional Misreporting

For any student or employee who commits an act of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking or who is found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another of an act of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking:

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

time of access of a technology-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action.

- Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking or who are found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another of an act of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.
- Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have committed an act of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking against a student or who is found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused a student of an act of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking may be disciplined in accordance with School policies, procedures, and agreements. Additionally, egregious acts of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking by certified educators may result in a sanction against an educator's state issued certificate. (See State Board of Education Rule 6B1.006, FAC., The Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida.)
- Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have committed an act of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking or who is found to have wrongfully and intentionally accused another of an act of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking and abuse shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.
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- Accusations made in good faith, even though subsequently determined to be false, shall not be subject to discipline consequences or remedial action as called for by this section.

(5.10.5) Reporting an Act of Bullying or Harassment

The Principal/Administrator or designee is responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees and school volunteers are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the Principal/Administrator or designee on the same day it is witnessed. In addition to reporting the incident to the Principal/Administrator or designee, if a school employee has reason to suspect that an alleged violation of this policy might constitute a crime, the employee shall also immediately report the complaint to law enforcement. Any uncertainty regarding whether an alleged violation might constitute a crime must be resolved in favor of reporting the incident to law enforcement. All other members of the school community, including students, parents/legal

guardians, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy anonymously or in-person to the Principal/Administrator or designee. In cases involving an alleged perpetrator who is of adult age and an alleged teen victim, certain suspicions of abuse must be reported to the Florida Abuse Hotline or local law enforcement pursuant to Section 39.201, Florida Statutes.

The Principal/Administrator shall establish and prominently publicize to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians, how a report of bullying, harassment, and cyberstalking may be filed either in-person or anonymously and how this report will be acted upon. The victim of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking, or anyone who witnessed the bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking has taken place may file a report. A school employee, school volunteer, student, parent/legal guardian or other person(s) who promptly reports in good faith to the appropriate school official and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in the school policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident. Submission of a good faith complaint or report will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades, learning or working environment, or work assignments.

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

(5.10.6) Investigation of Whether a Reported Act is Within the Scope of the School

A Principal/Administrator (or designee) will initiate an investigation of whether an act of bullying or harassment occurred within the scope of the school's oversight. The trained designee(s) will provide a report on results of investigation with recommendations for the Principal/Administrator to make a determination if an act of bullying or harassment falls within the scope of the school and will act according to the following protocols:

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

(5.10.7)

Prompt Investigation of a Report of Bullying or Harassment

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

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

- The Principal/Administrator (or designee employed by the school) will be assigned to initiate the investigation. The designee(s) may not be the accused perpetrator (harasser or bully) or victim.
- Documented interviews of the victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses are conducted privately, separately, and are confidential. Each individual (victim, alleged perpetrator, and witnesses) will be interviewed separately and at no time will the alleged perpetrator and victim be interviewed together.
- The investigator shall collect and evaluate the facts including, but not limited to:
 - Description of incident including nature of the behavior and the context in which the alleged incident occurred;
 - How often the conduct occurred;
 - Whether there were past incidents or past continuing patterns of behavior;
 - The relationship between the parties involved;
 - The characteristics of parties involved (i.e., grade, age, etc.);
 - The identity of the perpetrator, including whether the perpetrator was in a position of power over the student allegedly subjected to bullying or harassment;
 - The number of alleged bullies/harassers;
 - The age(s) of the alleged bullies/harassers;
 - Where the bullying and/or harassment occurred; and
 - Whether the conduct adversely affected the student's education or educational environment;
 - Whether the alleged victim felt or perceived an imbalance of power as a result of the reported incident;
 - The date, time, and method in which the parents/legal guardians of all parties involved were contacted;

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) of youth involved in a dating violence or abuse complaint may be notified of the complaint, except if such notification is not in the best interest or impairs the safety of the students involved; and
 - Any other factors or allegations necessary to complete a prompt and thorough investigation.
- Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances and includes:
 - Recommended remedial steps necessary to stop bullying and/or harassing behavior
 - A written final report to the Principal/Administrator with recommendations for disciplinary action if it is determined that bullying, harassing, and/or cyberstalking has occurred
 - A recommendation of whether bullying or harassing behavior should be referred to appropriate law enforcement agency for further investigation and review.

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

The maximum of 10 school days, except in exceptional circumstances, shall be the limit for the initial filing of incidents and completion of the investigative procedural steps. The highest level of confidentiality possible will be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or a report of bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking, and the investigative procedures that follow.

(5.10.8)

Determination of Consequences and Due Processes for a Perpetrator:

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

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

(5.10.9)

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

The Principal/Administrator, or designee, shall by telephone, personal conference, and/or in writing, report the occurrence of any incident of bullying or harassment as defined by this Policy to the parent or legal guardian of all students involved on the same day an investigation determines that an act of bullying or harassment in violation of the Policy has occurred. Notification shall be consistent with the student privacy rights under the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

If the bullying or harassment violation results in the perpetrator being charged with a crime, the Principal/Administrator, or designee, shall by telephone or in writing by first class mail, inform parents/legal guardian of the victim(s) involved in the bullying incident about the Unsafe School Choice Option (No Child Left Behind, Title IX, Part E, Subpart 2, Section 9532) that states “A student attending a persistently dangerous public

elementary school or secondary school, as determined by the State in consultation with a representative sample of local educational agencies, or a student who becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense, as determined by State law, while in or on the grounds of a public elementary school or secondary school that the student attends, be allowed to attend a safe public elementary school or secondary school within the local educational agency, including a public charter school.”

(5.10.10) Referral of Victims and Perpetrators of Bullying or Harassment for Counseling

A school referral procedure will establish a protocol for intervening when bullying, harassment, and/or cyberstalking is suspected or reported. This may include referrals to community agencies or partner agencies the school has relationships with. The procedure shall include:

A process by which the teacher or parent/legal guardian may request informal consultation with school staff to determine the severity of concern and appropriate steps to address the concern.

A referral process to provide professional assistance or services includes:

- A process by which school personnel or parent/legal guardian may refer a student to the school intervention team (or equivalent school-based team with a problem-solving focus) for consideration of appropriate services.
- If a formal discipline report or formal complaint is made, the Principal/Administrator or designee must refer the student(s) to the school intervention team for determination of counseling support and interventions.
-
- A school-based component to address intervention and counseling assistance as determined appropriate by the intervention team includes:
 - Counseling and support to address the needs of the victims
 - Research-based counseling/interventions to address the behavior of the perpetrator (e.g., empathy training, anger management)
 - Research-based counseling/interventions which includes assistance and support provided to parents/legal guardians, if deemed necessary or appropriate

(5.10.11) Providing Instruction Regarding Bullying and/or Harassment

The Organization will ensure that the school sustains healthy, positive, and safe learning environments for all students. It is important to change the social climate of the school and the social norms with regards to bullying and harassment. This requires the efforts of everyone in the school environment – teachers, administrators, counselors, school

nurses other non-teaching staff (such as bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers, school resource officers, instructional aides, and/or school librarians), parents/legal guardians, and students.

Students, parents/legal guardians, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and school volunteers shall be given instruction at a minimum on an annual basis on the School's Policy and Regulations against bullying and harassment. The instruction shall include evidence-based methods of preventing bullying and harassment, as well as how to effectively identify and respond to bullying and harassment in schools.

(5.10.12) Publication of the Policy

At the beginning of each school year, the Principal/Administrator shall, in writing, inform school staff, parents/legal guardians, or other persons responsible for the welfare of a student of this policy.

The school shall provide notice to students and staff of this policy through appropriate references in the code of student conduct and employee handbooks, and/or through other reasonable means.

The Principal/Administrator shall ensure the development of an annual process for discussing the policy on bullying and harassment with students in a student assembly or other reasonable format to ensure the Policy is accurately conveyed to all applicable parties.

Reminders of the policy and bullying prevention messages such as posters and signs will be displayed around the school.

(5.11) Civility Policy

In order to ensure all individuals associated with the Organization behave civilly and with fairness and respect, several policies are in place to ensure proper behavior. Students are obligated to meet School expectations as defined elsewhere in this policy. Adults are subject to the following civility policies:

(5.11.1) Civility of Staff

All employees of the organization shall behave with civility, fairness, and respect in dealing with fellow employees, students, parents, patrons, visitors, and anyone else having business with the school. Uncivil behaviors are prohibited. Uncivil behaviors shall be defined as any behavior that is physically or verbally threatening, either overtly or implicitly, as well as behaviors that are coercive, intimidating, violent, or harassing. Examples of uncivil behavior include, but are not limited to: use of profanity; personally insulting remarks; attacks on a person's race, gender, nationality, religion, or sexual preference; or behavior that is out of control. Such interactions could occur in telephone conversations, voice mail messages, face-to-face conversations, or in written communication.

Any uncivil behavior should be reported to the immediate supervisor or the Principal/Administrator. A record shall be made of the alleged incident and the action taken, which may include disciplinary action as defined within this policy manual. Confidentiality shall be observed whenever possible to protect the complainant and the alleged offending person. Students and employees may be subject to additional action under other state statutes or school policies. Retaliation against a person who reports a claim of uncivil behavior shall be prohibited. Nothing in this policy should be construed to limit open and frank discussions of issues.

(5.11.2)

Civility of Parents and Patrons

All parents and patrons of the organization shall behave with civility, fairness, and respect in dealing with fellow parents, patrons, staff members, students, and anyone else having business with the school. Uncivil behaviors are prohibited. Uncivil behaviors shall be defined as any behavior that is physically or verbally threatening, either overtly or implicitly, as well as behaviors that are coercive, intimidating, violent, or harassing. Examples of uncivil behavior include but are not limited to: use of profanity; personally insulting remarks; attacks on a person's race, gender, nationality, religion, or sexual preference; or behavior that is out of control. Such interactions could occur in telephone conversations, voice mail messages, face-to-face conversations, or in written communication.

Any uncivil behavior by parents or patrons shall be reported to the school administration. A record shall be made of the alleged incident and the action taken. Confidentiality shall be observed whenever possible to protect the complainant and the alleged offending individual. Repeated incidents of uncivil behavior can result in the individual being banned from the school premises. Retaliation against a person who reports a claim of uncivil behavior is prohibited.

(5.12)

Prohibition Against Firearms and Weapons

The presence of firearms or weapons poses a substantial risk of serious harm to organization students, staff, and community members. Therefore, possession of firearms or weapons is prohibited on school premises at all times except for law enforcement officials, Safe School Officers, or other such statutorily allowed exceptions. The unauthorized possession of a firearm or weapon on school premises may constitute a criminal act under Florida law and shall be reported as such to appropriate law enforcement agencies. As used in this policy, the phrase "school premises" includes all organization buildings, grounds, vehicles, and parking areas. This prohibition also extends to the sites of school activities, whether or not those school activities are conducted on organizational property.

Students found in violation of this policy will be disciplined up to and including reassignment as provided elsewhere within this policy manual. Law enforcement officials will be notified and the individual violating this

policy will be directed to leave school premises immediately. Non-students violating this policy will be barred from all school premises and school activities for a period of at least one (1) year. Subsequent violations by the same individual will result in a permanent bar from organizational properties and activities and referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Student participation in school sanctioned gun safety courses, student military or ROTC courses, or other school sponsored firearm related events does not constitute a violation of this policy, provided the student does not carry a firearm or other weapon into any school, school bus, or onto the premises of any other activity sponsored or sanctioned by school officials.

(5.13) Research Requests

Requests for research studies involving students and/or staff of the Organization must be submitted to the Principal/Administrator for approval. Any research utilizing human subjects must be authenticated by the sponsoring university. Written permission from parents of the students to be involved must also be obtained as well as approval of the Principal/Administrator.

The organization will provide the university with the necessary information and data to conduct research and make decisions to support and improve Charter Schools. Student privacy will be respected in all such matters.

(5.14) Parent Teacher Organization

(5.14.1) Encouragement of Parent Teacher Organization

The organization believes that a strong partnership between school staff, parents and the community at large is an essential component to effectively educating students. As such, the organization strongly encourages and will work to support the existence of a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) to support the efforts of the charter school.

(5.14.2) Operation of the Parent Teacher Organization

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) will be governed by the bylaws of the school and may not act in a manner that is contrary to the school's policies and procedures. The PTO will elect its own officers, manage its own budget in partnership with the Principal/Administrator, and be responsible for updating its members as to changes in school policy that affect the workings of the PTO.

The PTO Board will consist of the officers and the Principal/Administrator or his or her designee. The Principal/Administrator and PTO will work together toward a mutual benefit for the school, communication being the key to the unit's success. The Principal/Administrator or designee has one vote on the board of directors.

Membership in the PTO will be available to parents, the entire school staff (including administrators), businesses, neighbors and anyone who believes in the PTO mission and purposes.

PTO funds should always be used to further the mission of the school. Appropriate use of funds includes student-oriented programs in priority areas such as health, safety, juvenile protection, parent/family involvement, cultural arts, environmental education, and advocacy efforts on behalf of children and youth.

The PTO budget will be approved by the School Governing Board prior to being implemented. All funds raised by the PTO are part of the school's funds. The accounting practices of the PTO will align with the accounting policies and procedures adopted by the school. The school's Administrative Assistant will have full access to the PTO accounts and records. The PTO will comply with all requests of the accounting department and will provide complete records at the close of each school year. The PTO treasurer will assist with any auditing questions that may arise.

(5.15) Mental Health Services

The Principal/Administrator shall ensure that the school has a plan in place to address the Mental Health Assistance Allocation funds as described in Florida Statute 1011.62(15). The plan will ensure that a multitiered system of support exists to provide evidence-based mental health assistance to students at the school. The plan shall detail the responsibilities of staff members as well as outside services providers. The plan should also address the early identification and programs to be provided to students who show signs of mental-health related issues. Any revisions to the plan must be approved by the Governing Board.

5.15.1 Contracted Service Providers

The Principal/Administrator shall ensure contracts or interagency agreements are in place with one more local community behavioral health providers to which students can be referred for screenings and assessments and counseling as needed. The agreements can stipulate either on or off campus services as allowed in Florida Statute. The contracts must stipulate those students referred for screening be evaluated within 15 days of the referral, and that services be initiated within 30 days of the referral.

5.15.2 Mental Health Awareness and Assistance Training

The Principal/Administrator shall ensure that all staff members participate in an approved mental health awareness and assistance training program as described by Florida Statutes 1012.584.

(6) Business Operations

(6.1) General Office Procedures

(6.1.1) Handling of Mail

The Administrative Assistant, or designee, will be responsible for checking the mailbox on a daily basis and receiving all incoming mail. All incoming mail will be date stamped before distribution and scanned when applicable.

A copy of all outgoing correspondence will be maintained in the appropriate office file.

(6.1.2) Property and Supplies

Office equipment and supplies are to be used for official business only. All property and supplies should be stored in a secure location and should not leave School property.

The Administrative Assistant will maintain an inventory of basic office supplies used. Request for supplies should be submitted to the office manager for approval through the Principal/Administrator.

(6.2) Files and Record Management

The organization will retain records in an orderly fashion for time periods that comply with legal and governmental requirements and as needed for general business requirements.

(6.2.1) Filing System

To ensure efficient access, filing centers will be established. To reduce the amount of duplicate and unnecessary record retention, individual desk files should be avoided unless they are used in daily operations. All other records should be filed in central filing areas. Unless necessary, internal records should only be kept by the originator or sender and not by the receiver (unless original signatures are required) to avoid duplicate filing systems.

(6.2.2) Student Records

This section of this policy manual does not apply to student records. Student records shall be stored in accordance with Florida Statute and policy (6.2) of this manual.

(6.2.3) Record Retention and Long-Term Storage

The school will abide by the Records Retention Policy established by the Florida Department of State: Division of Library and Information Services section GS7 which currently can be found at:

<https://dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/records-management/general-records-schedules/>. The records retention schedule establishes the minimum length of time that the record series must be retained. Records retention shall be the responsibility of the Principal/Administrator and a records review will be conducted no less than annually to ensure compliance.

Storage of archived records will be maintained in the locked storage area of the organization or designated public storage facility. Access to this area will be limited to the Principal/Administrator, treasurer, officers of the charter school and the Administrative Assistant.

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

Files should be stored in boxes with similar items, dates, and retention periods. This will allow for easier access and purging of records.

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

(6.2.4)

Retention Schedule.

The most common documents for retention are as follows (as of March 2022) - any item that is not listed can be found by visiting the Division of Library and Information Services section GS7.

<u>Document</u>	<u>Holding Period in Years</u>
• Accident Reports After Settlement	8
• Accounts Payable (Vouchers & Invoices)	6
• Bank Statements and Reconciliations	6
• Canceled Checks	6
• Cash Receipt Books	6
• Claim Files (Against Us)	6
• Claim Files (By Us)	6
• Contracts, Agreements & Leases after Expiration	6
• Credit Files	6
• Employee Records (Terminated)	6
• Financial Statements (internal)	5
• Financial Statements (External)	6

- General Ledgers and Journals 6
- Income and Other Tax Returns 6
- Insurance Claims After Settlement 6
- Patents and Licenses 17
- Payroll Registers and Time Sheets 6
- Payments and Reports to Government Agencies 6
- Physical Inventory Records 6
- Purchasing Correspondence 6
- Sales/Reimbursement Correspondence 2
- Sales/Reimbursement Invoices 6
- Student Records 12
- Travel and Expense Reports 6

(6.2.5) Record Destruction

The school will proceed with the destruction of all files that have exceeded their recognized holding period. A listing of file categories to be destroyed will be circulated to all the applicable School administrators prior to destruction for review and comment. The actual listing of records destroyed will be maintained permanently for future reference. Destruction of the files will be by shredding. Disposal of records into the Organization's general trash service is not allowed.

(6.2.6) Digital Retention

Records stored electronically must follow the same retention rules as other non-electric records.

The Principal/Administrator shall ensure that the school has established a file structure to be used that allows for the organized storage and retention of electronic records. The system must ensure that proper electronic backups are kept both on- and off-site utilizing local computers and cloud-based backup systems.

(6.2.7) Digital Communication Retention

The school will provide a platform for electronic communication such as Email, document storage or similar mediums. The Principal/Administrator shall ensure that systems are in place to provide archival access to these communication systems. Such an archival system must allow the school to provide universal searches of communication for public records

or legal discovery purposes when applicable, often referred to as “eDiscovery”. The archival system must ensure that user data is backed up and searchable even in the event that a user deletes a message. Communications should be stored for a period of no less than ten (10) years.

(6.3)

Public Records Request

It is the policy of the Organization that all public records made or received in connection with the official business of the agency be made available upon request of any person for inspection, examination, and copying in accordance with applicable law, including Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, and the following policy guidelines. This Policy is intended to supplement and hereby incorporate by reference the Florida Government-In-The-Sunshine Manual, prepared by the Office of the Attorney General, which may be found [http://myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/WF/MNOSB9QQ79/\\$file/SunshineManual.pdf](http://myfloridalegal.com/webfiles.nsf/WF/MNOSB9QQ79/$file/SunshineManual.pdf):

- All public records shall be available for inspection or copying under the supervision of the custodian (or designee) of the public records at reasonable times during normal office hours. All public records that are presently provided by law to be confidential or prohibited from being inspected by the public, whether by general or special law, are exempt from production.
- The Principal/Administrator may from time-to-time direct that public records requests be handled in a specific manner in order to ensure that the public records are protected, that requests are complied with as expeditiously as is reasonably possible given the nature and scope of the request, and that confidential and exempt records are not disclosed except as required by law. Such directives must not be used in any way to hinder, delay, or circumvent a person's right of access to public records.
- The Principal/Administrator shall ensure a “Custodian of Public Records” is assigned who will be responsible for ensuring the school's compliance with public records request. The name and contact information of that person shall be clearly identified on the school's website.
- The fact that the originator of a public record asks or directs that it remains confidential does not in fact make that document confidential. Such a record is still subject to disclosure unless the law makes it confidential or exempt from disclosure. Except in the case of student records, if a public record contains information that is confidential or exempt by law, a true and correct copy of the original record shall be made, the confidential or exempt portions of copy shall be

redacted, and the redacted copy of the record shall be made available to the requesting party. In the case of student records, the entire record is confidential and exempt and shall not be disclosed except as required or permitted by applicable law.

- The requesting party need not demonstrate any special or legitimate interest in the requested public records. Requests for public records shall be complied with regardless of the motivation of the requesting party.
- No automatic waiting period shall be imposed. The only delay permitted is that which is reasonably necessary to allow the custodian to compile the requested records and protect against disclosure of those records or portions of records that are confidential and exempt.
- Public records made or received by a third party pursuant to a contract or agreement with the agency shall be subject to disclosure to the same extent as public records in the physical custody of the agency.
- If a public records request is insufficient to identify the records sought, the requestor shall be promptly notified that more information is needed in order to produce the records. The agency shall offer reasonable assistance to the requestor in describing the nature and extent of such information.
- Exemption: There are various records and documents that are judicially or statutorily exempt from disclosure. A complete list of exempt documents is available in the Government-In-The-Sunshine Manual listed above and incorporated herein. Common examples include, but are not limited to
 - Social security numbers.
 - Personal financial information, such as credit card and bank account numbers.
 - Data processing software subject to licensing agreement.
 - Sealed bids or proposals received in response to invitations to bid until notice of the decision or intended decision is given or 10 days after bid or proposal opening, whichever is earlier.
 - Security system plans, threat response plans, emergency evacuation plans, sheltering arrangements, and manuals for security personnel, emergency equipment, or security training.

- Building plans or diagrams that depict the internal layout and structural elements of a building, arena, stadium, water treatment facility, or other structure.
- If the public records request is anticipated to result in the duplication of more than 10 pages of paper or more than 15 minutes of staff member's time, the school shall prepare an estimate for the costs associated with completing the request. The estimate shall be provided to the requestor prior to filling the records request. The following costs and guidelines apply:
 - A cost of up to \$0.15 per page of duplicated materials will be assessed if the document(s) being requested are more than 10 pages in length.
 - Should complying with the request take more than 15 minutes, the requestor will be billed the hourly cost (in 15-minute increments) for the actual time required to comply with the request.
 - If a request is estimated to cost more than \$25, the school may request a down payment of 50% of the request prior to fulfilling the request. The balance will be due upon the delivery of the request.
- If the nature or volume of public records requested to be inspected or copied is such as to require extensive use of information technology resources or extensive clerical or supervisory assistance by personnel of the agency involved, or both, the School may charge, in addition to the actual cost of duplication, a special service charge, which shall be reasonable and shall be based on the cost incurred for such extensive use of information technology resources or the labor cost of the personnel providing the service that is actually incurred by the agency or attributable to the agency for the clerical and supervisory assistance required, or both.
- Definitions:
 - **Public Records:** The term "public records" includes all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films, sound recordings, data processing software, or other material, regardless of the physical form, characteristics, or means of transmission, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by the agency.
 - **Public Records Request:** The term "public records request" means a request by any person, whether

written or verbal, for inspection, examination, or copying of public records.

- **Request for Information:** A request for information, as distinguished from a public records request, is one in which the requested information does not already exist in public record form.

(6.4) Contractual Agreements

A limited number of employees and governing board officers will be authorized to sign contracts and legally bind the school, and there shall be no fewer than two individuals at all times. This policy applies to all regular contracts on behalf of the school.

(6.4.1) Authorized Signers

The Board of Directors shall provide authorization to individuals to be able to sign contracts on behalf of the school. Such approvals will be documented in the meeting minutes. Any person who is no longer entitled to approve contracts on behalf of the school will be notified in writing.

(6.4.2) Signature Levels Required.

All contracts will require two signatures, the Principal/Administrator and one designee contingent that contracts are within the approved budget line items. Contracts outside of budget line items must have board approval or have a board resolution with an updated budget affecting line items.

(7) Fiscal and Accounting Management

(7.1) Operational Safeguards

It is the purpose of the policies set forth in this section to provide adequate operational safeguards to ensure proper accounting and reliable security of the assets of the organization.

(7.1.1) Financial Stewardship

As a public charter school, the Organization realizes the importance of acting as responsible stewards of public resources and shall ensure adequate safeguards, separation of duties, and processes are in place to ensure the Organization's finances and resources are utilized to fulfil the mission and vision of the Organization.

(7.1.2) Governing Board's Responsibilities

The Governing Board acknowledges that it has the ultimate responsibility to oversee, plan and direct the resources of the Organization to meeting the mission of the Organization. Even when the Governing Board elects to delegate some of the responsibilities for the accounting or day-to-day operations of the school's finances, it retains the responsibility to

oversee such duties and to ensure proper reporting and adequate safeguards are in place to adequately account for all of the Organization's resources and assets.

(7.1.3)

Segregation of Duties

Wherever possible, the Governing Board and the Principal/Administrator will work closely together to ensure processes are in place to ensure a proper separation of duties with regards to the school's financial management. Separation of duties is defined as the means by which no one person has sole authority over the lifespan of a transaction. It is the policy of the Organization that no one person shall be able to initiate, record, authorize and reconcile a transaction independently. The policy of the Organization is to ensure multiple people are involved in the life cycle of all financial transactions of the Organization to ensure that no one person could defraud the Organization or misuse any resources overseen by the Governing Board. An adequate system of checks and balances, as defined within this policy, shall be instituted by the Principal/Administrator, and approved by the Governing Board to faithfully carry out the mission of this Organization in order to protect the non-profit status of the Organization and its charter agreements.

(7.2)

Banking Policies

(7.2.1)

Banking Policy and Relations

The Principal/Administrator or designee, in conjunction with the appointed Governing Board Treasurer, may invest excess capital funds of the Organization in certificates of deposit, money market funds, Treasury Notes, Bonds and bills, equities, mutual funds and professionally managed accounts as approved by the Governing Board. The Governing Board shall make the final determination for which accounts to open. Further, the organization will maintain positive relations with all sources of capital and banking service providers.

(7.2.1.1)

Banking Relations

The Principal/Administrator or designee will be the Organization's primary representative in dealing with financial institutions. The Principal/Administrator or designee will be responsible for meeting with personnel of the primary financial institutions on an as needed basis to provide consistent financial information reporting and updates on the school's operations to financial institution officials. The Administrative Assistant or designee will be responsible for promoting a positive working relationship between the financial institutions. The Principal/Administrator or designee will also provide the institution officials with the school's anticipated capital needs or financial service requirements to provide institution officials adequate time to understand, approve and prepare for the school's needs.

The Board Treasurer or designee will also perform an ongoing evaluation of the institution's abilities to satisfy the goals of the organization and will make appropriate changes whenever necessary. Criteria to be used in the evaluating institutions can include:

- Institution Size (appropriate size to meet charter school needs while being small enough to be responsive)
- Financial safety and capital structure
- Reputation
- Location
- Flexibility and lending philosophy/attitudes
- Operating efficiency and accuracy (computerization, employee training, etc.)
- Previous work with public agencies, including but not limited to Charter schools.

(7.2.1.2) *Banking Policy and Arrangements*

The charter school may establish separate accounts for each fund and/or account group (internal funds, FTE funds, etc.) which will be used for all deposits and disbursements related to the fund.

All accounts opened at any financial institution in the name of the organization must be approved by the Governing Board.

(7.2.1.3) *Authorized Signatories*

A limited number of employees and board officers will be authorized signatories on file with the financial institution(s), and there shall be no fewer than three individuals at all times.

Authorized check signers must be approved in writing and require Governing Board authorization. The Principal/Administrator will have check signing authority and is the sole charter school employee who may be authorized to sign checks. Additional individuals with or without dollar limitations may be authorized, as necessary.

The Chairman may revoke check-signing authority at any time and for any reason. Any person who is no longer entitled to sign checks on behalf of the Organization will be notified in writing. The Administrative Assistant or designee will oversee the proper notification of the Organization's financial institutions whenever authorized signature changes are made.

(7.2.1.4) *Online Access and Activity*

The school may take advantage of online tools available from the financial institution to aid with the proper management of school funds. The Principal/Administrator must approve online access for individuals

with a valid business need for this access and shall maintain a list of individuals who have access to the online account. The Principal/Administrator will ensure that proper measures are taken to secure the login credentials to said accounts. Whenever possible and allowed for by the financial institution, each individual with access should have their own login credentials which can be revoked in the event that the individual's access needs to be terminated. If individual login credentials are not possible, in the event that an individual's access must be terminated, the credentials shall be changed and updated immediately. Unless specifically permitted and authorized by the Governing Board, any and all online access shall occur on Organization property and such access shall not be granted on personal devices. The Principal/Administrator or designee shall monitor log-in credentials and access points on an as needed basis to ensure the safeguarding of assets.

Any electronic or online bill payments, money transfers, or other transaction initiated electronically are required to follow the same procedures as outlined elsewhere in these policies with regards to approval for transactions, purchases or fiscal operations prior to the transaction taking place.

(7.2.2) Bank Loan Applications

The Governing Board is responsible for developing the organization's financing plan for capital needs. In the event the Organization decides to borrow money, the Board Treasurer and Principal/Administrator shall work together to prepare for loan officer questions and materials to aid in negotiating loan rates and other terms with multiple lenders. The treasurer or designee will prepare loan proposals according to established procedures. The Governing Board may institute a system of competitive bidding for financial institutions to submit sealed bids for the securing of loan proceeds if applicable.

(7.2.2.1) Assessment of Capital Requirements

The Chairman of the Governing Board will be responsible for directing the Treasurer in developing borrowing and financial plans to meet the needs of the Organization's operations. These plans shall take into account current and projected business conditions and can include, but are not limited to, the following criteria:

- Capital requirements to satisfy the organization's growth in relation to risk.
- Ability of the organization to meet present obligations as well as new debt under worse case conditions.
- Appropriateness of capital or debt structure.
- Level or type of debt does not preclude future borrowing or funding capacity.

- Cost of capital in relation to return on investment from use of funds obtained.

(7.2.2.2)

Preparation of Loan Applications

Loan proposals will be drafted and presented to the Governing Board with the following information, if applicable. The Governing Board reserves the right to approve or deny any and all loan proposals if in the best interest of the Organization:

- **Date:** The proposal for each bank should be dated with the current date the proposal will be given to the bank.
- **Borrower:** The specific legal name of the intended borrowing entity should be listed.
- **Type of Loan:** The specific type of loan requested should be listed (i.e., equipment loan, line of credit, etc.).
- **Amount:** The amount of the loan requested should be determined and listed. It is very important to establish credibility with the loan officer and committees. All numbers should be carefully forecasted and supported with documentation.
- **Use of Proceeds:** As above, the use of proceeds should be listed and well supported by documentation in the organization's business plan and forecasts.
- **Term:** The desired term of the loan should be listed. If deemed possible, longer terms or automatic renewal terms should be requested to avoid the process of having to renew the loan frequently.
- **Closing Date:** Set a closing date. For renewals, approximately 30 days after application; for new bank or loan applications, approximately 60 days after application.
- **Takedown at Closing:** The amount of funds to be drawn immediately at closing of the loan should be listed.
- **Collateral:** Any assets (i.e., equipment, inventory, accounts receivable, etc.) to be used as collateral for the loan should be listed and appropriately reflect the type of loan. The Governing Board Treasurer shall ensure that any asset used as collateral may properly be used as collateral to ensure the loan does not affect any requirement in the charter agreement with the sponsoring school district. This section should also incorporate Section 1002.33(8)(d), Florida Statutes which provides that, "When a charter is not renewed or is terminated, the school shall be dissolved under the provisions of law under which the school was organized, and any unencumbered public funds, except for capital outlay funds and federal charter school

program grant funds, from the charter school shall revert to the sponsor. Capital outlay funds provided pursuant to s. 1013.62 and federal charter school program grant funds that are unencumbered shall revert to the department to be redistributed among eligible charter schools. In the event a charter school is dissolved or is otherwise terminated, all district school board property and improvements, furnishings, and equipment purchased with public funds shall automatically revert to full ownership by the district school board, subject to complete satisfaction of any lawful liens or encumbrances. Any unencumbered public funds from the charter school, district school board property and improvements, furnishings, and equipment purchased with public funds, or financial or other records pertaining to the charter school, in the possession of any person, entity, or holding company, other than the charter school, shall be held in trust upon the district school board's request, until any appeal status is resolved."

- **Guarantees:** This should normally be completed with "none." The Organization should always propose loans based upon the Organization's credit worthiness.
- **Rate:** For negotiating purposes, rather than having the bank "suggest" the interest rate, it is better to state a reasonable but fair market value rate. The rate should reflect the type of loan and the level of risk the school represents to the bank.
- **Repayment Schedule:** A realistic repayment schedule should be determined and should correspond to the charter school's business plan and financial forecasts.
- **Source of Funds for Repayment:** The specific source of cash flow to be used for repayment should be identified.
- **Alternate Source of Funds for Repayment:** To satisfy concerns by banks that in the event the organization does not meet financial projections, the plans on how the organization would meet the repayment schedule should be listed. For example, liquidating assets, etc., could be used to repay the loan.

(7.2.3)

School Credit Card policy

The Governing Board may approve the use of school credit cards for authorized employees and Directors. Cardholders shall be required to sign an agreement indicating the terms of credit card use are accepted. Individuals who do not adhere to these policies risk revocation of their credit card privileges and/or disciplinary action. Only individuals authorized by the Governing Board may use school credit cards. The following policies shall be in place regarding the use of school Credit Cards:

(7.2.3.1) Individual Credit Card Use

- The use and authorization of the school credit card may only be granted by the Governing Board.
- Only the approved user may use or have access to the card.
- The credit card shall be kept in a secure location.
- Lost or stolen credit cards must be reported to the Principal/Administrator immediately upon the recognition that the card is missing. The Principal/Administrator shall ensure it is reported to the financial institution as soon as possible.
- Only purchases approved within the annual budget or by the Governing Board are allowed to be made with the credit card. The use of the credit card should not circumvent other school policies regarding the proper approval of purchases.
- The credit card shall not be used for cash advances, personal or non-business-related purchases
- If the credit card is accidentally used to purchase personal items, the employee or Director will be required to remit payment to the school for the amount of the purchase within 24 hours of discovery of the error. If an employee fails to remit such payment, the Organization reserves all rights to pursue repayment in a court of law.
- The authorized employee or Principal/Administrator must provide the vendor with the company's tax-exempt form, if applicable.
- Receipts for all credit card purchases must be retained and handed in to the Schools' Principal/Administrator weekly along with a receipt summary form indicating the authorizing source of any purchase.
- The Credit card shall not be retained in an online database for access by anyone, including but not limited to, vendors and co-workers.
- The school credit card may not be used for reoccurring payments unless specifically approved by the Governing Board.
- Failure to submit receipt and proper documentation for credit card purchases will result in the purchase being considered a personal expense, for which the employee or Principal/Administrator must reimburse the school.

- In the event of transfer, separation from the school, or upon request of the Principal/Administrator the approved user will surrender the card to the Principal/Administrator.
- The Principal/Administrator shall conduct monthly reviews of the credit card statement to ensure proper authorized use of the credit card by all authorized employee and such review shall be submitted to the Governing Board for review and approval. The Governing Board reserves the right to revoke any and all credit card or credit card access at any time and for any reason.

(7.2.3.2) Credit Card Payments

Payments made to the financial institution for a credit card statement must be split into the appropriate function/object codes. Payments to the financial institution must be made prior to the due date to minimize interest or late payment fees.

(7.2.3.3) Incentive Programs

Any incentive programs offered by the financial institution for the use of the credit card (i.e., cash back, purchase discounts, etc.) must be used for the benefit of the school. No individual employee or Director may personally take advantage of these incentives if they are offered by the financial institution.

(7.2.3.4) School Debit Cards

It is the policy of this Organization to prohibit the use of a debit card which draws from the accounts of the organization. Debit cards lack the fraud protection available from credit cards and make the forecasting and management of the organization's cash flow significantly more complicated. Whenever possible, the Organization will attempt to obtain a school credit card to be used for purchases that require such.

(7.3) Accounting Platform

(7.3.1) Software Selection

The Governing Board shall ensure a software package is selected to manage the school's financial records. The software package must allow the school to record financial transactions in a way that aligns with the Financial & Program Cost Accounting & Reporting for Florida Schools (Red Book) standards.

The software should enable the Principal/Administrator, any designated financial employees, Governing Board members and the school's accountant to be able to access the Organization's accounting records and ensure proper accounting of the Organization's resources.

Care will be taken to ensure the software package is adequately secured against unauthorized access, as well as ensuring that proper safeguards

are in place to provide backing up and securing data in alignment with policy (7.2.4).

(7.3.2) Chart of Accounts

To facilitate the record keeping process for accounting, all ledger accounts will be assigned a descriptive account title and account number consistent with the Financial and Program Cost Accounting and Reporting for Florida Schools manual (The Red Book).

(7.3.3) General Ledger Management

(7.3.3.1) Recording Transactions in the General Ledger

The Administrative Assistant or designee is responsible for the proper posting of journals and entries to the general ledger and for the maintenance of the accounts to ensure accuracy, validity, and reliability of financial records.

As such, the Administrative Assistant may not be granted signatory access to the Organization's bank accounts to ensure proper separation of duties. In addition, the Administrative Assistant may not complete the monthly account reconciliations.

(7.3.3.2) Posting Transactions and Journals

The accounting software aids in the maintenance of journals and posting of transactions to general ledger accounts. The following functions should be performed on a monthly basis to update the general ledger for the month's activities:

- All activities recorded in journals will be posted to the general ledger using the computerized posting feature. These journals include:
 - General Journal
 - Purchases Journal
 - Cash Receipts Journal
 - Cash Disbursements Journal - Payroll Journal
- The recurring adjusting journal entries will be posted via the general journal. Recurring journal entries will be established for adjustments that occur equally each monthly accounting period. Recurring journal entries can include the following:
 - Accruals of interest expense not paid during the accounting period. Amortization of prepaid expenses
Depreciation of fixed assets
 - Recurring journal entries will be reviewed monthly and adjusted accordingly.

- Adjusting journal entries will be prepared for transactions that have not been recorded in other journals or to correctly restate account balances to accurate amounts. The need to make adjusting journal entries may be due to the following:
 - Accrual of income and expense items
 - Correction of errors
 - Recording non-cash transactions

All journal entries will be reviewed and authorized by the Principal/Administrator or designee before being posted. Adequate supporting documentation will be prepared for each journal entry. The Governing Board shall review the month-end journal transaction summaries prepared by the Principal/Administrator or designee.

(7.3.4) Bank Account Reconciliations

Errors or omissions can be made to the cash records due to the many transactions that occur. Therefore, it is necessary to prove periodically the balance shown in the general ledger. Cash on deposit with a bank or other financial institution is not available for count and is therefore proved through the preparation of a reconciliation of the Organization's record of cash in the bank/financial institution and the bank/financial institution's record of the organization's cash that is on deposit.

Monthly reconciliations of all bank accounts held by the Organization shall be completed by an individual who does not have check signing authority or money handling ability within the Organization. The reconciliation will indicate the balance shown on the bank/ financial institution statement and work to ensure the corrected balance is equal to the number currently indicated on the general ledger. The following procedures will be used to complete this process:

(7.3.4.1) Format

The Organization's format for monthly bank/financial institution reconciliations is composed of two distinct sections. One section begins with the balance as shown on the bank/financial institution statement and works to a corrected balance. That is the balance the bank/financial institution statement would show if all transactions were recorded by the bank (e.g., outstanding checks, deposits in transit, etc.).

The second section starts with the balance shown by the school records and also works to a corrected balance; the balance that should be shown in the organization's records after all transactions are properly recorded (e.g., bank charges, interest, etc.).

(7.3.4.2) Preparation and Reconciling Items

Upon receipt of the monthly bank/financial institution statement including cleared checks, deposit slips and any other transaction notifications, the monthly bank/financial institution reconciliation will be prepared by the accountant, Administrative Assistant or designee utilizing the following process:

- The first section of the monthly reconciliation will be started with the ending balance per the bank/financial institution statement.
- Next, any deposits in transit that were made by the Organization but were not yet recorded by the bank/financial institution will be listed and added to the bank/financial institution balance.
- Next, any checks that were written on the account prior to month-end but which have not yet cleared the bank/financial institution, will be listed and deducted from the bank/financial institution balance.
- From these steps, the "corrected" ending balance will be derived for the first section.
- The second section of the monthly reconciliation will be started with the ending balance per the school's books.
- Next, any interest or any other bank/financial institution credit items will be listed and added to the balance.
- Next, any bank/financial institution charges, transfer fees, etc. will be listed and deducted from the balance.
- From these steps, the "corrected" ending balance will be derived for the second section and should equal the "corrected" balance for the first section.
- Any discrepancies between these two balances will require research and prompt investigation by the accountant, Administrative Assistant, or designee to determine the cause, such as recording errors, omissions, mispostings, etc. This can also include recalculation of the bank/financial institution statement for any possible errors made by the bank/financial institution.

(7.3.4.3)

Adjustments and Journal Entries

Any book reconciling items such as interest, bank/financial institution charges and any recording errors shall be summarized and drafted in journal entry form for recording in the general ledger. Further, any outstanding checks over six months old will be reviewed for disposition including write-off by journal entry.

(7.3.4.4)

Review and Approval

The monthly bank/financial institution reconciliation for each account should be reviewed and approved by the Principal/Administrator or designee (an individual who did not prepare it), via signature and date on the completed forms and submitted for final review by the Governing Board.

(7.3.4.5) Reconciliation Process

- Upon receipt of the monthly bank/financial institution statement including cleared checks, deposit slips and any other transaction notifications, the monthly bank/financial institution reconciliation will be prepared by the accountant, Administrative Assistant or designee.
- The accountant, Administrative Assistant or designee shall utilize the reconciliation component of the accounting software to designate which transactions have and have not cleared the bank.
- Any discrepancies between these two balances will require research and prompt investigation by the accountant, Administrative Assistant, or designee to determine the cause, such as recording errors, omissions, mispostings, etc. This can also include recalculation of the bank-/financial institution statement for any possible errors made by the bank-/financial institution.
- Any book reconciling items such as interest, bank/financial institution charges and any recording errors will be summarized and drafted in journal entry form for recording in the general ledger.
- Further, any outstanding checks over six months old will be reviewed for disposition including write-off by journal entry if necessary.
- The reconciliation report generated by the software along with a copy of the bank statement shall be generated, filed in the organization's accounting records, and forwarded to the School's Principal/Administrator and the Treasurer of the Governing Board.

(7.3.5) Year-End Closing

An orderly, timely and comprehensive closing of all accounts will be performed by the accountant, Administrative Assistant, or designee to assure an accurate representation of the Organization's financial statements and to provide the necessary documentation for the Organization's independent auditors.

(7.3.5.1) Individuals Responsible

Year-end closings of all accounts held by the Organization shall be completed by an individual who does not have check signing authority or money handling ability within the organization. The following policies will be administered in the completion of the year-end closing:

(7.3.5.2)

Assets

Assets should be accurately stated, generally at realizable amounts. Work papers should show the basis and when required, how the amounts were calculated.

- **Cash** - Prepare bank reconciliations for year-end. Balances for each bank account should match the bank balances for each account. Show original dates and descriptions of each reconciling item. Prepare necessary journal entries and adjust the reconciliations. Prepare a summary of all petty cash and change funds. Totals must agree with the general ledger. Supplement with actual statements.
- **Investments** - Prepare a list of all securities on hand at year-end by location held such as broker or bank. Use full names and show the face amount or number of shares and date of acquisition. Determine cost and market values. Calculate accrued interest.
- **Accounts Receivable** - Obtain aged trial balances and reconcile to general ledger. Calculate possible allowance for uncollectible accounts and obtain approval of treasurer. Adjust allowance to calculated amount. Write off any unallocated differences.
- **Other Receivables** - Prepare schedule of grants and other miscellaneous receivables and reconcile to general ledger. Comment on collectability, if applicable.
- **Inventories** - Prepare a summary of all properties held in inventory. Reconcile inventories from physical inventory to year-end balances. Explain material variations from prior year for either positive or negative inventory reports.
- **Fixed Assets** - Prepare a schedule of assets and related allowances for depreciation. Reconcile allowance additions to total depreciation expense. Trace disposals to capital gain and loss schedule or to expense if items were scrapped or discarded.

(7.3.5.3)

Liabilities and Net Assets

Liabilities are shown as the amount to be paid in the subsequent period.

- **Accounts Payable** - Determine that all items paid for through year-end are not shown on the accounts payable list. Accounts payable shall be kept open for 45 days after year-end in order to receive invoices and record them in the accounts payable list. After this 45-day period, maintain a list of any items over \$1,000 that are received or paid that are not included in accounts payable but relate to that year-end period.

- **Accrued Payroll** - Calculate accrued payroll and vacation pay due by the number of days outstanding at year-end. Include any incentive bonuses or other special payroll payments.
- **Other Accrued Expenses** - Review accruals for payroll taxes, payroll deductions payable, interest expense on short term borrowings and long-term debt. Determine cost of audit and legal services through year-end and record.
- **Income Taxes Payable** - The Federal tax payable schedule will be prepared with the assistance of the auditors. (This is applicable only if the organization has unrelated trade or business income, which does not relate to its exempt purpose).
- **Current Liabilities** - Prepare a schedule of debt and calculate and record the current portion due within one year and accrued interest.
- **Contingent Liabilities and Commitments** - Prepare a schedule of any outstanding litigation and possible loss. Prepare a schedule of all long-term rental agreements.
- **Net Assets** - Bring permanent file of all net asset accounts up to date.

(7.3.5.4)

Revenues

Prepare a schedule of all revenues and compare amounts to prior year. Evaluate and comment on any material positive or negative revenue differences. Prepare a memorandum on new revenue accounts. Also prepare a schedule of revenues by program for inclusion in the annual report.

(7.3.5.5)

Expenses

Each expense total should be compared to the prior year and unusual variances reviewed and explained. Several expense items are directly related to asset or liability accounts and the worksheets for the related accounts should be prepared at the same time and shown on one schedule.

- **Payroll** - Prepare a schedule of all payroll and employer taxes and reconcile to payroll expense. Prepare a schedule of annual payroll and benefit levels for each organization employee for the auditors and annual report.
- **Legal and Professional Fees** - Prepare a schedule of all legal invoices with the amount and brief description of services rendered. Reconcile total to Legal expense.

- **Bad Debt Expense** - Prepare a list of all accounts written off during the year. Note specifically any additions to the allowance for uncollectible accounts.
- **Interest Expense** - Prepare a schedule of interest expense by source. Reconcile amounts to short-term borrowing and long-term debt.

(7.4) Purchasing

The Principal/Administrator shall ensure proper processes are in place to document, approve, and track all purchases made by the Organization. The Principal/Administrator must approve all purchases and abide by the following policies:

(7.4.1) Must Be Within Budget or Board Approved

All purchases must be within the approved annual budget. Any purchase which would cause a deviation of more than one percent from the annual budget must be approved by the Governing Board prior to the approval.

(7.4.2) Price Comparisons

As responsible stewards of public resources, the Organization shall make it a practice to compare prices for items before making purchases. The Principal/Administrator shall ensure a process is in place to record price comparisons for any item greater than \$1,000. Three bids are required for any item greater than \$1,000. Bids will be provided to the Board for review and approval.

(7.4.2.1) Sole-Source Procurements

Some items may only be available from a single source provider, and comparable items may not be available from other vendors. For example, a specific textbook may only be available from the publisher of the book. In this case, this will be considered a sole-source procurement.

When making a purchase of a sole-source procurement, written justification of why the particular item is required and that it is only available from the specific vendor. The Principal/Administrator or designee must approve this documentation (if prepared by someone other than the Principal/Administrator or designee) and it must be maintained with the purchase paperwork.

(7.4.2.2) Retention of Purchase Documentation

The Principal/Administrator shall ensure a filing system is in place to document the processes used to obtain price quotes and approvals for purchases. The documents may be stored electronically, and in alignment with the records retention policy 7.2.

(7.4.3) Approval Process

All purchases must receive proper approvals before the purchases are made. The Principal/Administrator shall ensure a process is in place to document the approval of the appropriate parties through an electronic

approval system or through physical signatures prior to purchases being made.

Purchases that are less than \$1,000 must be approved by the Principal/Administrator. Purchases greater than \$1,000 must be approved by both the Principal/Administrator and the Governing Board and Regional Director.

Reimbursements or payments to the Principal/Administrator require the approval of the Governing Board and Regional Director.

(7.4.4) Use of Purchase Orders

The Organization does not require the use of purchase orders prior to making a purchase, so long as the adequate approval is documented in some way. However, in the event a formal purchase order is requested or used, the purchase order will signify the date on which the purchase occurred. Purchase orders shall include, but are not limited to:

- Date
- Purchase order numbers
- Vendor Name
- Vendor Telephone Number
- General Description
- Amount (Estimated)
- Approver's Signature and Date

(7.5) Accounting Processes

(7.5.1) Accounts Payable, Cash Disbursements and Accrued Expenses

Proper internal control will be followed to ensure that only valid and authorized payables are recorded and paid. Accounting procedures will be implemented to ensure the accuracy of amounts, coding of general ledger accounts and appropriate timing of payments.

(7.5.1.1) Internal Controls

(7.5.1.1.1) Documenting Accounts Payable

All invoices with accompanying purchase orders, requisitions or bids, if applicable, will be scanned to an appropriate electronic file.

(7.5.1.1.2) Recording of Invoices and Check Requests

- The invoices will be matched to the purchase request.
- All invoices will identify any special instructions for payment, if applicable.

- The Principal/Administrator, and a Governing Board member and Regional Director, where applicable, will approve all invoices before payment is processed.
- Approved invoices and check requests will be entered into the accounting system and properly coded for payment by the Administrative Assistant.

(7.5.1.1.3) Payment of Accounts Payable

Accounts payable invoices will be selected and paid weekly according to their payment terms unless otherwise determined by the Principal/Administrator or designee. Any credit balances (amounts owed to the organization) will be applied to the invoice amount when determining payment.

(7.5.1.1.4) Accrued Expenses

The Principal/Administrator will ensure that at the end of each month records are prepared for accrued expenses. Accrued expenses represent amounts due for services or benefits that the school has received but are not yet payable. Once all amounts have been determined, the accrued expenses will be recorded in the accounting system.

(7.5.1.2) Check Requests

If funds are required in advance of receipt of an item, such as when an item is being sent 'cash on delivery', a Check Request form with appropriate documentation will be processed through the accounting system in the amount of the expense so that a check can be issued and held securely at the program for use.

If the exact amount of the purchase is not known, an Advance Request can be completed requesting issue of funds in the name of a specific employee for the purpose of making the payment.

The Organization does not permit the use of manual checks. All payments must be processed through the accounts payable system.

(7.5.1.2.1) Origination

Any Check Request or Advance Request form must be completed with all pertinent information and receive appropriate approvals before being processed.

(7.5.1.2.2) Processing

For processing purposes, Check Request and Advance Request forms will be treated the same as any other accounts payable item.

(7.5.1.3) Check Signing Authority

(7.5.1.3.1) Signature Levels Required

The following approval/signature levels will be required according to the dollar amount of the payment. If the School is sending paper checks, the

checks must have these signatures. If the School is using an electronic payment system, the transaction should document the relevant approvals based on the following:

Less than \$2,500 - A check issued for an amount less than \$2,500 requires only one signature, typically that of the Principal/Administrator.

Greater than \$2,500 - A check issued for greater than \$2,500 requires two signatures, typically that of the Principal/Administrator and any other account signer

(7.5.1.3.2) Prohibition from Reconciliation

Individuals who are authorized check signers on any school bank account shall not be permitted to conduct the monthly bank reconciliation.

(7.5.2) Accounts Receivable

(7.5.2.1) Reducing Cash Receivables

In order to reduce the possibility of theft or accounting errors, the Principal/Administrator will ensure processes are in place to, as much as possible, eliminate the use of cash receipts to the school. When funds must be collected the use of electronic payments or payments by check should be encouraged as much as is feasible. Parents will be notified on a regular basis (at least annually) of this policy and asked not to send cash to the school.

(7.5.2.2) Receipts

Funds may be received in person, by mail, or submitted electronically on the internet through secure sites. Unless a special exception is made, such as for field trips and lunch money collection described below, payments made at the school will only be received within the main administrative office. In-person payments may be accepted only during regular office hours, and only by authorized personnel who have been trained in the process.

(7.5.2.2.1) Authorization

The Principal/Administrator shall authorize office staff who are allowed to accept funds. Authorized receivers will typically include the Administrative Assistant and Principal/Administrator, and potentially a limited number of office staff members, such as a secretary, receptionist, who has been trained and authorized by the Principal/Administrator. The Principal/Administrator shall make the Governing Board aware of those authorized office staff members.

(7.5.2.2.2) Receipt Log

Each person authorized to collect cash on behalf of the school shall be provided with a three-part NCR, sequentially numbered receipt book. It is expected that staff members shall store the books securely.

When cash is received, the staff member must record payments in the book and the receipt signed by the paying and receiving parties. The original receipt is given or mailed to the payer. The first receipt copy is bundled with funds received that day and placed in a secure temporary location and hand-delivered to the Administrative Assistant at the earliest possible opportunity. Funds collected by the Administrative Assistant will be stored in the safe until they can be deposited. The second receipt copy remains in the receipt book.

If a receipt is made unusable for any reason, it shall be voided. One copy of the voided receipt shall remain in the receipt book with the word VOID clearly written across it. The other two copies shall be shredded and discarded.

(7.5.2.2.3) *In-Person Payments*

The office staff member who has been authorized by the Principal/Administrator shall accept in-person payments, verify any funds presented while the payer is present and have the payer sign the receipt confirming the amount of the payment. The original receipt shall be provided to the payer. The payment shall be recorded on the appropriate Receipts Log (i.e., lunch log, field trip log, event log, etc.). The funds shall be stored in a secure location and hand-delivered to the Administrative Assistant at the earliest possible opportunity. Funds collected by the Administrative Assistant will be stored in the safe until they can be deposited.

(7.5.2.2.4) *Mailed Payments*

The office staff member authorized to open the mail shall endorse each check immediately utilizing a personalized "For Deposit Only" stamp which includes the Organization name and account number on the back. The payment shall be recorded on the appropriate Check Log. The funds shall be stored in a secure temporary location and hand-delivered to the Administrative Assistant at the earliest possible opportunity. Funds collected by the Administrative Assistant will be stored in the safe until they can be deposited.

(7.5.2.2.5) *Classroom Collections*

The Principal/Administrator may train and authorize classroom teachers to collect funds for specific purposes within the classroom during morning attendance time. These collections should be for limited specific purposes as defined by the Principal/Administrator such as school lunch, or field trips.

For each approved collection purpose, the teacher will be provided with a log to record the payments, and an envelope to store the funds in. When the funds are collected, a receipt should be issued, and the funds should be recorded on the log. All funds collected must be secured in a locked drawer and the envelope and log provided to the designated office staff person at the earliest possible opportunity.

The designated office staff person will count any cash in the envelope in the presence of the teacher, verify the amount in the envelope matches the logged amount, make a copy of the log, and return the log and envelope to the teacher.

(7.5.2.3) *Depositing Funds*

Only the Principal/Administrator, the Administrative Assistant, or staff members authorized by the Principal/Administrator may make bank deposits. The person physically depositing the funds to the bank may not be the same person who completes the monthly bank reconciliations. All receipts shall be deposited within 24 hours or the next banking day. Each individual deposit must be documented on a Deposited Cash Receipts Log (DCRL), and an electronic packet assembled including all required documentation (receipt and check copies, accompanying documentation, electronic deposit verifications, deposit slip and deposit receipt, as applicable). The DCRL packet must be reviewed and signed by the Principal/Administrator upon finalization and the signed packet stored electronically in the prescribed location.

(7.5.2.3.1) *Electronic Deposits*

In the event the selected financial institution allows for electronic deposits, the Organization may utilize such tools. Check will be scanned and deposited to the online system. The checks shall be endorsed with the statement "Electronically deposited" and maintained along with a verification report provided by the financial institution as evidence of the deposit.

(7.5.2.3.2) *Manual Deposits*

Checks that are manually deposited to the bank shall be grouped together by batch based on the number of items allowed by the financial institution. A Deposited Cash Receipts Log must be prepared for each individual deposit, and all cash receipts and checks included in the batch shall be electronically scanned along with the deposit slip being used for said deposit and saved for compilation with the completed deposit record.

An authorized staff member shall then physically make the deposit to the financial institution for deposit and retain a copy of the deposit receipt provided by the financial institution as evidence of the deposit.

(7.5.2.3.3) *Delayed Deposits*

If, in unusual cases, the deposit cannot be made in a timely manner, or the amount of funds received for deposit is less than \$100, the deposit shall be stored in the safe and deposited as soon as possible, but not less than weekly. The Principal/Administrator shall be notified whenever funds are not deposited the next business day and shall ensure that a deposit is made at least weekly, when applicable funds are in-house, regardless of the amount.

(7.5.2.3.4) *Deposit Validation*

A deposit slip, validated by the bank, or a copy of the online deposit report, must be obtained for every deposit. The Principal/Administrator shall investigate any failure to receive a validated receipt and take appropriate corrective action.

(7.5.3)

Bad/NSF Checks

Checks returned by the bank and designated uncollectible are to be processed in a method to avoid publicly embarrassing clients/donors while ensuring that the funds will be collected. Whenever a check is returned for insufficient funds, a handling fee should be charged to the issuer equal to the fees incurred by the Organization. Entities or individuals who present NSF checks may be prohibited from paying by check in the future.

(7.5.3.1)

Returned Checks

A returned check for less than \$500 or stamped "uncollected funds," should be re-deposited the following day, or when the next deposit is made.

For returned checks in amounts greater than \$500, the bank that the check is drawn against should be telephoned and requested to provide if the check amount will clear the client/donor's account. If sufficient funds exist, the check should be re-deposited.

(7.5.3.2)

Redeposited Checks

In the event a re-deposited check is returned or if sufficient funds do not exist to cover the check, the check should be turned over to the Principal/Administrator or treasurer immediately for follow-up with the issuer to obtain alternate payment and no further checks should be accepted from that issuer.

(7.5.4)

Asset Management

(7.5.4.1)

Capitalization & Depreciation of Fixed Assets

Assets acquisitions with a useful life expectancy of greater than one year and with a material unit cost of over \$1,000 will be capitalized by the Organization and depreciated. The Organization's accountant shall review any and all assets covered under this section to ensure proper filing.

(7.5.4.1.1)

Capitalization

Capitalization is the process of recording the purchase of a fixed asset that is generally recorded individually on an asset schedule. Examples of capital expenditures are purchases of land, buildings, machinery, office equipment, leasehold improvements, computer software and vehicles.

All assets with a useful life of greater than one year and a material unit cost of over \$1,000 will be capitalized and (except for land) will be recorded in the depreciation records. Any asset that does not meet the

above criteria will be expensed such as small tools and equipment or repairs and maintenance.

The cost basis of furniture and equipment assets will include all charges relating to the purchase of the asset including the purchase price, freight charges and installation if applicable.

Leasehold improvements are to be capitalized if they relate to the occupancy of a new location or a major renovation of an existing location. Expenditures incurred in connection with maintaining an existing facility in good working order should be expensed as a repair.

The cost of buildings should include all expenditure related directly to their acquisition or construction. These costs include materials, labor and overhead incurred during construction and fees, such as attorneys, architects and building permits.

(7.5.4.1.2) Depreciation

Depreciation represents the write-down or write-off of the cost of the asset over its estimated useful life.

In general, the depreciation methods/lives for assets should be selected for consistent financial reporting and tax purposes. The following depreciation methods and useful lives should be used for the following asset classifications for financial reporting purposes:

Asset Class	Useful Life	Method
Vehicles	Three Years	Straight Line
Office Equipment and Computers	Three Years	Straight Line
Furniture and Line Machinery	Five Years	Straight Line
Leasehold Improvements	Remaining Life of Lease Term, Including Option Renewals	Straight Line
Buildings	Twenty Years	Straight Line

The lowest life permitted by tax regulations for asset classes should be selected to optimize depreciation deductions.

(7.5.4.2) Fixed Asset Control

Proper control procedures will be followed for all capital asset acquisitions, transfers and dispositions in order to provide internal control of capital equipment and to assist in reporting. The Principal/Administrator is responsible and accountable for furniture, equipment, machinery, and any other capital assets and will maintain control over capital assets at the direction of the Governing Board. The

Principal/Administrator or designee will assist and evaluate the capital asset control procedures.

(7.5.4.2.1) Acquisitions

All purchases for items over \$1,000 must include a completed purchase order, with the form indicating that the item is a capital purchase. When the Administrative Assistant enters the records into the accounting system, the item will be recorded in the official school inventory documentation as well.

Any internally constructed or donated equipment will be reported to the Administrative Assistant if the item costs or has an FMV of \$500 or more. A complete description of the property, date manufactured or received, number of items, cost or estimated value and a statement that it was internally constructed or donated will be included on the organization's in-kind contributions log/records.

(7.5.4.2.2) Dispositions

Capital assets may be sold or traded in on new equipment. An Inventory and Fixed Asset form is to be completed and approved by the Principal/Administrator. The disposition of any asset with an original value greater than \$1,000 will also require the Governing Board's approval.

Upon approval, the school may advertise the property for sale or submit a list to the Administrative Assistant for sale and disposition. After completion of the sale, the Inventory and Fixed Asset form will be submitted to the accountant, and the item will be noted as disposed on the inventory records by the Administrative Assistant. The accountant will record the removal of the item from the asset records and record any gain or loss on the disposition.

Worn-out or obsolete property with no cash value will be reported to the Administrative Assistant who will complete and process an Inventory and Fixed Asset form with description, serial number, and condition. The Principal/Administrator or Administrative Assistant will personally inspect all worn-out or obsolete property before it is removed from the charter school and discarded. The asset will then be removed from the asset records.

Any asset that is missing or has been stolen will be reported in writing as soon as possible. The description, serial number, and other information about the lost item should be included in the report. The Principal/Administrator will determine the proper course of action and will notify the charter school's insurance carrier and any outside authorities if deemed appropriate. If not recovered, the asset will then be removed from the asset records utilizing the established procedure.

(7.5.4.2.3) Asset Records

Upon any asset acquisition, the Administrative Assistant or designee is responsible for assigning and attaching an asset number label to the property where it can be readily seen. The Administrative Assistant will add the item to a detailed inventory record. Each asset that receives an asset label will be recorded on this record, including the asset label number assigned to the asset, the date the asset was purchased, the date the asset was labeled, the cost or FMV of the asset, the location of the asset, the description of the asset and the date the asset was disposed of, if applicable.

On an annual basis, the inventory record should be reviewed to verify accuracy. Any discrepancies noted should be reported to the Principal/Administrator and the resolution documented by the Administrative Assistant.

(7.5.4.2.4) *Inventory of CSP Grant Purchases*

Pursuant to Section 1002.33(17)c, Florida Statutes, all items purchased with Charter School Programs (CSP) grant funds must be logged and inventoried upon receipt, and then inventory must be checked at least twice annually and reported as required by law. All capital outlay purchases (all line items with 600 series object codes) must be labeled with an inventory label that includes the following wording:

Property of the School District of Bay
AMIkids Maritime Academy
[Inventory ID / Serial Number]
Purchased with Federal CSP Funds

The school shall institute an inventory system to tag and track all capitalized materials and items purchased with federal funds as well as other specific grant sources. The items identified on the inventory label must match the identification number of the inventory system, and each item must be listed individually. The inventory must also include the following information for each item:

- Item/ID Serial Number
- Funding Source
- Item Description
- Date Acquired
- Date Inventoried
- Item Condition (new, used, damaged, lost/stolen, sold, etc.)

In the event the school wishes to dispose of any items purchased with CSP funds, in addition to the Organization's disposition policy, the school

will also notify the sponsor. This provision remains in effect throughout the life of the equipment even after the CSP grant expires.

(7.6) Financial Reporting

(7.6.1) Preparation of Governing Board Financial Reports

The Principal/Administrator, in consultation with the Board Treasurer, should ensure that financial reports are regularly prepared and presented to the Governing Board for review. At each regularly scheduled Governing Board meeting the Board should, at a minimum, be provided with the following reports:

- **Statement of Financial Position/Balance Sheet** – a financial statement that reports the organization’s assets, liabilities and equity at a specific point in time. The most end of the most recently closed month should be used as the date for which this report is created.
- **Statement of Activities/Profit and Loss** – a financial statement that summarizes the revenues, costs and expenditures incurred thus far during the current fiscal year.
- **Budget Versus Actual** – a comparison of the organization’s planned financial transactions thus far during the current fiscal year as compared to the most recently approved annual budget.

The board may periodically define additional financial reports or summaries it wishes to see on a regular basis.

(7.6.2) Preparation of School District Financial Reports

In accordance with the charter agreement with the sponsor the Principal/Administrator shall ensure the Organization prepares and submits to the sponsor a monthly (or if the school is currently classified as a high performing school, quarterly), a financial statement which contains a concise, uniform, monthly financial statement summary sheet that includes a balance sheet and a statement of revenue, expenditures, and changes in fund balance. The statements shall be in the format provided by the Department of Education.

(7.6.3) Annual Financial Audit and Financial Statements

In accordance with Florida Statute 1002.33(9)(j)2, the Governing Board shall ensure the Organization retains the services of a certified public accountant or auditor to complete the annual financial audit. The auditor shall be selected using the RFP process described in this policy. The annual audit shall be submitted to the Governing Board for approval, and for submission to the sponsor.

(7.7) Financial Conditions

(7.7.1) Deteriorating Financial Condition or Financial Emergencies

AMIkids Maritime Academy's Governing Board is dedicated to sound and efficient financial management. It is the intent of the Board that the Organization's finances will be managed in such a way as to ensure fiscal stability for the organization. However, in the event that the school has been determined to be in a state of deteriorating financial condition or within a financial emergency, as described by Florida Statute and Administrative Codes, the following policies will be implemented.

(7.7.1.1)

Determination

Consistent with Florida Statute 218.503(1) and Administrative Code 6A-1.0081 the school's sponsor or auditor may determine that the school is in a deteriorating financial condition based on the criteria outlined in Administrative Code 6A-1.0081. Florida Statute 1002.345(2) provides the Commissioner of Education the ability to declare the school in a financial emergency.

(7.7.1.2)

Developing Corrective Action Plan

If a corrective action plan is required, the Governing Board's treasurer and the Principal/Administrator shall meet with the school's accountant within fourteen (14) days of the notice to clearly define the conditions which have caused the deteriorating financial condition or confirm a deteriorating financial condition actually exists, and to recommend actions to be taken to resolve these conditions. These recommendations will become the draft corrective action plan to be presented to the Governing Board and must include:

- Clearly defined cause for the condition;
- Description of actions to be taken to correct the condition, including specific deadlines;
- A list of procedures for monitoring the implementation of the actions to be taken;
- A schedule for providing reports to the sponsor; and
- Any other information or plans as deemed necessary to address the condition.

Within fourteen (14) days of the development of the draft plan the Governing Board shall hold a meeting to discuss, finalize and approve the plan.

(7.7.1.3)

Submission of Plan

Once approved, the corrective action plan shall be submitted to the sponsor within two (2) days. In the event that the Commissioner has declared a state of financial emergency, the plan shall also be submitted to the Commissioner.

(7.7.1.4)

Monitoring the Corrective Action Plan

Until the financial condition which caused the concern has been resolved and the finances show a healthy, fiscal trajectory, the Governing Board shall meet at least monthly to review financial reports, monitor the progress of the plan, and provide any necessary reports to the Sponsor and/or Commissioner.

Copies of the Corrective Action Plan, and any monitoring reports and data shall be retained by the school for inclusion in the school's annual report and be made available for public inspection if requested.

(7.8) General Financial Matters

(7.8.1) Property Tax Assessments

All non-exempt property tax assessments will be reviewed for accuracy and properly assessed valuations to ensure minimum property tax costs to the organization. Pursuant to Section 1002.33(18)c, Florida Statutes, any facility, or portion thereof, used to house a charter school whose charter has been approved by the sponsor and the governing board, shall be exempt from ad valorem taxes pursuant to Section 196.1983, Florida Statutes.

(7.8.1.1) Review of Assessments

All assessments are to be promptly reviewed. Any qualified properties used by the organization for its exempt purpose should apply for exemption annually. Many jurisdictions only allow a challenge to an assessment within 30 days after the annual notice as assessed value is sent. It is the Policy of the Organization to begin the analysis process prior to receiving the assessment notice.

When reviewing an assessment, the first step is to find out how the property was assessed. Ask for a full explanation of how the assessed value was derived.

(7.8.1.2) Appealing of Assessments

If upon review of the assessment and all other factors, the Organization believes a downward adjustment to the property assessment is appropriate, an appeal should be prepared by the Organization's attorney. Once the case is prepared, an appeal can be sought by simply calling the local assessor's office and asking for an appointment to discuss the assessment.

(7.8.2) Release of Financial Information

The release of financial, personnel, statistical or other information that may be of a confidential nature will be controlled and every request will be referred to the Principal/Administrator or treasurer and in accordance with the public records laws under Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.

(7.8.3) Expense Reimbursement Policy

This policy provides a uniform system of reimbursement for approved expenditures made on behalf of the organization by individuals. The

failure to follow the policies laid out within this policy may result in the denial of a reimbursement request.

(7.8.3.1) Approval and Responsibilities

The individual wishing to receive reimbursement must receive permission before the expenses are made on behalf of the school operation. All approval requirements described elsewhere within the organization's policies apply to prior approval for reimbursements.

Employees should obtain a tax-exempt certificate from the administration to provide to the vendors to ensure sales tax is not charged.

It is the responsibility of each employee to complete an expense report for timely submission. The expense report with valid attached receipts must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant within five days of incurring the expense in the prescribed format. Expense reports turned in after 60 days will not be accepted or reimbursed. The report must be signed and all receipts which match the totals listed on the expense report must be provided. All receipts should clearly list the date of purchase and the business name and location.

Reimbursement shall be effective within fifteen (15) business days after an approved request.

(7.8.3.2) Rules Relating to Specific Reimbursement

(7.8.3.2.1) Lodging

Judgment should be used in selecting appropriate accommodations. The school will only reimburse rates up to the rates established by the Organization, which shall not exceed those defined by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) current Per Diem Rates for the location to which is being traveled to. The approved rates are accessible from the GSA website.

Suite accommodation is not permitted; the organization pays only for single rooms. An upgrade to a security room is a personal expense unless the hotel is in a place or a city that is designated to be a risk to all travelers.

If late arrival is guaranteed and the reservation must be canceled, the cancellation must be made within the time allowed. The organization will not pay for no-shows. All charges shown on the expense report form should be itemized to show hotel charges, meals, telephone charges, etc. In-room movies and use of mini-bars are considered personal expenses and therefore not reimbursable.

(7.8.3.2.2) Vehicle Transportation

Every effort should be made to use the lowest priced transportation available. Reimbursement will be made for the following modes of transportation:

- Commercial airline travel will only be reimbursed for coach class unless approved by the organization.
- Rental cars - Additional insurance may not be purchased. Personal auto used for business will be reimbursed at the rate established by the Organization, which shall not exceed the prevailing IRS mileage allowance. The mileage reimbursement rate covers all vehicle expenses including gas, insurance, and depreciation.
- Cost of taxi or bus to hotels or airports from place of business or residence.

(7.8.3.2.3) Meals

For overnight travel, employees shall be allowed reimbursement for subsistence. Subsistence allowances for meals shall be paid in accordance with the rates defined by the AMIkids Meal Policy. The approved rates as of 06/15/22 are:

Breakfast \$6.00

Lunch \$11.00

Dinner \$19.00

Meal rates are subject to change.

(7.8.3.2.4) Training, Conferences and Seminars

Registration fees or similar expenses for approved training courses, conferences, seminars, and conventions are reimbursable if approved by the Principal/Administrator in accordance with the Organization's policies.

(7.8.3.2.5) Donations or Contributions

Donations or contributions are not reimbursable expense items.

(8) Facilities

(8.1) Facilities Rental

The organization may rent its facilities not in use for educational purposes to other organizations from time to time so long as such rental does not interfere with any School function or purpose and is permitted under any lease agreement or charter agreement with the authorizing sponsor. The following policies are in place regarding such rentals:

- The Principal/Administrator shall create administrative policies, forms, and price schedules to ensure equitable use of the facilities.
- The Principal/Administrator may refuse the use of school facilities for any reason.
- A member of the organization's staff is required to be present during the entire rental of the facility, payment of such staff shall be incorporated into the pricing schedules.
- The Principal/Administrator shall be allowed the option of charging a security deposit if deemed appropriate.
- Charter School Sponsored Programs and Parent Teacher Organization Activities:
 - Parent Teacher Organizations and school related activities shall be granted free use of the facilities for school-related activities. Such activities may include: performances, fund raising events, etc.
 - Activities must be approved by the Principal/Administrator prior to notice of the event being distributed.
 - The Principal/Administrator reserves the right to charge a cleaning fee if the facility is not left in the state it was found.
- Charitable and Non-Profit Use
 - The rental of the facilities for charitable purposes by organizations which have been identified by the IRS as being a not-for-profit agency shall be offered rates representing only the cost for additional facility operation.
- The Principal/Administrator shall ensure that party renting space has completed a Building Use Agreement and pays appropriate fees.
- Disputes between the Principal/Administrator and the party requesting or renting the facility may be appealed to the Governing Board.
- The party renting space shall be responsible for all damage or loss of school property.
- Parties renting space shall provide a certificate of insurance for liability and property damage before the event and name the school as an additional insured. Such a certificate shall be for at least one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per occurrence. The

Principal/Administrator shall have the ability to waive this requirement in rare, necessary circumstances.

- The party renting the facilities is subject to adherence to applicable standards of behavior and law.
- The school's attorney shall review all lease agreements to ensure compliance with state law, the lease agreement with the school's landlord (if applicable), the charter agreement, and any other applicable rule or regulation.

(8.2) Animals in School

(8.2.1) Special Events

Special events involving animals must be approved by the Principal/Administrator prior to the event. If such an event is approved, a list of all animals to be present must be sent home to parents so as to ensure that no students will have allergies to the animals. If a student has allergies to an animal, the teacher is responsible for finding another environment for that student and providing opportunities to gain from the learning experience as other students who do not have allergies.

(8.2.2) Classroom Pets

Teachers will be allowed to have classroom pets, if such pets pertain to the curriculum the teacher is offering. The teacher will be responsible for the care, clean up and wellbeing of classroom pets. Prior to bringing the pet into the classroom, the Principal/Administrator must approve of the proposed animal, then signed consent forms must be obtained from the parent/guardian of each student who would access the classroom. These forms must be submitted to the Principal/Administrator prior to bringing the animal into the school. The Principal/Administrator has the right to ask that the animal be removed at any time.

(8.3) Classroom Decor

(8.3.1) Custom Paintings/Murals

Prior to any staff member permanently affixing any design or color to a classroom wall (i.e., painting, permanent markers, etc.), a plan for the design must be submitted to the Principal/Administrator for approval. The Staff members should also be prepared to paint over any designs should the Principal/Administrator deem they are a distraction or no longer appropriate for the classroom.

(8.3.2) Affixing Items to Walls

Methods for affixing any items to common school areas, such as hallway walls, etc., shall be prior approved by the Principal/Administrator. Methods of affixing typically approved would be sticky materials or tape which can be removed without leaving any holes or defacing walls by

paint removal, etc. Methods of affixing requiring approval include, but are not limited to, staples, nails, tacks, or any objects requiring repairing, patching, or rebuilding surface areas to restore ready for painting.

(8.4) Hazardous Materials

The Principal shall ensure that all chemicals and materials used in the care and maintenance of the school's building are stored and recorded in an appropriate manner. The Principal/Administrator will ensure that appropriate documentation will be kept of the purchase, use, storage, and disposal of substances designated as hazardous by local, state, and federal authorities.

(8.5) Key Distribution and Control

Keys will be issued to employees at the beginning of the school year and will be collected at the end of the school year. Employees are responsible for their keys, and if an employee loses a key, they may be responsible for the cost of rekeying the locks on the building as well as the cost of additional keys. When utilizing keys to enter the building during non-business hours, the employee is responsible for ensuring the building is properly secured.

(9) Transportation

(9.1) Student Transportation Services

AMIkids Maritime Academy will work with the parents and the sponsor to ensure that transportation is not a barrier to equal access for all students residing within the catchment area determined by the charter application. While AMIkids Maritime Academy will not provide transportation to or from our campus, the school will work with parents to implement strategies to ensure students have transportation to and from school. Such strategies may include, but are not limited to, assisting parents in coordinating carpooling or in determining means of available public transportation. For students with disabilities whose IEP indicates a need for transportation, the school will work to coordinate such transportation. AMIkids Maritime Academy will also comply with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act related to students experiencing homelessness.

(9.2) Use of Private Vehicles

(9.2.1) Private Vehicle Approval

Any private vehicle used to transport students under this policy shall be currently registered in the State of Florida except where otherwise allowed by law, be insured for personal injury protection and property damage liability in at least the minimum amounts required by law and be in good working order. An employee, parent, or other adult wishing to transport students in a private vehicle will request approval by submitting

his/her driver's license, vehicle registration, and insurance ID card along with any necessary documentation to the Principal/Administrator in a reasonable amount of time before the planned travel. The Principal/Administrator will determine whether approval of the request to transport students in a private vehicle is appropriate.

(9.2.2) *Restrictions While Using Private Vehicles*

Student transportation in private vehicles may only be authorized for trips within the State of Florida. When transportation is authorized in a private vehicle, students are required to use the occupant crash protection system provided by the vehicle manufacturer. A student who is transported to an activity in a private vehicle approved under this policy shall return from the activity in the same vehicle unless the student is released to his/her parent.

(9.2.3) *Insurance Requirements*

Employees of the organization will be covered by the organization's liability insurance when they are transporting students as part of their assigned or related duties. Benefits due from private vehicle insurance will be primary, except for workers' compensation, in accordance with State law. However, parents or other adults are not covered by the organization's liability program when they are transporting students and, therefore, must have adequate insurance during the time that the vehicle is being used to transport students.

(9.2.4) *Emergency Situations*

Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, in an emergency situation which constitutes an imminent threat to student health or safety, school personnel may take whatever action is necessary under the circumstances to protect students.

(9.3) *General*

(9.3.1) *Prohibition of The Use of Passenger Vans*

The Organization prohibits the use of passenger vans or any passenger vehicle that does not meet the Florida School Bus Specifications.

(9.3.2) *Behavioral Policies Apply*

All behavioral policies within this manual also are applicable to students while on school provided transportation. Transportation rules and regulations will be distributed annually to parents/guardians. Students will receive instruction for the safe loading, riding, unloading and emergency evacuation procedures.

(10) *Food Service Program*

(10.1) *Wellness Policy*

The Organization recognizes that good nutrition and regular physical activities affect the health and well-being of all students. Furthermore, research suggests that there is a positive correlation between a student's health and well-being and his/her ability to learn. Moreover, schools can play an important role in the developmental process by which students establish their health and nutrition habits by providing nutritious meals through the schools' meal programs, supporting the development of good eating habits, and promoting increased physical activities both in and out of school.

The Organization is committed to creating school environments that promote and protect the overall well-being of all students and staff. The guidelines listed below encourage a comprehensive wellness approach that is sensitive to both individual and community needs.

(10.1.1)

Local School Wellness Policy Leadership

The Organization shall assemble a representative wellness committee that will meet annually to monitor and set goals for the development and implementation of its local school wellness policy. As required by K-20 Education Code 1003.453 the policy shall be reviewed annually and updated according to United States Department of Agriculture Wellness Policy Compliance Checklist. A copy of the updated policy shall be made available for public access.

- The Wellness Policy Coordinator, as defined herein, shall ensure compliance with the local school wellness policy, and report any findings or necessary changes to the sponsoring school district's coordinator.
- Parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the school board, school administrators and the general public shall be permitted to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review and update of the local school wellness policy.

(10.1.1.1) Wellness Coordinator

The Principal/Administrator shall appoint a staff member to serve as the School's Wellness Coordinator. This person will be responsible for:

- Establishing goals and overseeing school health and safety policies and programs. This includes development, implementation, and periodic review, and provide an update to the school's administration
- Establishing a relationship with stakeholders who will help to maintain the wellness plan at each site. These stakeholders include but are not limited to local dietitians, business representatives, health care professionals or community or civil leaders.

(10.1.1.2) Healthy School Team

The organization will establish an ongoing Healthy School Team that will meet bi-annually to ensure compliance and to facilitate the implementation of the wellness policy. This team will incorporate the expertise of a wide cross section of stake holders including but not limited to parents, students, school food service program representatives, school administrators, school health professionals, physical education teachers and the public.

- The Principal/Administrator and School staff shall have the responsibility to ensure the school complies with federal and state regulations as they relate to the wellness policy.
- The Plan Committee Chair will be responsible for establishing the Healthy School Team that will ensure compliance with the policy.
- The Healthy School Team is responsible for:
 - Ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations for competitive food and beverage items sold on the school campus (7 CFR 210.11 and FAC 5P-1.003);
 - And reporting its school's compliance of the regulations to the School Administration who is responsible for ensuring overall compliance with the school's wellness policy.

The Organization will review and consider evidence-based strategies and techniques in establishing goals for nutrition promotion and education, physical activity and other school-based activities that promote student wellness to include, at a minimum, a review of Smarter Lunchroom tools and techniques.

(10.1.2) Nutrition Promotion

Nutrition promotion can positively influence lifelong eating behaviors by creating food environments that encourage healthy choices and encourage participation in the school meal programs.

The school environment, including the cafeteria and classrooms, shall provide clear and consistent messages that promote and reinforce healthy eating.

(10.1.3) Nutrition Education

Academic performance and quality of life issues are affected by the choice and availability of nutritious foods in our schools. Healthy foods support student physical growth, brain development, resistance to disease, emotional stability, and ability to learn.

The nutrition benchmarks under the Florida Standards for Physical Education shall be integrated within the comprehensive health education

curriculum in each grade level, or integrated into other core subjects, such as math, science, language arts and social sciences.

(10.1.4)

Physical Activity

The Organization shall ensure that physical activity is an essential element of each school's instructional program. The program shall provide the opportunity for all students to develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to participate in a lifetime of physical activity.

Students will have the opportunity to be involved in physical activity through physical education programs, before and after school activities or other activity programs. Students will be encouraged to participate in community-offered fitness and athletic programs.

- In grades 9-12, students shall receive a minimum of one credit of physical education in senior high school as required. One semester shall be personal fitness while the second semester may be any physical education course offered by the school with the approved state course codes.

(10.1.5)

Other School-Based Activities

The school will integrate wellness activities across the entire School setting. These initiatives will include nutrition, physical activity, and other wellness components so that all efforts work towards the same set of goals and objectives used to promote student well-being, optimal development, and strong educational outcomes.

(10.1.5.1)

General Guidelines

- The goals outlined by the wellness policy will be considered in planning all school-based activities which include but are not limited to school events, field trips, dances, and assemblies.
- Afterschool programs will encourage healthy snacking and physical activity.
- The organization shall be in compliance with drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free policies.

(10.1.5.2)

Eating Environment

- Students will be provided with an adequate amount of time to consume their meal with a minimum of 20 minutes after receiving their food from the line.
- Each school will provide nutritious, and fresh, food provided by the Fresh Food from Florida food distribution program.
- Convenient access to facilities for hand washing and oral hygiene will be available during meal periods.
- Clean running water shall be available to all students from a water fountain in the cafeteria. Water cups are available on demand for refilling.

(10.1.5.3) Health Services

A coordinated program of accessible health services shall be provided to students and staff and shall include, but not be limited to, violence prevention, school safety, communicable disease prevention, health screening, including body mass index, community health referrals, immunizations, parenting skills and first aid/CPR training.

(10.1.5.4) Behavior Management

- The Organization is committed to prohibiting the use of food as a reward, unless incorporated into an activity that promotes positive nutrition messages (such as a guest chef or field trip to a farm).
- Teachers and other school personnel will not deny or require physical activity as a means of punishment.

(10.1.6) Guidelines for All Foods and Beverages Available During the School Day

The Organization shall operate and provide food service in accordance with USDA's National School Lunch Program (NSLP) standards and applicable laws and regulations of the state of Florida. The guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by USDA. Any third-party food service provider selected by the school shall abide by the guidelines established under the NLSP. Any contract for third-party food service providers shall require this compliance and provide for indemnification to the school and/or Organization for the third-party food service provider's failure to adhere to this requirement and guideline.

(10.1.6.1) General Guidelines

- All reimbursable meals will meet nutrition standards mandated by USDA, as well as any additional state nutrition standards that go beyond USDA requirements.
- School meals will include a variety of nutrient-dense foods, including whole grains and fiber-rich fruits and vegetables, while accommodating special dietary needs and ethnic and cultural food preferences.
- To the maximum extent possible, the school will participate in available federal school meal programs, including the SBP (School Breakfast Program), NSLP (National School Lunch Program), and SFSP (Summer Food Service Program).
- Unless being sold by the organization's food service program, it is impermissible for any competitive food item sold to students during the school day to consist of ready-to-eat combination foods of meat or meat alternate and grain products, as defined in 7 CFR 210.10 and 210.11. (FAC 5P-

1.003). The most current regulations can be found on the USDA website at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/nutrition-standards-school-meals>

(10.1.6.2) Nutrient standards for competitive foods:

Beverages	Elementary	Middle	High
Plain water	unlimited	unlimited	unlimited
Unflavored low-fat milk	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
Unflavored or flavored fat-free milk	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
100% fruit or vegetable juice	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
100% fruit or vegetable juice diluted with water but no added sweeteners	8 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.	12 fl. oz.
Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain 5 calories or less per 8 fl. oz., or 10 calories or less per 20 fl. oz.	Not allowed	Not allowed	20 fl. oz.
Other flavored and/or carbonated beverages that are labeled to contain 40 calories or less per 8 fl. oz. or 60 calories or less per 12 fl. oz.)	Not allowed	Not allowed	12 fl. oz.

Portion sizes listed are the maximum that can be offered above the beverages chart.

Food and beverages for high school students may contain caffeine.

(10.1.6.3) Standards for food and beverages available during the School day that are not sold to students:

Class parties or celebrations shall be held after the lunch period and only foods that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards can be served.

Schools will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month.

School Type	Maximum Number of School Days to Conduct Exempted Fundraisers
Senior High Schools	15 days
Combination Schools	10 days

The school's Healthy School Team will maintain a school calendar identifying the dates when exempted competitive food fundraisers will occur. (FAC 5P-1.003)

All foods and beverages sold on the school campus to students outside of reimbursable school meals are considered "competitive foods," and must comply with the nutrition standards for competitive food as defined and required in 7 CFR 210.11; and

To be allowable, all competitive food items sold to students must meet general nutrition requirements and nutrient standards (see Nutrient Standards for Competitive Foods table).

The organization's nutrition department's replacement and purchasing decisions will reflect the marketing guidelines mentioned above.

(10.1.7)

Policy for Food and Beverage Marketing

School-based marketing will be consistent with policies for nutrition education and health promotion. As such, the following guidelines apply:

Schools will only be allowed to market and advertise those foods and beverages that meet or exceed USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.

Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors are encouraged. Examples may include: vending machine covers promoting water, pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines, sales of fruit for fundraisers and coupons for discounted gym memberships.

(10.1.8)

Evaluation and Measurement of the Implementation of the Wellness Policy

The Organization's wellness committee will update and make modifications to the wellness policy based on the results of the annual review and/or as local priorities change, community needs change, wellness goals are met, new health information and technology emerges and new federal or state guidance or standards are issued. The wellness policy will be assessed as indicated at least every three years following the annual assessment.

(10.1.8.1)

Annual Progress Assessments

The Organization shall conduct an assessment of the school's wellness policy to measure wellness policy compliance at least once per year. This assessment will measure the implementation of the local school wellness policy, and include:

- The extent to which the school is in compliance with the local school wellness policy;
- The extent to which the local school wellness policy compares to model local school wellness policies; and

- A description of the progress made in attaining the goals of the local school wellness policy.

(10.1.9) Informing the Public

The Organization will ensure the wellness policy and assessments are available to the public at all times. The school will also actively notify households on an annual basis about any updates made to the wellness policy and the availability of the assessment results, as well as provide information to the community about the school nutrition environment.

- The school will ensure the most updated version of the wellness policy and assessments are always available on the school website for the public to view.
- The school will present wellness policy updates, as applicable, during meetings with the Parent Teacher Organization, Governing Board, school administration, health and wellness committee and other interested groups or stakeholders.
- Wellness updates will be provided to students, parents, and staff, as applicable, in the form of handouts, the organization's website, to ensure that the community is informed, and that public input is encouraged.

(10.1.10) Community Involvement

The Organization is committed to being responsive to community input, which begins with awareness of the wellness policy. The school will actively communicate ways in which parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, teachers of physical education, school health professionals, the local school board, school administrators and the general public can participate in the development, implementation, and annual review of the local school wellness policy through a variety of means, including:

- The Organization will consider student needs in planning for a healthy nutritional environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of surveys and attention will be given to their comments.
- The school will use electronic mechanisms, such as email or displaying notices on the school's website, as well as non-electronic mechanisms, such as newsletters, presentations to parents or sending information home to parents, to ensure that all families are actively notified of any updates to the wellness policy, as well as how to get involved and support the policy.

(10.1.11) Record Keeping

Records to document compliance with the requirements of the local school wellness policy will include, but are not limited to the following:

- The written local school wellness policy;

- Documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement requirements, including requirements to make the local school wellness policy and assessments available to the public as consistent with the section on informing and updating the public; and
- Documentation of the annual assessment of the local school wellness policy.

(10.2) Food Service Management

The Principal/Administrator or designee will develop and implement procedures for operating a food services program. In addition, the Principal/Administrator or designee will monitor the quality and efficiency of the school's food service program.

The school's food service program will comply with all state and federal regulations for food quality and financial reimbursement.

The organization may elect to contract with a food service management company to manage the school's food service program.

The duration of contracts with food service management companies will be limited to one (1) year with no more than four (4) annual renewals.

(10.3) Uniform Policy for Free and Reduced-Price Meals

The Organization will participate in the National School Lunch Program. Eligible students will be identified for participation in the free and reduced-price lunch program based upon federal and state guidelines.

Information concerning the eligibility standards will be distributed annually within the school. The identification of student participants in the program will be confidential with such information disclosed to staff members on a strict as-needed basis.

(10.4) Food Safety

The purpose of Organization's food safety program is to ensure the delivery of safe foods to children in the school meals program by controlling hazards that may occur or be introduced into foods anywhere along the flow of food from receiving to service.

Serving safe food is a critical responsibility for school food service and is a key aspect of a healthy school environment. Keeping foods safe is a vital part of healthy eating. When properly implemented, the school's food safety program will help ensure the safety of school meals served to School students.

In order to carry out these goals and comply with federal law, the School's Food Safety Program will include written plans for each school

and will be consistent with Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles.

The School's Food Safety Program will focus on three (3) key points.

- Food preparation areas will be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner. This includes ensuring that workers hands, utensils, and food contact areas are clean and sanitary so as to avoid cross contamination.
- Temperature controls will be strictly adhered to. Food will be cooked and served at the proper temperature.
- Standard Operation Procedures should be developed to ensure sanitation; to ensure that food is maintained at the proper temperatures, and to facilitate other safety aspects of the food service program.

(10.5) Unpaid Meal Policy

This policy details how students will be charged for meals, as well as limits on meal charges when a student's account has insufficient funds.

The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are integral in ensuring that students have access to nutritious meals to support their academic success. It is also imperative to protect the financial stability of the school nutrition program.

- Students who qualify for free meals will not be denied a reimbursable meal even if they have accrued a negative balance on their cafeteria account.
- Students who have money to pay for a reduced-price or full price meal at the time of service are provided with a meal. If the student intended to use the money for that day's meal, the school will not use the money to repay a negative balance or other unpaid meal charge debt.
- Students are allowed to charge 3 days of meals, both breakfast and lunch.
- Students who charge a meal will receive a reimbursable meal breakfast or lunch.

(10.5.1) Communicating the Policy

- The written meal charge policy will be available on the school's website, included in the student information packet distributed on the first day of school and to all transfer students during the school year, and attached to the Meal Benefits Application.
- The written meal charge policy will be communicated to all cafeteria staff prior to the first day of school.

- Child Nutrition Program staff will receive training on meal charge policy and a record of training will be maintained as part of the professional development portfolio.
- Documentation of the communication and training plan will be maintained for the Federal Program Administrative Review.

(10.5.2)

Notifying the Household of Low or Negative Balance In Student Cafeteria Account

- The student's household will be notified when a student's cafeteria account falls below \$15.00 OR the equivalent of three day's meals, breakfast, and lunch.
- The school will notify households of low or negative balances. Letters via US mail, email, or a notification letter will be sent home by the student in a white envelope and addressed to the parent or legal guardian.
- Notifications to households will include the amount of unpaid meal charges, expected payment dates, the consequences of non-payment and where to go for questions or assistance.
- The consequences of non-payment will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- The persons responsible for managing unpaid meal charges are:
 - The Food Service Worker
 - The Program Principal/ Administrative Assistant

Bad debt is defined as delinquent debt that is deemed uncollectible at the end of the school year. Students with a bad debt account will not be carried over to the next school year.

At the end of the school year, the Administrative Assistant will evaluate all delinquent debt for conversion to bad debt. Bad debt will be restored to the school from the general fund prior to the end of the same fiscal year.

Efforts to collect delinquent and/or bad debt will be handled by the following

- Send First and Second Letters
- Phone calls
- Consequence - students may be removed from extracurricular activities such including but not limited to field trips

(10.5.3)

Assistance to Households

Households with questions or needing assistance may contact the school office and all requests will be treated with confidentiality within the confines of Florida law.

Employee Acknowledgement

As an employee of AMIkids Maritime Academy, I acknowledge that I have received my copy of the Policy Manual which includes the organization's employee policies. The policy manual outlines the instructions of the Governing Board with regards to the operation of the organization.

The employee policies describe important information about the organization, and I understand that I should consult the Principal/Administrator regarding any questions not answered in the manual. I have entered into my employment relationship with the organization voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. Accordingly, either I or the organization can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time, so long as there is no violation of applicable federal or state law.

This manual and the policies and procedures contained herein supersede any and all prior practices, oral or written representations, or statements regarding the terms and conditions of your employment with the organization. By distributing this manual, the Organization expressly revokes any and all previous policies and procedures which are inconsistent with those contained herein.

I understand that, except for employment at-will status, any and all policies and practices may be changed at any time by the Governing Board, and the Organization reserves the right to change my hours, wages and working conditions at any time. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Governing Board has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

I understand and agree that nothing in the manual creates, or is intended to create, a promise or representation of continued employment and that employment at the Organization is employment at-will, which may be terminated at the will of either the Organization or myself. Furthermore, I acknowledge that this manual is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I understand and agree that employment and compensation may be terminated with or without cause and with or without notice at any time by the Organization or myself.

In addition, I specially acknowledge the following policies contained within the policy manual (Please initial each item):

_____ I understand that employment at the Organization is at-will.

_____ I acknowledge that I have received and understand the Conflict-of-Interest Policy (2.8.6).

_____ I acknowledge that I have received and understand the Organization's Employment Non-Discrimination and Non-Harassment (2.2)

_____ I acknowledge that I have received and understand the Organization's Social Media Policy (5.8.4)

Employee Name (Printed)	Employee Signature	Date Signed