



PERSONNEL HANDBOOK



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NORTHSIDE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL'S ("NCHS" OR THE "SCHOOL") VISION, MISSION & IDEA STATEMENTS

Vision

To be a college preparatory organization for all students where postsecondary education attainment is the expectation and reality.

Mission

To provide an enriching and innovative learning environment where students achieve postsecondary readiness.

NCHS's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Anti-Racism (IDEA) Statement

Northside Charter High School is committed to building diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environments. Northside Charter High school is committed to dismantling racist barriers within school structures and systems. We embrace and protect our community members' multiple identities, as they are essential assets through which we structure policies and manage resources that build access and opportunity for our students, as well as calibrate our strategic approach to achieve our mission.

NCHS's Core Values

Commitment, Accountability, Respect, and Integrity are NCHS's core values. These values represent the fundamental beliefs of the school and are principles by which we govern ourselves. These values help guide how the school makes decisions, views changes in our programming, and sets expectations of members within our community. We expect all members of our community to understand and abide by our values. This includes staff, students, caregivers, consultants/vendors, higher education partners, or any individual or organization that enters our community.

INTRODUCTION & WELCOME

You are now part of the NCHS Family, welcome! We want your time here to be rewarding and fulfilling. If there are any questions, comments, or concerns, just let us know.

Welcome to Northside Charter High School

The information in this Personnel Handbook ("Handbook") is important to all staff at NCHS ("the School"). This Handbook is a tool to help promote a cooperative and healthy working environment. It sets forth policies regarding hours, wages and conditions of employment. However, possession of this Handbook does not make employees eligible for the various benefits described herein. Employees must satisfy certain eligibility requirements before obtaining coverage. In some instances, state or federal laws may impose certain requirements in addition to those stated as School or service provider policy. In any situation where insurance or other benefit plans are concerned, the official plan document(s) and insurance contract(s) prevail over statements contained in this Handbook.

This document is informational only: it is not an attempt to provide a complete reference to applicable law, employee rights, or regulations of the State Education Department, or other relevant authorities. Any specific questions should be directed to the appropriate administrative staff.

Charter schools are bound by the same New York State health and safety, civil rights, and student assessment requirements as other public schools. The School is subject to federal laws, laws of the State of New York, including the New York State Charter Schools Act, the requirements of the compulsory education law, and student performance standards adopted by the Board of Regents.

In 1998, New York State adopted the Charter Schools Act, which established charter schools within the State of New York with the following criteria in mind: “Charter schools put children before bureaucracy and innovation ahead of regulation. They strengthen public education, by creating alternatives to the existing system, giving caregivers real choices and creating a competitive atmosphere so all children can improve.”

In New York State (as in other states), charter schools are often viewed as having four distinguishing characteristics that provide guidance regarding the objectives of this School:

- I. They are public schools, funded with public dollars, and fully accountable to public oversight. Schools that fail to meet their stated goals for academic achievement and fiscal responsibility can be closed.
- II. They are created by caregivers, educators, or civic or community groups who meet qualifications and agree to reach specified pupil achievement goals.
- III. They operate free from bureaucracy that frequently stifles innovation and cripples learning. They invite innovation while demanding results.
- IV. They foster competition, which will improve education for all children.

The School reserves the right to modify, rescind, delete, or supplement provisions of this Handbook, or add provisions to this Handbook without notice. Additionally, policies may be created by the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of the School. Employees are bound by the policies contained herein, as well as by any and all other policies created by the School and/or Board of Trustees. Every effort will be made to keep employees informed of all relevant and significant changes to law, regulation, and policy. A member of the senior management team (“SMT”) will attempt to provide employees with notification of changes as they occur.

We hope you enjoy the challenging and rewarding experience of working at the School, and we wish you great success in your future here.

Disclaimer: This Handbook should not be construed as, and does not constitute, a contract of employment, either express or implied, or for any specific duration. Employment with the School is at-will and can be terminated at any time, with or without reason, with or without cause, and with or without notice by either the employee or the School. Any oral or written statement to the contrary by any employee or agent of the School is invalid and should not be relied upon.

EMPLOYMENT

Employee Professional Conduct

- The mission of Northside Charter High School (NCHS) requires employees to develop relationships characterized by collegiality and professionalism. Employees must maintain a high degree of mutual respect, both professionally and personally, and provide robust support to one another.
- NCHS values the following principles:
 - **Active Participation:** Teachers, staff, and the School Management Team are encouraged to actively participate in discussions about decisions that affect them.
 - **Diversity of Perspectives:** Embracing diverse perspectives leads to a deeper understanding of the organization's reality and enriches the knowledge base for decision-making.
 - **Healthy Conflict Resolution:** Employees should resolve conflicts in a healthy manner, which leads to stronger solutions for complex issues.
 - **Reflective Thinking:** Employees are encouraged to reflect on their own and others' thinking to achieve better organizational decisions.

At-Will Employment

All employees of Northside Charter High School (NCHS) are considered "at-will" employees. This means that either the School or the employee may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without reason, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

This Handbook does not constitute a contract for employment between the School and any employee.

Employees should refer to their agreement letter for all terms pertaining to their employment with NCHS.

Equal Opportunity Employer

The School is committed to equal employment opportunity.

The School does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, gender/gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, age, marital status, veteran's status, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Employment decisions will be made in a non-discriminatory manner and are based solely on qualifications and merit. This policy governs all aspects of employment at this School including hiring, assignments, training, promotion, demotion, transfer, lay-off and termination, compensation, employee benefits, discipline and other terms and conditions of employment.

Any questions or concerns about any type of discrimination must be brought to the attention of the employee's supervisor at the School. If the School is involved in the reported conduct, or the employee feels uncomfortable about making a report to the



School, the employee shall report the incident directly to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the School.

The School shall comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, and shall not knowingly discriminate against individuals on the basis of gender.

The School's Title IX Coordinator's contact information is as follows: Chief Finance and Operations Officer ("CFO"), 424 Leonard Street, 4th Fl, Brooklyn, NY 11222, CFO@northsidechs.org.

The Title IX Coordinator may be used for all discrimination complaints. In the event a complaint concerns the Title IX Coordinator, the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") of the School should be contacted at ceo@northsidechs.org

Anyone found to be engaging in any type of discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

No Harassment Policy

The School is committed to providing an environment that is free from harassment and coercion, where all employees can work together comfortably and productively.

Harassment is illegal and is prohibited at the School and at School-related functions.

The School prohibits all types of harassment, including, but not limited to: verbal harassment, based on an employee's sex, gender, race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, age, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other basis prohibited by federal, state, or local law.

This prohibition applies in relationships with all other employees, students, caregivers/guardians, visitors, and guests. Likewise, the School will not tolerate retaliation or reprisals of any type against any employee who complains of harassment or provides information in connection with any such complaint.

Sexual Harassment

As sexual harassment raises issues about human interaction that are to some extent unique, the subject of sexual harassment is treated separately here.

The School is committed to maintaining a workplace free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of workplace discrimination. All employees are required to work in a manner that prevents sexual harassment in the workplace. This Policy is one component of the School's commitment to a discrimination-free work environment. Sexual harassment is against the law and all employees have a legal right to a workplace free from sexual harassment and employees are urged to report sexual harassment by filing a complaint internally with the any member of the SMT. Employees can also file a complaint with a government agency or in court under federal, state or

local anti-discrimination laws.

1. Policy

- a. This Sexual Harassment Policy applies to all employees, applicants for employment, interns, whether paid or unpaid, contractors and persons conducting business, regardless of immigration status, with the School.
- b. In the remainder of this Sexual Harassment Policy, the term “employees” refers to this collective group.
- c. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Any employee or individual covered by this Sexual Harassment Policy who engages in sexual harassment or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- d. Retaliation Prohibition: No person covered by this Sexual Harassment Policy shall be subject to adverse action because the employee reports an incident of sexual harassment, provides information, or otherwise assists in any investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. The School will not tolerate such retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports or provides information about suspected sexual harassment. Any employee, paid or unpaid interns, or non-employees working in the workplace who believe they have been subject to such retaliation should inform any member of the SMT. All employees, paid or unpaid interns or non-employees who believe they have been a target of such retaliation may also seek relief in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.
- e. Sexual harassment is offensive, is a violation of our policies, is unlawful, and may subject the School to liability for harm to targets of sexual harassment. Harassers may also be individually subject to liability. Employees of every level who engage in sexual harassment, including supervisors who engage in sexual harassment or who allow such behavior to continue, will be penalized for such misconduct.
- f. The School will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation that ensures due process for all parties, whenever a member of the SMT receives a complaint about sexual harassment, or otherwise knows of possible sexual harassment occurring. The School will keep the investigation confidential to the extent possible. Effective corrective action will be taken whenever sexual harassment is found to have occurred. All employees, including supervisors, are required to cooperate with any internal investigation of sexual harassment.
- g. All employees are encouraged to report any harassment or behaviors that violate this policy. The School will provide all employees a complaint form for employees who report harassment and file complaints.
- h. Supervisors are required to report any complaint that they receive, or any harassment that they observe or become aware of, to any member of the SMT. This Sexual Harassment Policy applies to all employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees and all must follow and uphold this policy. This policy must be provided to all employees and should be posted prominently in all work locations to the extent practicable and be provided to employees upon hiring.

2. What is “Sexual Harassment”?

- a. Sexual Harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, self-identified or perceived sex, gender expression, gender identity and the status of being transgender.
- b. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual’s sex when:
 - i. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, even if the reporting individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;
 - ii. Such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment; or
 - iii. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting an individual’s employment.
- c. A sexually harassing hostile work environment includes, but is not limited to, words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation or physical violence which are of a sexual nature, or which are directed at an individual because of that individual’s sex. Sexual harassment also consists of any unwanted verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone which are offensive or objectionable to the recipient, which cause the recipient discomfort or humiliation, which interfere with the recipient’s job performance.
- d. Sexual harassment also occurs when a person of authority tries to trade job benefits for sexual favors. This can include hiring, promotion, continued employment or any other terms, conditions, or privileges of employment. This is also called “quid pro quo” harassment.
- e. Any employee who feels harassed should report so that any violation of this policy can be corrected promptly. Any harassing conduct, even a single incident, can be addressed under this policy.
- f. **Examples of sexual harassment:** The following describes some of the types of acts that may be unlawful sexual harassment and that are strictly prohibited at NCHS:
 - i. Physical acts of sexual nature, such as:
 - ii. Touching, pinching, patting, kissing, hugging, grabbing, brushing against another’s body or poking another’s body;
 - iii. Rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults.
 - iv. Unwanted sexual advances or propositions, such as:
 1. Requests for sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning the target’s job performance evaluation, a promotion or other job benefits or detriments;
 2. Subtle or obvious pressure for unwelcome sexual activities.
 - v. Sexually oriented gestures, noises, remarks or jokes, or comments about a person’s sexuality or sexual experience, which create a hostile environment.
 - vi. Sex stereotyping occurs when conduct or personality traits are considered inappropriate simply because they may not conform to

- other people's ideas or perceptions about how individuals of a particular sex should act or look.
- vii. Sexual discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as:
 1. Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional material, reading materials or other materials that are sexually demeaning or pornographic. This includes such sexual displays on workplace computers or cell phones and sharing such displays while in the workplace.
 - viii. Hostile actions taken against an individual because of that individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender, such as:
 1. Interfering with, destroying or damaging a person's workstation, tools or equipment, or otherwise interfering with the individual's ability to perform the job;
 2. Sabotaging an individual's work;
 3. Bullying, yelling, name-calling.
3. **Who can be a target of sexual harassment?** Sexual harassment can occur between any individuals, regardless of their sex or gender. New York Law protects employees, paid or unpaid interns, and non-employees, including independent contractors, and those employed by companies contracting to provide services in the workplace. Harassers can be a superior, a subordinate, a coworker or anyone in the workplace including an independent contractor, contract worker, vendor, client, customer or visitor.
4. **Where can sexual harassment occur?** Unlawful sexual harassment is not limited to the physical workplace itself. It can occur while employees are traveling for business or at employer sponsored events or parties. Calls, texts, emails, and social media usage by employees can constitute unlawful workplace harassment, even if they occur away from the workplace premises, on personal devices or during non-work hours.
5. **Retaliation:** Unlawful retaliation can be any action that could discourage a worker from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim. Adverse action need not be job-related or occur in the workplace to constitute unlawful retaliation (e.g., threats of physical violence outside of work hours). Such retaliation is unlawful under federal, state, and local law.
- a. The New York State Human Rights Law protects any individual who has engaged in "protected activity." Protected activity occurs when a person has:
 - i. made a complaint of sexual harassment, either internally or with any anti-discrimination agency;
 - ii. testified or assisted in a proceeding involving sexual harassment under the Human Rights Law or other anti-discrimination law;
 - iii. opposed sexual harassment by making a verbal or informal complaint to supervisors, or by simply informing a supervisor of harassment;
 - iv. reported that another employee has been sexually harassed; or
 - v. encouraged a fellow employee to report harassment.
 - b. Even if the alleged harassment does not turn out to rise to the level of a violation of law, the individual is protected from retaliation if the person had

a good faith belief that the practices were unlawful. However, the retaliation provision is not intended to protect persons making intentionally false charges of harassment.

Preventing sexual harassment is everyone's responsibility. The School cannot prevent or remedy sexual harassment unless it is reported. Any employee, paid or unpaid intern, or non-employee who has been subjected to behavior that may constitute sexual harassment is encouraged to report such behavior to a supervisor, the CEO, and/or the CFOO.

6. Reporting Responsibilities:

- Members of management and supervisors who are aware of any sexual harassment must inform any member of the SMT immediately.
- Anyone who knowingly allows or tolerates sexual harassment or retaliation and does not report it will be in direct violation of this policy.

How to Report:

- Reports of sexual harassment may be made verbally or in writing. A complaint form will be provided, and all employees are encouraged to use this form.
- Employees reporting sexual harassment on behalf of other employees should use the complaint form and indicate that the report is on another employee's behalf.
- Employees, paid or unpaid interns, or non-employees who believe they have been a target of sexual harassment may also seek assistance in other available forums, as explained below in the section on Legal Protections.

7. Legal Protections: Employees who believe they have been a target of sexual harassment may seek assistance from various legal forums. Detailed information on these legal protections and the process for seeking assistance will be provided in the Legal Protections section of this handbook.

8. Supervisory Responsibilities

- a. All supervisors who receive a complaint or information about suspected sexual harassment, observe what may be sexually harassing behavior or for any reason suspect that sexual harassment is occurring, are required to report such suspected sexual harassment to a member of SMT.
- b. In addition to being subject to discipline if they engaged in sexually harassing conduct themselves, supervisors and managers will be subject to discipline for failing to report suspected sexual harassment or otherwise knowingly allowing sexual harassment to continue.
- c. Supervisors will also be subject to discipline for engaging in any retaliation, up to and including termination.

9. Complaint and Investigation of Sexual Harassment

- a. *All* complaints or information about sexual harassment will be investigated, whether that information was reported in verbal or written form. Investigations will be conducted in a timely manner and will be confidential

- to the extent that it does not interfere with the integrity of the investigation.
- b. An investigation of any complaint, information or knowledge of suspected sexual harassment will be prompt and thorough, commenced immediately and completed as soon as possible. The investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. All persons involved, including complainants, witnesses and alleged harassers will be accorded due process, as outlined below, to protect their rights to a fair and impartial investigation.
 - c. Any employee may be required to cooperate as needed in an investigation of suspected sexual harassment. The School will not tolerate retaliation against employees who file complaints, support another's complaint or participate in an investigation regarding a violation of this policy.
 - d. While the process may vary from case to case, investigations should be done in accordance with the following steps:
 - e. Upon receipt of a complaint, a member of the SMT will conduct an immediate review of the allegations, and take any interim actions (e.g., instructing the respondent to refrain from communications with the complainant), as appropriate. If the complaint is verbal, the complainant will be encouraged to complete the "Complaint Form" in writing. If they refuse, a member of the SMT is to prepare a Complaint Form based on the verbal reporting.
 - f. If documents, emails or phone records are relevant to the investigation, a member of the SMT will take steps to obtain and preserve them.
 - g. Request and review all relevant documents, including all electronic communications.
 - h. Interview all parties involved, including any relevant witnesses.
 - i. Create a written documentation of the investigation (such as a letter, memo or email), which contains the following:
 - i. A list of all documents reviewed, along with a detailed summary of relevant documents;
 - ii. A list of names of those interviewed, along with a detailed summary of their statements;
 - iii. A timeline of events;
 - iv. A summary of prior relevant incidents, report or unreported; and
 - v. The basis of the decision and final resolution of the complaint, together with any corrective actions(s).
 - j. Keep the written documentation and associated documents in a secure and confidential location.
 - k. Promptly notify the individual who reported and the individual(s) about whom the complaint was made of the final determination and implement any corrective actions identified in the written document.
 - l. Inform the individual who reported the right to file a complaint or charge externally as outlined in the next section.

10. Legal Protections and External Remedies

- a. Sexual harassment is not only prohibited by the School but is also prohibited by state, federal and local law.
- b. Aside from the internal process at the School, employees may also choose to pursue legal remedies with the following governmental entities.

While a private attorney is not required to file a complaint with a governmental agency, employees may seek the legal advice of an attorney.

- c. In addition to those outlined below, employees' industries may have additional legal protections.

New York City Human Rights Law (“NYC HRL”)

The New York City Human Rights Law, codified as N.Y.C. Admin. Code § 8-101 et seq., protects all individuals against discrimination based on gender, which includes sexual harassment in the workplace. A complaint alleging violation of the NYC HRL may be filed either with the New York City Commission on Human Rights (“CHR”) or in any court of competent jurisdiction.

Complaints with CHR may be filed within three years of the harassment. If an individual did not file at CHR, they can sue directly in state court under the NYC HRL within three years of the alleged sexual harassment. An individual may not file with CHR if they have already filed a discrimination complaint based on the same facts with any other court or agency.

Individuals do not need an attorney to file a complaint with CHR, and there is no cost to file with CHR.

CHR will investigate complaints and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that sexual harassment has occurred. If CHR finds probable cause for discrimination, individuals will receive a notice and your case will be referred to the Office of Administrative Trials and Hearings (“OATH”), for a hearing before an administrative law judge (“ALJ”). After the trial, the ALJ issues a Report and Recommendation, which may include findings of fact, decisions of law, and recommendations on damages and civil penalties. CHR’s Office of General Counsel gathers the Report and Recommendation, along with any post-trial comments or objections submitted by the parties and provides the information to the Office of the Chair for a final Decision and Order. The Office of the Chair then issues its Decision and Order, adopting or rejecting— in whole or in part – the ALJ’s Report and Recommendation. Either party may appeal to the New York Supreme Court within thirty days of service of the Decision and Order.

CHR has offices in every borough of New York City. Individuals can contact their main office at the Law Enforcement Bureau of the NYC Commission on Human Rights, 40 Rector Street, 10th Floor, New York, NY; call 311 or (212) 306-7450. Employees can report sexual harassment to CHR by calling 718-722-3131 or visit NYC.gov/HumanRights to learn how to file a complaint or report discrimination. Employees can file a complaint anonymously.

New York State Human Rights Law (“NYS HRL”)

The New York State Human Rights Law, codified as N.Y. Executive Law, art. 15 § 290 et seq., applies to all employers in New York State with regard to sexual harassment, and protects employees, paid or unpaid interns and non-employees, regardless of

immigration status. A complaint alleging violation of the NYS HRL may be filed either with the Division of Human Rights (“DHR”) or in New York State Supreme Court.

Complaints with DHR may be filed at any time within three years of the harassment. If an individual did not file at DHR, they can sue directly in state court under the NYS HRL, within three years of the alleged sexual harassment. An individual may not file with the DHR if they have already filed a NYS HRL complaint in state court.

Complaining internally to the School does not extend the time to file with DHR or in court. The three years is counted from the date of the most recent incident of harassment.

Individuals do not need an attorney to file a complaint with DHR, and there is no cost to file with DHR.

DHR will investigate the complaint and determine whether there is probable cause to believe that sexual harassment has occurred. Probable cause cases are forwarded to a public hearing before an administrative law judge. If sexual harassment is found after a hearing, DHR has the power to award relief, which varies but may include requiring your employer to take action to stop the harassment, or redress the damage caused, including paying of monetary damages, attorney’s fees and civil fines.

DHR’s main office contact information is: NYS Division of Human Rights, One Fordham Plaza, Fourth Floor, Bronx, New York 10458. Individuals may call (718) 741-8400 or visit: www.dhr.ny.gov.

Contact DHR at (888) 392-3644 or visit dhr.ny.gov/complaint for more information about filing a complaint. The website has a complaint form that can be downloaded, filled out, notarized and mailed to DHR. The website also contains contact information for DHR’s regional offices across New York State.

Civil Rights Act of 1964

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) enforces federal anti-discrimination laws, including Title VII of the 1964 federal Civil Rights Act (codified as 42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq.). An individual can file a complaint with the EEOC anytime within 300 days from the harassment. There is no cost to file a complaint with the EEOC. The EEOC will investigate the complaint and determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe that discrimination has occurred, at which point the EEOC will issue a Right to Sue letter permitting the individual to file a complaint in federal court.

The EEOC does not hold hearings or award relief but may take other action including pursuing cases in federal court on behalf of complaining parties. Federal courts may award remedies if discrimination is found to have occurred. In general, private employers must have at least 15 employees to come within the jurisdiction of the EEOC.

An employee alleging discrimination at work can file a “Charge of Discrimination.” The

EEOC has district, area, and field offices where complaints can be filed. Contact the EEOC by calling 1-800-669-4000 (TTY: 1-800-669-6820), visiting their website at www.eeoc.gov or via email at info@eeoc.gov.

If an individual filed an administrative complaint with DHR, DHR will file the complaint with the EEOC to preserve the right to proceed in federal court.

Contact the Local Police Department

If the harassment involves unwanted physical touching, coerced physical confinement or coerced sex acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the local police department.

Annual Anti-Sexual Harassment Training

Pursuant to New York State law, every employer in New York State is required to provide their employees with sexual harassment prevention training. The training must:

- Be interactive
- Include an explanation of sexual harassment consistent with guidance issued by the Department of Labor in consultation with the Division of Human Rights
- Include examples of conduct that would constitute unlawful sexual harassment
- Include information concerning the federal and state statutory provisions concerning sexual harassment and remedies available to victims of sexual harassment
- Include information concerning employees' rights of redress and all available forums for adjudicating complaints
- Include information addressing conduct by supervisors and any additional responsibilities for such supervisors

Each employee must receive training on an annual basis.

The School prohibits sexual harassment at any time of any employee, student, parent/guardian, visitor, or guest. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination in violation of federal, state and local law. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical contact and other verbal or physical conduct when submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of employment or submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions or when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

No employee shall be forced to submit to such conduct as a basis for any employment decision. The School will strive to keep its workplace free of any conduct, which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Other Harassment

Other prohibited harassment consists of verbal or physical conduct which degrades or

shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of their race, color, religion/creed, gender, national origin, age, disability, citizenship, marital status, veteran's status, or other prohibited basis, and which interferes with the individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Such harassment is prohibited in the workplace or in any work-related setting outside the workplace. The same prohibition applies in relationships to students, caregivers or guardians, visitors and guests. The School will not take or permit any retaliatory action against an individual who reports a possible violation of the anti-harassment policy or participates in the investigation of an alleged violation.

General Complaint Process

All complaints by an individual or group should follow the standard escalation procedure:

Escalation Steps:

1. **Direct Supervisor:**
 - Present your complaint to your direct supervisor.
2. **Senior Management Team (SMT):**
 - If unresolved, escalate the complaint to a member of the SMT.
3. **ADP (Automatic Data Processing) (Employer of Record):**
 - If further escalation is needed, contact ADP directly for assistance.
4. **Board of Trustees:**
 - Complaints can be brought directly to the NCHS Board of Trustees.

Board of Trustees Complaint Process:

- **Submission:**
 - Complaints may be submitted at least one week prior to the regular Board meeting for it to be officially addressed.
 - Complaints submitted less than one week before the next regular Board meeting will be addressed at the subsequent Board meeting.
 - Emergency issues will be dealt with on an as-needed basis.
- **Investigation and Response:**
 - The Board will make every effort to address each matter respectfully and satisfactorily.
 - The Board may direct the SMT or another responsible party to investigate and/or act upon the complaint and submit a written report.
 - The Board will create a written response with determinations and rationales for every complaint submitted in writing.
- **Appeal Process:**
 - If a complainant believes the Board has not adequately addressed the complaint, they may appeal to the charter entity, the NYSED.
 - If the NYSED does not adequately address the complaint, the complainant may present it to the NYS Board of Regents.

Submission Methods:

- Complaints can be presented via USPS or email.
- The Board Chair will confirm receipt and outline the investigation process, timeline, and

response method.

Harassment Policy

Investigation and Response:

- The School will thoroughly investigate any harassment report and take corrective action as necessary, including disciplining individuals who violate harassment policies.
- Employees must cooperate in investigations. Failure to cooperate or providing false information may result in disciplinary action, including termination.
- The School will not retaliate against employees who report harassment in good faith.

Confidentiality:

- Confidentiality will be maintained as practical and appropriate. Records of all complaints and investigations will be kept confidential.

Employee Responsibilities:

- Refrain from discrimination or harassment.
- Report complaints to the School, treating information with sensitivity.
- Cooperate in any investigation conducted by the School or its agent.

Supervisor Responsibilities:

- Maintain a workplace free of discrimination, harassment, and intimidation.
- Report complaints to the School or Board of Trustees.
- Promptly investigate complaints and take corrective action if necessary.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of all parties involved.
- Document each incident and its resolution.

School Responsibilities:

- Educate and train employees on policies regarding discrimination, harassment, and intimidation.
- Assist supervisors in investigating complaints and provide training on proper procedures.
- Investigate complaints promptly and report findings with recommendations for corrective action.

Recruitment Policy

Selection Process:

- Applicants are selected based on experience, alignment with the School's mission, necessary credentials, and ability to perform required duties.
- Evaluations are based on skill and merit.

Verification:

- The School will verify information provided on employment applications.
- Misrepresentation, falsification, or omission of information may result in exclusion from consideration or termination of employment.

Applicant Pool Generation:

- The School uses various sources such as job postings, mailings, networking, job fairs, on-campus recruiting, online services, and other resources to generate a pool of qualified applicants.

ELIGIBILITY TO WORK IN A CHARTER SCHOOL

Charter school staff members are employees of the charter school, not the school district in which it is located. The School, as all charter schools, is required to request fingerprint clearance of

prospective employees for purposes of determining whether or not the prospective employee has a criminal history, which could prevent him/her/them from working in a public school. Instructional employees should be certified and “Highly Qualified”, in accordance with requirements applicable to other charter schools. If the status of an employee changes during their time at NCHS, a decision will be made by the CEO regarding whether or not the person can remain at NCHS.

Employment Categories

Each employee is categorized as full-time, part-time, temporary, or consultant:

- Full-time Employees – Full-time regular (exempt and non-exempt) employees work a minimum of 35 hours per week.
- Part-time Employees – Part-time (exempt and non-exempt) employees, below 30 hours or less are not eligible for benefits.
- Temporary Employees – Temporary employees are hired for short-term periods and are not eligible for benefits.
- Consultants – These independent contractors work under a consultancy agreement, have no employee status, and are not eligible for benefits.

Exempt Positions: Exempt employees are excluded from overtime eligibility under federal and state wage and hour law. Positions which meet the tests for exemption under the Fair Labor Standards Act and any other applicable law will be classified as “Exempt”. Individuals in this classification will be paid on a salary basis. As exempt employees are expected to work whatever hours are necessary for them to properly perform their job duties; they do not receive overtime pay.

Non-Exempt Positions: Certain staff positions are classified as “non-exempt”. Non-Exempt employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. Non-exempt employees will be paid straight-time for all hours worked in excess of their regularly-scheduled hours up to forty (40) hours, exclusive of sick, personal, vacation, snow, holiday and emergency closing time. Non-exempt employees will be paid time and a half for all hours worked over forty (40), exclusive of sick, personal, vacation, snow, holiday and emergency closing time. The School will notify employees if they are non-exempt, and therefore entitled to overtime pay. Please note that the School requires advance supervisor permission from any overtime.

Intellectual Property

The School shall own all rights, ideas, and information around lessons, curriculum, and any other content and materials authored, created, contributed to, made or reduced to practice, in whole or in part, by you during the period in which you are employed by or affiliated with the School. All materials, including but not limited to lesson plans, curriculum, and other related content, created by you during the period in which you are employed by or affiliated with the School or in the scope of your employment shall be deemed to be “works made for hire” within the meaning of the Copyright Act.

Termination Of Employment

Return of School Property: Immediately upon termination or resignation, employees must return all books, files, keys, laptops, records, supplies, or any other school property in their possession. Employees are not authorized to keep copies of School property, files, or other electronic data, and must delete any such property stored on personal devices upon termination or resignation.

Unauthorized Absence

An employee is deemed to be on “unauthorized leave” when the employee is absent from required

duties. This absence includes non-performance, unauthorized use of sick leave, unauthorized use of other leave benefits, non-attendance at required meetings and failure to perform supervisory functions at School-sponsored activities.

An employee who is absent for a period of at least three (3) days without notifying the School will be considered to have voluntarily resigned, with such resignation effective on the initial date of absence. The School will make the determination of unauthorized absence.

Verification of Absence

The School may require verification for longer than 3 absences in a row. If verification is requested, the employee shall provide the verification to the School within five (5) working days of the absence.

Personnel Records and Files

The following information may be included in an employee's file:

- Employment application and résumé
- Reference checks
- Transcript(s)
- Certification(s)
- Job description(s)
- Performance evaluation(s)
- Disciplinary notice(s) or document(s)
- Emergency contact form(s)
- Professional development record(s)
- Termination record(s)
- Exit interview notes

The School keeps medical records in a file separate from the personnel file. Access to the information in personnel and medical records is restricted. An employee's supervisor(s) may review the employee's files only for a legitimate reason. An employee may review their files. If an employee wishes to review their file, they must provide reasonable advance notice, and will have the right to review their personnel file or medical file in School offices and in the presence of an individual appointed to maintain the files. An employee has the right to copy information and to submit a written statement to their file.

An employee must immediately notify their supervisor, in writing, of any changes in personal data such as changes to:

- Home address
- Home telephone number and, if available, cell phone number
- Number of dependents
- Name of individual to notify in case of an emergency
- Change in marital status
- Change in citizenship, permanent resident, or alien status
- Military status

Failure to report the correct information may adversely affect the benefits to which the Employee is entitled. Providing false information may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Employees can also make a written Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request for the contents of

their personnel files, which may be redacted in accordance with FOIL.

The contact information for the School's Records Access Officer is as follows: CEO, 424 Leonard Street, Brooklyn, NY 11222, CEO@northsidechs.org

The School will not release any information about any employee to external sources other than dates of employment and job title, except where such release is required or authorized by law or otherwise authorized by the Employee. The School will provide information to any particular company or individual only upon the receipt of a written request and explicit authorization specifying the information to be provided and to whom it should be provided.

Nepotism

Any action that can be viewed as or gives the appearance of nepotism is not allowed.

Hiring an immediate family member must be approved by the CEO, including appropriate disclosure to the Board.

For the purpose of this section, immediate family is defined as spouse, siblings, caregivers,, children, in-laws, and grandchildren.

Employee Primary Goals And Responsibilities

Health and Safety:

Employees are responsible for promoting the health and safety of students under their supervision and any other students in their vicinity. Employees must always be alert to safety hazards and attentive while supervising students.

Student Development:

Employees are required to foster the development of each student's potential—social-emotional, physical, and intellectual. This includes encouraging good work habits and positive attitudes.

Communication:

Employees are to maintain open communication between caregivers, teachers, and administrators. They should conduct themselves in a manner that ensures caregivers feel confident about their child's safety, mental health, happiness, and personal development. Employees should provide support, encouragement, and assistance to caregivers in the challenging task of raising a child, as caregivers strive to meet their career goals and personal fulfillment needs.

Respect for Diversity:

Employees must be non-judgmental towards people with different lifestyles, ethnic backgrounds, and cultures. They should respect families who have different goals and expectations for their children and themselves, and who may be dealing with changing lifestyles and family patterns in various ways. Employees must recognize that families face different stresses and have varying capacities for tolerating stress and organizing their lives.

Responsibility to the School:

All employees have a serious responsibility towards the School, its reputation, and its success as a high-achieving educational institution. They should help young students become caring individuals with high standards and goals—students who are well-organized, wise, and competent.

Creating an Effective Learning Environment:



By creating a well-designed and equipped environment (both social and physical), students will be provided with the most effective education. Teachers are expected to deliver an educational program and to fully cooperate with the School and their direct educational supervisor in matters of curriculum, pedagogy, and all other classroom matters.

Relationships with Our School Community

It is important to understand that Northside Charter High School (NCHS) exists to provide the community with an alternative approach and philosophy in educating the students we serve. Every interaction and publication regarding the School influences caregivers' perceptions, either strengthening or changing their impressions.

Community Expectations:

When caregivers choose to send their children to NCHS, they do so with great expectations and a very positive impression of our School and its Mission. It is the responsibility of all employees to meet these expectations and build a lasting, positive impression.

Professional Conduct:

Every action and statement made by employees must be delivered with the utmost quality and professionalism. This commitment is essential as the School's success depends on its reputation and relentless dedication to education.

Commitment to Excellence:

NCHS's reputation and success rest on the continuous effort and commitment of its employees to provide the highest standard of education. By fulfilling the community's expectations, employees contribute to the School's mission and help maintain its esteemed status.

Employee Children on Campus

From time to time, in special or emergency situations, it may be necessary for an employee to bring their child to campus during the workday. The following guidelines must be adhered to:

- **Supervisor Approval:** The employee must obtain prior approval from their supervisor before bringing their child to school.
- **Health and Supervision:** The employee must ensure that the child is well and supervised at all times while on campus.
- **No Interference:** The presence of the child must not interfere in any way with the employee's duties.

By following these guidelines, employees can ensure that the work environment remains productive and professional, even in special or emergency situations.

WORK DAYS AND WORK HOURS

All employees are expected to work the established work week as determined by their supervisor. Additionally, classroom instructional staff is expected to work such hours that ensure the timely start of the school day, an orderly process for ending the school day, and sufficient interaction with other instructional staff and administrators to help support the educational mission of the School. Hours

below may be changed at the discretion of the Management or Board of Trustees, and all employees are expected to comply with such changes in hours.

Employees who need to engage in personal business during a break period must receive prior approval from their supervisor or their designee. All employees are expected to be on time daily. On time is defined by Senior Management Teams. Working hours to be set by the Senior Management Team, which is composed of the CEO, Chief Academic Officer (“CAO”), Chief Student Services Officer (“CSSO”), and CFOO). Working hours may be adjusted/modified as needed to meet the needs of the School community.

Notice of Absence

Notice of Absence and Lateness

- 1st verbal warning after 1st unexcused absence
- 1st written warning and letter to file after 2nd unexcused absence
- Employee Placed on Performance Improvement Plan after 3rd unexcused absence

Lateness

All school staff members must arrive on time following the work hours set by the Senior Management Team. Adhering to these schedules ensures the smooth operation of the school and supports a professional work environment.

Definition of Lateness:

- An employee is considered late if they arrive five (5) or more minutes after their assigned time.

Procedures for Addressing Lateness:

1. **Initial Incidents of Lateness:**
 - If an employee is late three (3) or more times within a 30 day window, they will meet with their Direct Supervisor and/or a member of the senior management team to discuss the reasons for the lateness.
 - Together, they will set goals to ensure that the employee is no longer late to work.
 - Consequences for further incidents of lateness will also be discussed.
 - A letter detailing the meeting, the goals, and the consequences of any future incidents of lateness will be signed by the employee and their supervisor and placed in the employee’s personnel file.
2. **Excused Lateness:**
 - Lateness deemed by the school to be caused by unforeseen circumstances beyond the employee’s control may be excused at the sole discretion of the school.
 - The employee may be required to provide proof of the cause of lateness.

Consequences for Continued Lateness:

- **First Occurrence:**
 - Verbal warning.
- **Second Occurrence:**
 - Written warning.
- **Third Occurrence:**
 - Written warning with potential loss of one day’s wages.

These procedures and consequences help maintain a professional work environment and ensure all staff members contribute to the school’s consistent and reliable operation.

Pay Periods And Paychecks

Pay Periods:

- **Semi-Monthly Schedule:** Pay periods are semi-monthly.
 - **First Pay Period:** From the 1st day of the month up to and including the 15th day of the month.
 - **Second Pay Period:** From the 16th day of the month up to and including the last day of the month.
- **Payday Adjustments:** If a payday falls on a holiday or weekend, checks may be distributed at the discretion of the School a business day earlier. The CFOO will notify employees of the specific pay dates.

Direct Deposit:

- Eligible employees can opt to have their pay directly deposited into their checking or savings account.
- **Enrollment:** Employees must complete the necessary paperwork to use Direct Deposit.
- **Pay Stub:** On payday, employees using Direct Deposit will receive a pay stub/report instead of a physical paycheck.

Lost Paychecks:

- **Reporting:** In the event of a lost paycheck, the CFOO must be notified in writing as soon as possible before a replacement check can be issued.
- **Recovered Checks:** If the lost paycheck is recovered and the CFOO identifies the endorsement as that of the employee, the employee must remit the amount of the replacement check within twenty-four (24) hours. Further consequences may be imposed on the employee by the School as deemed appropriate.

For any questions or issues related to payroll, employees should contact the CFOO.

Employee Pay

The School operates on a July 1st – June 30th Fiscal Year. All salaries are calculated annually-based on the School's fiscal year calendar.

Pay Deductions and Garnishments

The only deductions from an employee's paycheck are those required by law or authorized in writing by them. The check stub identifies each deduction and should be kept as a permanent record.

Pay deductions may also be taken by the School in response to a garnishment notice received from a court or other legal authority.

Coverages

All instructional staff are required to provide coverages for absent staff each semester. The number of coverages will be capped at ten (10) for the school year.

PAID AND UNPAID LEAVE

Weather Days and Other Closings

When there is a snowstorm, or other weather emergency, Northside Charter High School will issue an alert to inform the school community of decisions regarding school closure or delayed opening.

At the discretion of the School, any classroom days lost to closure due to inclement weather or other reasons may be made up by adding an equal number of days to what was scheduled to be the end of the school year.

Note: given the ability to conduct remote learning; most instances of school closure due to inclement weather will result in a fully-remote learning day. All staff are required to work remotely.

Sick and Personal Time Off (PTO)

- In accordance with the New York City Earned Safe and Sick Time Act, employees (both full-time and part-time) who work eighty (80) or more hours per calendar year are eligible for up to forty (40) hours of paid sick leave per calendar year (July 1st to June 30th). Safe and sick leave time is earned at a rate of one (1) hour for every thirty (30) hours worked. This leave time will be prorated for new hires after July 1st and for any employee who departs during the year. Full days off will be considered equivalent to eight (8) hours for tracking purposes.

- **Use of Safe and Sick Leave:**

An employee can use safe and sick leave to take time off from work for the following reasons:

- 1. Personal Health Needs:**

- The employee has a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition.
- The employee needs to get a medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of their mental or physical illness, injury, or condition.
- The employee needs to get preventive medical care.

- 2. Care for a Family Member:**

- The employee must care for a family member who needs a medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition.
- The employee must care for a family member who needs preventive medical care.

- 3. Public Health Emergency:**

- The School closes due to a public health emergency.
- The employee needs to care for a child whose school or child care provider closed due to a public health emergency.

- 4. Victim of Domestic Violence or Similar Incidents:**

- The employee or their family member may be the victim of domestic violence, unwanted sexual contact, stalking, or human trafficking.

- The employee needs to take actions necessary to restore their physical, psychological, or economic health or safety, or that of their family members.
- The employee needs to take actions to protect those who associate or work with them, including:
 - Obtaining services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other services program.
 - Participating in safety planning, relocating, or taking other actions to protect their safety or that of their family members, including enrolling children in a new school.
 - Meeting with an attorney or social service provider to obtain information and advice related to custody, visitation, matrimonial issues, orders of protection, immigration, housing, discrimination in employment, housing, or consumer credit.
 - Filing a domestic incident report with law enforcement or meeting with a district attorney's office.
- **Definition of Family Members:**
 - The law recognizes the following individuals as “family members”:
 - Child (biological, adopted, or foster child; legal ward; child of an employee standing in loco parentis)
 - Grandchild
 - Spouse; Domestic Partner
 - Parent; Grandparent
 - Child or Parent of an employee's spouse or domestic partner
 - Sibling (including a half, adopted, or step sibling)
 - Any other individual related by blood to the employee (applicability to be determined on a case-by-case basis)

Paid Time Off (PTO) and Sick Days Use

All full time employees are allocated 25 PTO days & 5 sick days.

Unless otherwise provided for, or as approved by the Senior Management Team, Sick days may be used for illness and are to be used in accordance with the following provisions:

- If the need is foreseeable, NCHS requires an employee to give their supervisor notice as soon as practicable.
- If the need is unforeseeable, NCHS requires an employee to provide notice as soon as practicable, and no later than 6:00 AM on the day of the absence.
- If notice is not provided, the absence will be considered unexcused.
- When possible, such as in the event of foreseeable extended illnesses and planned medical procedures, advance notice of the use of care days should be provided to the agent from ADP

For an absence of more than three (3) consecutive workdays, employees may be asked to provide

documentation verifying that the leave was used for safe or sick leave purposes, as follows:

- For sick leave, NCHS would require documentation from a licensed health care provider prior to the return to work date;
- For safe leave, NCHS would require reasonable documentation signed by a social service provider, a member of the clergy, an attorney, court or police records or a notarized letter by the employee explaining the need for safe leave.

The documentation does not need to specify the reason for the leave. The misuse of sick leave may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. NCHS will not retaliate against any employee for using sick leave. Employees have the right to file claims for violation of the New York City Earned Safe and Sick Time Act with the NYC Department of Consumer Affairs (nyc.gov/paid-sick-leave or dial 311).

All federal and NY DOE holidays are recognized. School breaks (winter break, spring break, etc.) are working days and require the use of PTO to take those days off.

All Sick time must be booked in ADP.

Employees requesting Personal Time Off (PTO) usage must complete the request on ADP and receive approval from their manager.

Unpaid Time Off

PTO time taken without approval from your manager and/or a member of the SMT will be taken as unpaid time off and deducted from the next available paycheck. The rate will be determined by the CFOO based on your current salary.

Sick time taken beyond your accrued Sick time balance will be taken as unpaid time off and deducted from the next available paycheck. The rate will be determined by the CFOO based on your current salary.

Unexcused sick time (beginning with your 2nd unexcused sick day) will be taken as unpaid time off and deducted from the next available paycheck. The rate will be determined by the CFOO based on your current salary.

Unused Personal Time Off (PTO)

For Full-time employees, earned, unused Personal Time Off (PTO) may be rolled over from year to year at a maximum of thirty (30) days and can be used by employees in subsequent years, subject to the School's rules for use of Personal Time Off (PTO). There is no annual payout of unused PTO or Sick days for any employees.

Upon termination of employment the earned PTO days will be paid in full. The CFOO will determine the value of those days, based on your salary for the prior school year.

Community Sick Leave Bank

Northside Charter High School has established a program that allows employees to donate Personal/Sick leave on a voluntary basis to a Community Sick Leave Bank. The Community Sick Leave Bank will be available to *eligible* employees who have suffered a *catastrophic illness or injury* and who have exhausted all of their Personal/Sick time.

Bereavement

If an employee has been employed by Northside Charter High School (NCHS) continuously for ninety (90) days or more, bereavement leave is available.

Eligibility and Duration:

- **Paid Bereavement Leave:** An employee who suffers the loss of an immediate family member is entitled to bereavement pay for up to four (4) consecutive days.
- **Additional Leave:** The employee may be granted additional time without pay or may use earned, unused Personal Time Off (PTO) for extended bereavement leave.

Notification:

- The employee should notify the Senior Management Team and their supervisor as soon as possible about the reason for and expected length of absence.

Definition of Immediate Family Member:

- **Immediate family member** includes a spouse, partner, father, mother, child, stepchild, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild of the employee, or any other person as defined by the CEO.

Verification:

- Within a reasonable period of time (no later than two weeks), the employee should provide verification of the death (such as an obituary or death certificate).

Military Duty

If an employee is a member of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine, Coast Guard, National Guard, Reserves or Public Health Service, they will be granted an unpaid leave of absence for military service, training or related obligations in accordance with the Unified Services Employment and Re-employment Act of 1995 (USERRA).

Family And Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”)

Northside Charter High School (NCHS) encourages employees to balance their work and family life by taking reasonable unpaid leave for certain family-related circumstances.

- **Eligibility:**An employee must have been employed by the School for a total of at least twelve (12) months (not necessarily consecutive) and must have worked at least one thousand two hundred and fifty (1250) hours over the immediately preceding twelve (12) months to be eligible for FMLA leave.
- **Leave Entitlement:** Eligible employees may be granted up to a total of twelve (12) workweeks of leave during any twelve (12)-month period (measured backward from the date an FMLA leave commences) for one or more qualifying reasons.
- The School will require, where applicable, that paid leave be applied towards the FMLA twelve (12)-week limit. Paid leave includes short-term disability, paid time off (if any), care leave, parental leave, and workers’ compensation leave.
- Any paid leave used for an FMLA-qualifying reason will be charged against an employee’s entitlement to FMLA leave, provided that the leave is for an

FMLA-qualifying purpose. The substitution of paid leave for unpaid leave will not extend the twelve (12)-workweek leave period provided by the FMLA.

- To the extent the employee does not have available paid leave, the FMLA leave will be unpaid.
- Qualifying Reasons for FMLA Leave:
 - The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care.
 - To bond with a child (leave must be taken within 1 year of the child's birth or placement).
 - To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition.
 - For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform their job.
 - For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee's spouse, child, or parent.
- Military Caregiver Leave:
 - An eligible employee who is the spouse, child, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member may take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the service member with a serious injury or illness.

Definition of Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Benefits Continuation While On FMLA Leave

Group Insurance Plan Benefits:

- An employee's current group insurance plan benefits will continue during FMLA leave on the same basis as if they had been continuously employed during that time. This includes any applicable employee contributions to the cost of those benefits.

Health Insurance Premiums:

- Paid FMLA Leave: If the FMLA leave is paid, the employee's portion of health insurance premiums, if any, will be deducted from their salary.
- Unpaid FMLA Leave: Employees on unpaid leave must submit their portion of the health insurance premiums to the CFOO by the first day of the month. If an employee falls more than thirty (30) days in arrears for required employee contributions, coverage will be canceled retroactively to the beginning of the month in which the delinquency occurred. The School will attempt to provide the employee with notice before discontinuing their health insurance coverage.

Accrual of Benefits:

- An employee will not accrue vacation or seniority during FMLA leave.
- FMLA leave time will count toward eligibility and vesting service under the School's retirement plan, if any.

Return From FMLA Leave

Subject to limitations specified below, upon return from FMLA leave, the School will reinstate the employee in the same position they held before the leave or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits and other employment terms.

Limitations On Reinstatement

All employees are entitled to reinstatement following return from FMLA leave only if they would have continued to be employed had FMLA leave not been taken. Thus, an employee is not entitled to reinstatement if, because of a layoff, reduction in force or other reason, they would not be employed at the time job restoration is sought.

Failure To Return To Work Following FMLA Leave

If an employee does not return to work following the conclusion of FMLA leave, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned. The School may recover health insurance premiums that the School paid on the employee's behalf during any unpaid FMLA leave except that the School's share of such premiums may not be recovered if they fail to return to work because of their serious health condition or their family member's serious health condition or because of other circumstances beyond their control. In such cases, the School may require the employee to provide medical certification of his/her serious health condition or his/her family member's serious health condition.

Requests For FMLA Leave

To request FMLA leave, the employee must contact ADP (1-844-448-0325) and follow their appropriate process and inform a member of the SMT. When leave is foreseeable for childbirth, placement of a child or planned medical treatment for the employee's serious health condition or his/her family member's serious health condition, the employee must provide the School with at least thirty (30) days advance notice. When the timing of the leave is not foreseeable, the employee must provide the School with notice of the need for leave as soon as possible (i.e., within one (1) or two (2) business days of learning of the need for the leave).

Required Documentation

When leave is taken to care for a family member, the School may require the employee to provide documentation or statement of family relationship (e.g., birth certificate or court or government document).

The employee may be required to submit medical certification from a health care provider to support a request for FMLA leave for his/her serious health condition or

his/her family member's serious health condition. Medical certification forms are available from the CFOO.

If the School has reason to doubt the employee's initial certification, the School may: (i) with the employee's permission, have a designated health care provider contact the employee's health care provider in an effort to clarify or authenticate the initial certification; and/or (ii) require the employee to obtain a second opinion by an independent School-designated provider at the expense of the School. If the initial and second certifications differ, the School may, at its expense, require the employee to obtain a third, final and binding certification from a jointly selected health care provider.

During FMLA leave, the School may request that the employee provide recertification of a serious health condition at intervals in accordance with the FMLA.

In addition, during FMLA leave, the employee must provide the School with periodic reports regarding current status and intent to return to work. If the anticipated return to work date changes and it becomes necessary for the employee to take more or less leave than originally anticipated, the employee must provide the School with reasonable notice (i.e., within two (2) business days) of the changed circumstances and new return to work date. If the employee gives the School notice of their intent not to return to work, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

Before the employee returns to work from FMLA leave for his/her own serious health condition, they may be required to submit a fitness for duty certification from their health care provider, with respect to the condition for which the leave was taken, stating that they are able to resume work.

FMLA leave or return to work may be delayed or denied if the appropriate documentation is not provided in a timely manner. Also, a failure to provide requested documentation of the reason for an absence from work may lead to termination of employment.

Additional Information

For further information or clarification about FMLA leave, please contact the CFOO.

NYS Paid Family Leave

In addition to FMLA, the State of NY requires most employers to provide Paid Family leave. On January 1, 2018, nearly all private employees in New York State are eligible for this leave. This entitles NCHS employees to:

- Full Paid time off for 12 weeks
- Job protection upon return from Paid Family Leave and
- Continuation of health insurance while out on paid leave
- Eligibility
- Employees with a regular work schedule of 20 or more hours per week are eligible after 26 consecutive weeks of employment.
- Employees with a regular work schedule of less than 20 hours per week are eligible

after 175 days worked.

For more detailed information about NYS Paid Family Leave visit:
<https://www.ny.gov/new-york-state-paid-family-leave/paid-family-leave-information-employees>

Important note regarding school vacation days and pay while on New York Parental Leave:

Pay During School Vacation Days:

1. **Paid Portion of Leave (100% Pay):**
 - If a school vacation day falls during the paid portion of the leave, wherein the employee is allowed 100% pay, the employee will receive 100% pay for those days. The employee will not receive extra days in the count of their paid leave.
2. **Paid Portion of Leave (67% Pay):**
 - If a school vacation day falls during the paid portion of the leave period, wherein the employee is granted partial (67%) pay, the employee will receive 100% pay for the school vacation days.
3. **Unpaid Portion of Leave:**
 - If a school vacation day falls during the unpaid portion of the leave period, the employee will not receive pay for those days.
 - If an employee's last unpaid leave day falls the day before a vacation begins (meaning that the employee returns on the first workday after the vacation), the employee will be paid for that vacation at 100% pay. The employee is considered to have returned to the School on the first day of the vacation.

Notice for Parental Leave:

- Employees planning to take parental leave must provide the School with at least 30 days' notice before the first day of leave.
- Notification should be given to the CEO, CFOO, and their supervisors or their designees.
- Failure to provide adequate notice may result in the elimination of all or a portion of the paid leave.

Lactation Accommodation Policy

- **Discussion Prior to Return from Parental Leave:** Before an employee returns from parental leave, NCHS will discuss with the employee whether they need a reasonable accommodation to express breast milk at work.
- **Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy:** NCHS will not tolerate discrimination or harassment against any employee based on the request for or usage of lactation accommodations. Any discrimination, harassment, or other violations of this policy can be reported to Human Resources.

Lactation Room:

- **Designation and Notification:** NCHS will designate a private room as a lactation room when employees need to express breast milk. Other employees will be notified that the room is prioritized as a lactation room and may only be used for expressing breast milk during the designated times. Proper signage will be posted to ensure that the room is free from intrusion and shielded from view.

- **Priority Use:** Employees who need the room for pumping will be given priority, and their pumping needs will determine the room's availability for other purposes.
- **Privacy and Cleanliness:** NCHS will ensure that the lactation room can be locked from the inside, is clean, and meets as many of the following requirements as possible:
 - Contains at least one electrical outlet.
 - Has a surface to place a pump and other personal items.
 - Provides a chair.
 - Is near running water and a refrigerator for storing breast milk.
- **Alternative Arrangements:**
 - **Multiple Users:** When more than one employee needs to use the lactation room, NCHS will discuss alternative options with all users to determine a suitable arrangement. Options may include:
 - Finding an alternative space.
 - Sharing the space among multiple users with screens, curtains, or other privacy measures.
 - Creating a schedule for use.
- **Temporary Space:** If the lactation room is unavailable, NCHS will provide an alternative space for temporary use as a lactation room.
- **Workspace Pumping:** An employee who wishes to pump at their usual workspace will be permitted to do so, as long as it does not create an undue hardship for NCHS.

Reasonable Time to Express Breast Milk

NCHS will provide a reasonable amount of time for an employee to express breast milk and will not unreasonably limit the amount of time or the frequency that an employee expresses breast milk. NCHS will speak with the employee to determine a schedule of breaks that reasonably accommodates the pumping needs of the employee.

NCHS does not require the employee to work while pumping. However, if the employee works while pumping, the employee will be paid at their regular rate for that time.

Undue Hardship

If NCHS believes that the lactation accommodation requested poses an undue hardship, NCHS will discuss reasonable alternatives with the employee to accommodate the employee's needs, initiating a cooperative dialogue as quickly as possible, but absolutely no later than five (5) business days from the date of the request. The conversation between NCHS and the employee will be in good faith, may occur orally or in writing, and will conclude with a final written determination of the

accommodation granted or denied. This process gives the employee an opportunity to have an open discussion with NCHS about their needs, and NCHS has an opportunity to hear its employee and work with them to come up with an appropriate accommodation for the employee.

For example, if NCHS believes the length of time an employee needs to pump is an undue hardship for NCHS to accommodate, NCHS will engage in a cooperative dialogue with the employee to determine if there is an accommodation, such as an adjusted pumping schedule, or more frequent pumping breaks for shorter periods of time, that addresses NCHS's concerns and the employee's needs.

During the time it takes to respond to a request and/or engage in a cooperative dialogue to determine the accommodation, NCHS will provide a temporary accommodation to the employee so that the employee can pump in a manner that meets the employee's immediate needs unless doing so poses an undue hardship.

Jury Duty and Witness Subpoena

Employees will be granted jury duty leave when summoned for jury duty. The School will pay full-time employees for the difference between jury duty pay and normal straight-time pay, up to a maximum of two (2) weeks (ten (10) workdays) for actual time served on jury duty. All employees are required to report to work whenever the court schedule permits.

Every employee must report anticipated jury duty to the CFOO and their supervisor immediately upon receipt of the summons. Upon completion of jury duty service, an employee must provide a copy of your "Completion of Jury Duty" notice to their supervisor who will forward a copy to the CFOO for inclusion in their personnel file.

The School encourages employees to fulfill your civic responsibility to serve jury duty. Employees will continue to earn all benefits and, if applicable, vacation, during jury duty leave.

If an employee receives a duly issued subpoena to appear as a witness during work time, they must immediately notify the CFOO and their supervisor. All subpoenas involving possible testimony about the School and employment at the School, must also be immediately reported to the CEO and the CFOO.

Leave to Appear as a Victim or Witness in a Criminal Proceeding

An eligible employee may take time off from work, without pay, for any of the following reasons:

- To comply with a subpoena to testify in a criminal proceeding (including time off to consult with the district attorney);
- To give a statement at a sentencing proceeding;
- To give a victim impact statement at a pre-sentencing proceeding; or
- To give a statement at a parole board hearing.

Leave Eligibility

An employee is eligible for time off under this policy if he or she is:

- The victim of the crime at issue in the proceedings;
- The victim's next of kin;
- The victim's representative, if the victim is deceased as a result of the offense;
- A "Good Samaritan;" or
- Pursuing an application or the enforcement of an order of protection, as provided under relevant law.



For the purpose of this policy, a “Good Samaritan” is someone who acts in good faith to apprehend a person who has committed a crime in his or her presence, to prevent a crime or an attempted crime from occurring, or to aid a law enforcement officer in effecting an arrest. A victim’s representative is a person who represents or stands in the place of another person, including, but not limited to, an agent, attorney, guardian, conservator, executor, heir or parent of a minor.

Notice and Certification

An employee must notify his or her supervisor of the need to take a leave under this policy no later than the day before the absence. In addition, the employee must provide the supervisor with verification of his or her service upon request.

The School will not retaliate or tolerate retaliation against any employee who seeks or obtains leave under this policy.

Voting Leave

Employees who do not have sufficient time outside of their working hours to vote may be granted time off from work to vote, including up to two hours of paid time off. If you need time off to vote, you must request voting leave from your supervisor between two (2) and ten (10) days before the election. Retaliation against an employee who requests leave under this policy is strictly prohibited.

Emergency Service Volunteer Leave

Upon presentation of a written request from the American Red Cross and with the approval of the CEO or the CEO’s designee, employees certified by the American Red Cross as disaster volunteers will be granted leave from work with pay for up to twenty (20) days in any calendar year to participate in specialized disaster relief operations. This leave will be provided without loss of seniority, compensation, sick leave, vacation leave, or other overtime compensation to which the volunteer is otherwise entitled.

Bone Marrow Donation Leave

Employees will be granted leaves of absence if they seek to undergo a medical procedure to donate bone marrow. Such leave is not required to be paid. Only employees who work for NCHS for an average of twenty or more hours per week are eligible for leave under this policy. The total length of the leave for each employee will be determined by the physician, but may not be longer than 24 work hours without School approval. An employee who seeks leave under this section must provide verification from a physician of the purpose and length of the leave. The School will not retaliate or tolerate retaliation against an employee for requesting or taking bone marrow donation leave.

Blood Donation Leave



Employees will be provided with up to three hours of leave time in each calendar year to donate blood. Employees seeking leave to donate blood must give reasonable notice to their supervisors of at least three working days prior to taking leave for blood donation. Non-exempt employees will receive paid leave to donate blood if the donation occurs at a blood drive at the School or at a school-sponsored blood drive. Leave to donate blood will be unpaid, however, if the non-exempt employee's donation occurs at a blood drive or facility that is not sponsored or otherwise connected with the School. As required by the Fair Labor Standards Act, exempt employees taking leave to donate blood under this policy will do so without a loss or reduction in pay. All employees taking leave to donate blood through a non-school-sponsored blood drive or at a blood drive away from the school may be required to provide proof of their blood donation. The School will not retaliate or tolerate retaliation against an employee for requesting or taking blood donation leave.

Screenings for Cancer

Employees will be granted up to four hours of paid leave on an annual basis to undertake a screening for cancer. This leave will be excused and will not be charged against any other leave to which the employee is entitled.

“Black Out Days”

Reporting Requirements After Time Off:

- All employees who are unable to report to work due to illness on the first day after sick leave, personal leave, vacation, holiday, or extended time off must bring a note from their doctor to be paid for the missed time and for it to be approved.
- The same call-in/notification steps as outlined previously are required. A doctor's note must be submitted upon the first day back at work.
- Employees who fail to submit a doctor's note on such occasions will be charged Personal Time Off (PTO) and may be subject to progressive discipline, up to and including termination.

“Black-out Days”:

- **Definition:** “Black-out Days” are typically days before and after a school holiday or other days deemed necessary for staff to be in attendance, as designated by the Senior Management Team.
- **Notification:** These days are noted on the internal school calendar, and any updates to these days will be provided to school staff.

Exceptions:

- Exceptions to this policy must be granted by a member of the Senior Management Team.

BACKGROUND CHECKS AND EMPLOYEE VERIFICATION

New York State Education Law and Regulation of the Commissioner of Education require charter schools to fingerprint prospective employees for the purposes of a criminal history background check. The School, at its own discretion, may also conduct an independent background check. Employees who will work with children or be present in schools when students are present will have to undergo a criminal background check supported by fingerprints or hand scans through the New York State Education Department (NYSED) in accordance with NY Education Law §§ 2854(3)(a-2) and 3035.

Until the School receives the fingerprint clearance from NYSED, the employee must sign the required forms to receive a conditional clearance from the Board of Trustees of its designee and follow the supervisory policy for employees who have not received clearance. Such conditional clearances must be updated in accordance with NY Education Law. Employees who have been previously fingerprinted by the New York City Department of Education or NYSED must file a "Request for Clearance," which can be obtained from the CEO or his or her designee.

The School will also perform various background checks, including but not limited to:

- Education
- Certification
- References
- Social Media check

The School reserves the right to withdraw an offer of employment if it receives a report on any prospective employee that is less than satisfactory.

Federal law requires all employers to verify each new employee's identity and legal authorization to work in the United States via the INS I-9 Form. All offers of employment are conditional upon the receipt of satisfactory evidence of an applicant's authorization to work in the United States. This evidence of the right to work must be provided within three (3) days of the employee's hire date. Failure to provide the appropriate documentation will be grounds for termination. Should an employee subsequently become unauthorized to work, the law requires that he or she be discharged pending receipt of additional documentation demonstrating an extension of the authorization to work in the United States.

BENEFITS: INSURANCE/HEALTH

Medical And Dental Insurance

The School will select medical and dental insurance plans to cover full-time, regular employees. Employee contributions for medical, dental and vision coverage will be required, and will vary depending upon the level of coverage selected by the employee (individual, individual plus spouse, family, etc.). Employee contributions for elected coverages will be automatically withheld from employees' paychecks in an amount in accordance with a schedule maintained by the School.

Medical, dental and vision benefits are effective first of the month following thirty days of hire, provided that all required paperwork is submitted to the School in a timely manner. Employees may elect to change their plan coverage once each year during the School's open enrollment period or when a life-changing qualifying event occurs. Part-time employees who work fewer than 30 hours per week are not eligible for medical, dental or vision benefits.

List of qualifying events

- Change in legal marital status, including marriage, death of a spouse, divorce, legal separation and annulment.
- A change in the number of dependents, including birth, death, adoption, and placement for adoption.
- A change in employment status of the employee, or the employee's spouse or dependent, including termination.
- A change in coverage of a spouse or dependent under another employer's plan. *Must notify the CFOO within thirty days of the qualifying event.

Short-Term Disability Insurance

The School provides short-term disability insurance to all eligible employees. Short-term disability insurance allows payment to employees in the event of certain injuries, illnesses, or other disabilities occurring outside of the workplace that result in the employee's inability to perform the regular duties of his/her employment, including disability caused by pregnancy. Short-term disability insurance payments commence after the seventh (7th) consecutive day of absence due to a disability. Under New York State law, employees on short-term disability leave will receive fifty percent (50%) of their salary up to a maximum of one hundred seventy dollars (\$170) per week, for a maximum of twenty-six (26) weeks, regardless of years of employment. Any employee wishing to claim disability pay must complete appropriate forms with the CFOO. Employees are also responsible for filing any other necessary forms, applications, or other information as required by applicable government policies.

Employees may opt to purchase additional short-term disability insurance coverage. Please see the CFOO for more information.

Long-Term Disability Insurance

The School provides long-term disability for all eligible employees. Long-term disability insurance allows payment to employees in the event of certain injuries, illnesses, or other disabilities occurring outside of the workplace that result in the employee's inability to perform the regular duties of his/her employment. Long-term disability insurance payments commence after ninety (90) days of absence due to a disability. Any employee wishing to claim disability pay must complete appropriate forms with Human Resources. Employees are also responsible for filing any other necessary forms, applications, or other information as required by applicable policies.

Life Insurance

The School provides life insurance to all eligible employees. Please check the benefits coverage options in ADP to better understand employees' options.

Employees may opt to purchase additional life insurance coverage. Please see the ADP for more information.

Declination of Benefits

Any employee who wishes to not accept any of the insurance benefits offered by the School is required to select the appropriate declination of coverage options in ADP.

Reservation of Rights

The School reserves the right to alter the benefits package made available to employees at any time, consistent with all applicable laws. Each employee will be notified of any modification to the benefits package in a timely fashion.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Deferred Compensation

The School may, subject to approval by the Board of Trustees, offer a deferred compensation 403(b) program to all eligible employees. Under such a program, employees may opt to defer a portion of their current gross pay, having that portion of pay invested in accordance with applicable federal and state guidelines governing deferred compensation programs and with procedures established by the School.



In accordance with federal guidelines, employees are subject to a maximum limit per year on deferred compensation. Employees shall take every reasonable precaution to ensure that the per-paycheck amount of income requested to be deferred will not cause such limits to be exceeded in any given year.

Any contributions to the 403(b) Program are at the sole discretion of the School and shall be paid to the employees account on a semi-monthly basis.

Eligible employees will receive up to a 5% match.. Employees should review the Mutual of America and ADP website for more information.

Workers' Compensation

The School provides Workers' Compensation coverage to its employees in case of injury or illness arising out of and in the course of employment. Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses should inform their supervisor and the CFOO as soon as is practicable after the injury.

Unemployment Compensation

The School contributes to the Unemployment Compensation plan administered by the State of New York.

Benefits Continuation-COBRA

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the School's health plan for at least eighteen (18) months when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee, a reduction in an employee's hours or a leave of absence, an employee's divorce or legal separation, and a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary typically pays the full cost of coverage at the School's group rates, plus an administration fee (Under the Obama Administration, there may be some assistance in helping terminated employees pay for their coverage under COBRA. Please see the CFOO for more information).

Tuition Program

The Tuition Program is intended to help employees increase their knowledge and skills to improve their overall expertise, as well as to improve their career path options for current and future Northside Charter High School opportunities. Northside Charter High School will pay \$800 per semester towards a degree or certification program that will support your career in education, pending approval by the School Management Team. The school reserves the right to not fund certain programs.

Eligibility: Employees in good standing with Northside Charter High School at the time of course enrollment are eligible to participate in the program.

Undergraduate & Graduate Study: The degree or certification program must be a subject that relates to the employee's job or the mission of NCHS. Determination as to whether the course of study meets this criterion is made by the School Management Team. Northside Charter High School will reimburse up to \$800 TOTAL per semester for a degree- or certificate-related course that is successfully completed (e.g., PASSED or all requirements met).

Procedure: Employees seeking reimbursement must submit a Tuition Reimbursement Request

Form along with their grade(s), bursar's receipt and the employee's proof of payment to the CFOO within 45 days of the end of the semester for which they are seeking reimbursement.

Service Obligation: In consideration of receiving tuition assistance under this policy, the employee is to agree to commit to 1 full school year of service with Northside Charter High School following the completion of each course. Should the employee, either voluntarily or involuntarily, no longer be employed at NCHS before completing the full semester and receiving tuition reimbursement, the reimbursed amount will be held from the final paycheck.

* Tuition Reimbursement is subject to annual budget consideration.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Evaluations, Observations And Job Requirements

The performance of each employee is critical to the overall success of Northside Charter High School (NCHS) and the accomplishment of our school's mission. Formal evaluations are conducted throughout the academic year to provide an objective, consistent, and fair way to assess each employee's job effectiveness. This process also offers an opportunity for supervisors and employees to develop strategies for improving future performance.

Purpose of Evaluations:

- **Assessment and Development:** Evaluations allow for the assessment of job tasks, identification and correction of weaknesses, encouragement and recognition of strengths, and discussion of purposeful approaches for meeting goals.
- **Reflection and Improvement:** Evaluations are designed to encourage reflection and lead to improvements both in and out of the classroom.

Evaluation Process:

- **Written Evaluations:** Evaluations will be in writing, and employees must sign their evaluation forms to acknowledge having received and reviewed them.
- **Documentation:** Evaluations, together with any employee written comments, will become a part of each employee's personnel file and may influence any personnel decisions involving the employee.
- **Supervisor Collaboration:** Supervisors will work closely with employees to help them perform to the best of their abilities. The frequency and method of performance evaluations will vary depending on the position. Supervisors will discuss the means by which job performance will be evaluated.

Professional Development:

- **No Probationary or Tenured Appointments:** NCHS does not recognize probationary or tenured appointments. Instead, it views each employee as a professional and accepts the obligation of assisting each employee in maximizing their professional potential.
- **Commitment to Excellence:** The School Management Team and Board of Trustees are committed to maximizing the educational experience of its pedagogical and professional staff. Observations, reviews, and evaluations will be conducted with the objective of enhancing the experience and abilities of all staff.

Merit Increases:

- **Eligibility for Salary Increase:** Annually, employees may be eligible for a salary increase based on their Annual Evaluation rating.
- **Standards and Expectations:** In the event an employee does not meet the NCHS mission

and standards, any merit increase consideration may not be granted.

PROBLEM/CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS

An employee with a complaint, dispute, issue, or problem with personnel, students, or caregivers should always try to settle it in a professional manner with the parties involved. If a positive conclusion is not reached, please use the following guidelines to resolve the situation:

1. Initial Resolution Attempt:

- a. **Direct Resolution:** The employee should first attempt to resolve the complaint, dispute, issue, or problem directly with the parties involved in a professional manner.
- b. **Escalation:** If the issue is not resolved, the employee should present the complaint, dispute, issue, or problem to their immediate supervisor in a timely manner.
- c. **Supervisor Conflict:** If the complaint, dispute, issue, or problem is with the employee's supervisor, the employee should contact a member of the School Management Team or the CFOO.

2. Meeting with Supervisor:

- a. **Scheduling:** The employee and their supervisor shall set a time to meet, which can be immediate upon presentation of the issue.
- b. **Good Faith Effort:** Both the employee and the supervisor will act in good faith and cooperate fully to resolve the issue.
- c. **Meeting Agenda:**
 - i. Identify the problem.
 - ii. Determine possible solutions.
 - iii. Determine a resolution.
 - iv. Set a course of action to achieve the resolution, including the process and timeline.
 - v. Schedule a follow-up meeting after the resolution process has been implemented.
- d. **Documentation:** The employee and their supervisor shall submit notes from the meeting and a written description of the process to be implemented to the employee's file.
- e. **Escalation to School Management:**
 - i. **Unresolved Issues:** If the issue is not resolved after a good faith attempt as outlined above, the employee may submit a written complaint to the School Management.
 - ii. **Management Review:** The School Management will follow the steps outlined in Step 2 above in a timely manner.
 - iii. **Administrative Conflict:** If the complaint is against the Management or the employee's immediate supervisor is an administrator, the employee may submit a written complaint to the Board of Trustees in accordance with the Grievance Policy and Complaint Procedure.
- f. **Escalation to the Board of Trustees:**
 - i. **Final Resolution:** If the issue was not resolved by any of the steps above, the employee may submit a written complaint to the Board of Trustees in

accordance with the Grievance Policy and Complaint Procedure.¹

WORKPLACE REGULATIONS

Confidentiality

Confidentiality:

During employment at NCHS, employees may learn or work with and be entrusted with confidential and/or privileged information about fellow employees, administrators, school caregivers, students, or applicants. Every employee must exercise the highest degree of care not to disclose any such information, advertently or inadvertently, to any unauthorized person in or outside of the School.

Types of Confidential Information:

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:

- Student records
- Financial information
- Personnel records and information
- Payroll records
- Computer programs, codes, processes, and passwords
- Personal information regarding the School's caregivers and students

Restrictions on Disclosure:

Employees shall not release any confidential and/or privileged information about the School or its activities, or the activities of its personnel, students, or caregivers, except as reasonably required by their duties, expressly permitted by the School, and in conformity with applicable laws such as:

- Freedom of Information Laws
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Any other applicable federal, state, or local law

Consultation Requirement:

If an employee believes confidential information must be disclosed to a third party, they must consult with the School prior to the disclosure. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential and/or privileged information is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Prohibited Actions:

- No employee shall publish, disclose, or use, or authorize anyone else to publish, disclose, or use, or cause to be published, disclosed, or used, any private or proprietary information acquired, learned, developed, or created by reason of employment with NCHS, unless authorized by the School in writing.
- Any document or material containing such information must be returned to the School upon an employee's termination or resignation.
- Obligations under this policy continue after termination of employment.

Personnel Inquiries

Authorized Personnel:

- Only the Senior Management Team or their designee may provide reference letters, answer

¹ Any person, including staff members, can bring a formal complaint to the NCHS Board of Trustees. The description above is for handling informal/workplace conflicts.

telephone calls, or respond to other inquiries from third parties about School employees.

- NCHS's policy is to provide only neutral letters of reference.

Prohibited Actions:

- All other employees are prohibited from responding to personnel inquiries.
- Unauthorized responses of this nature are grounds for termination.

Professional Appearance and Dress Code

Our School requires students to wear a uniform to inspire self-esteem, prevent clothing-related conflicts, and create an equitable, academically-focused environment. It is important that faculty and staff show support for the uniform policy. While a staff uniform is not required at this time, professional attire (e.g., business casual) is to be worn Monday through Friday and at all school events. Exceptions can be granted by the Senior Management Team.

Acceptable Attire:

- Staff may wear the school uniform (short or long-sleeve purple polo) or any of the following:
 - Blazers, suits, or sport coats
 - Dress slacks
 - Work-appropriate khakis
 - Ties
 - Dress shirts with buttons and collars
 - Dress shoes
 - Dresses (knee length)
 - Skirts (knee length)
 - Blouses
 - Sweaters

Unacceptable Attire:

- Jeans or other denim (unless permitted on a dress-down day or event)
- Shorts (unless permitted on a dress-down day or event)
- Plain or pocket T-shirts
- Cutoffs
- T-shirts with logos
- Athletic wear (other than Physical Education Staff)
- Flip flops of any kind
- Spandex or Lycra such as biker shorts (or jeggings/leggings)
- Tube tops, halter tops, and any other type of top with spaghetti straps
- Underwear as outerwear
- Beachwear
- Midriff-length tops
- Form-fitting and/or low-cut/sheer attire
- Off-the-shoulder styles
- Workout clothes or shoes (other than Physical Education Staff, who may wear knee-length, loose-fitting athletic shorts)
- Evening wear

The key to sustaining an appropriate but relaxed work attire program is the use of common sense and good judgment. If you question the appropriateness of the attire, it probably is not appropriate. If an employee has a question, requests advice, or requires assistance in administering or interpreting this guideline, they should contact their direct supervisor.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA affords caregivers and students over 18 years of age certain rights with respect to the student's education records. Please review the School's FERPA Policy below:

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

School officials with legitimate educational interest; Other schools to which a student is transferring; Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; Accrediting organizations; To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issue

Cameras Policy

The School prohibits employee use of cameras in the workplace, including camera phones, as a preventative step believed necessary to secure employee privacy, student confidentiality and trade secrets and other school information. In addition, cameras shall not be used in any matter inconsistent with the School's social media policy, or in any other manner that portrays the School in a negative light.

Cameras and camera cell phones or PDAs may not be used in the workplace, except by an employee who is specifically required to take a photograph or make a video. Anyone improperly using these electronic devices during school hours may be subject to disciplinary action. However, the mere possession of a cell phone with a camera will not subject an employee to disciplinary action.

Relationships With Students

School employees are strictly prohibited from engaging in personal relationships with students, which are outside the scope of a professional adult/student relationship or which may give the appearance of being outside the scope of a professional adult/student relationship. This prohibition applies both on and off School grounds.

Employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. Employees who violate this policy may also be subject to being reported to law enforcement authorities, if the conduct is believed to constitute a crime under state law. If disciplinary action is taken against an employee, a report will be made to law enforcement and/or a child abuse report will be made for violation of this policy. In addition, the caregivers of the student involved will be notified of the situation and the actions taken by the School.

Employee Treatment of Students

All employees must adhere to the Chancellor's Regulation A-420 which prohibits the use of corporal punishment against students and sets forth the reporting and investigative requirements for allegations of corporal punishment.

All employees must adhere to the Chancellor's Regulation A-421 which prohibits verbal abuse of students and sets forth the reporting and investigative requirements for allegations of verbal abuse.

Post-Employment Inquiries

The School does not respond to oral requests for references. In the event your employment with the School is terminated, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the School will provide only dates of employment, job titles and compensation in response to a written request. Your supervisor may be able to provide a reference to potential employers only if you have completed and signed a release form.

As an employee of the School, do not under any circumstances respond to any requests for information regarding another employee unless it is part of your assigned job responsibilities. If it is not, please forward the information request to your supervisor.

Gifts and Gratuities

Employees of the School are prohibited from accepting gifts, money or gratuities in any form from persons receiving benefits or services from the School or from persons performing services under contract to the organization, or otherwise in a position to benefit from an employee action.

School employees are not permitted to accept gifts of any kind of a value exceeding fifty dollars annually—including but not limited to money, goods, food, entertainment, or services—directly or indirectly from: 1) individuals, schools, or companies serving as vendors or potential vendors for the School; 2) elected officials or their representatives; 3) candidates for public office or their representatives; or 4) political party officials or their representatives. Exceptions may be made by the CAO or his/her designee, including instances where such gifts intended for and will be used by the School. Offers of such gifts in excess of fifty dollars, even when refused, must be communicated immediately by the employee receiving such an offer to the CAO or his/her designee.

Solicitation

In the interest of efficiency and security, the School's general policy is to restrict solicitations or distributions by employees to non-work areas during non-work time. Employees are prohibited from soliciting or distributing literature in work areas or during work time. Employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Solicitation or distribution of literature of any kind by non-employees is not permitted on the School premises at any time.

In addition, the use of school resources (such as stationery, e-mail, voice-mail, bulletin boards, and meeting facilities) for non-school solicitation is prohibited. Commercial ventures that wish to solicit the faculty, staff, students, or parent body of the school may only do so if they have the express written consent of the CEO, in accordance with NCHS Board policies which also apply. The CEO is encouraged to present any proposals for such solicitation to the Board of Trustees for recommendation.

Violence in the Workplace

The School is committed to preventing workplace violence. Given the increasing violence in society in general, the School has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, or other threats of (or actual) violence that may occur during business hours or on its premises.

All employees, including supervisors and temporary employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, rowdy behavior, or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Employees are prohibited from bringing firearms, weapons, or other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances onto the premises of the School.

The School prohibits conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, a student, visitor, guest, or candidate for employment. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment, including harassment that is based on an individual's gender, race, age, or any characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

Employees must immediately report violence or threats of violence, both direct and indirect, to a supervisor. This includes threats by employees, students, or visitors. Reports should be as specific and detailed as possible.

The School will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of violence or threats of violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practically reasonable. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, the School may suspend employees, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Anyone determined to be responsible for acts or threats of violence or other conduct in violation of these guidelines will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

The School encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors or the School, before the situation escalates into potential violence. The School shall assist in the resolution of employee disputes, and will not discipline an employee for raising such concerns.

CODE OF ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All employees are responsible for observing rules of behavior and conduct. The purpose of these rules is not to restrict employee rights, but rather to provide a safe and nurturing environment.

The following list is not exhaustive of all unacceptable behavior in the workplace. The following are

some examples of unacceptable conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Falsification of records, including timekeeping and others
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to harm to others or to damage of employer-owned property
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct (including refusal to follow a supervisor's lawful directives)
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace or while at work outside the workplace
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential information
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct

Some of the unacceptable forms of behavior are separately discussed in more detail elsewhere in this Handbook. Other misconduct will be evaluated based on the specific facts and circumstances.

Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace

Alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace are a danger to all. They impair safety and health, promote crime, lower productivity and quality, and undermine public confidence in the quality of education provided. Employees who work while under the influence of alcohol or drugs present a safety hazard to themselves, co-workers and students, and threaten the reputation and integrity of the School.

It is the policy of the School to create a drug-free workplace in keeping with the spirit and intent of the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, sale or use of a controlled substance in the workplace or while engaged in business off premises (such as at a parent's home) is strictly prohibited.

To educate employees on the dangers of drug abuse, employees may be periodically required to attend information and training sessions in the area of alcohol and illegal drug dangers, treatment resources and workplace policy.

Employees convicted of controlled-substance-related violations, including pleas of nolo contendere (i.e., no contest), must inform the School within five (5) days of such conviction or plea.

Any employee who violates any aspect of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. At its discretion, the School may require employees who violate this policy to successfully complete a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program as a condition of continued employment.

Smoking

The New York State Education Law prohibits tobacco use on school grounds. "School grounds" means any building, structure and surrounding outdoor grounds contained within a public or private pre-school, nursery school, elementary or secondary school. In the interest of safety and health, the School endorses and incorporates this prohibition. Any employee found using tobacco on school grounds will be subject to discipline.

USE OF FACILITIES, TELEPHONES AND COMPUTER

This policy establishes rules governing employee use of the School computer network, electronic mail ("e-mail"), internet access, and telephone message handling ("voicemail"). The School has developed these rules to ensure that everyone understands how these options function and the limits which properly apply.

Use of School Equipment:

- All School equipment, including desks, telephones, computers and computer systems, computer software, e-mail, voicemail, and other physical and electronic items, are for business use only.
- All communications and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are School records and the property of the School.
- Employees have no right of personal privacy in any matter stored in, created, received, or sent over the School computer, email, internet, or voicemail system.

School Rights:

- The School retains the right, without notice, to search all directories, indices, diskettes, files, databases, e-mail messages, voicemail messages, internet access logs, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the School computer, e-mail, voicemail, and internet access systems and equipment.
- Computer, e-mail, and voicemail messages you delete or erase may remain stored in the School computer server or telephone system.
- By placing information on the School computer system, employees give the School the right to edit, delete, copy, republish, and distribute such information.

Compliance with Policies:

- The School's Harassment policy and Confidential Information policy apply to all forms of communication, including information conveyed in writing or via e-mail and/or voicemail.

User Identification and Passwords:

- All School systems require users to identify themselves with a user ID and password to obtain network access. Unauthorized use of systems without making this identification or by bypassing this process is a violation of School policy.
- Employees should make every effort to safeguard their passwords. Sharing network access with other users is strictly prohibited.

Internet Use:

- If the School provides an employee access to an internet service such as web-browsing, such access is to be used for business use only. This restriction includes any internet service accessed on or from School premises using the School's computer equipment or via School-paid access methods and/or used in a manner that identifies the Employee with the School.

Anti-Virus Precautions:

- Employees must take necessary computer anti-virus precautions before downloading or

copying any file. Employees must notify their supervisor and/or the technology department personnel of any potential computer viruses.

Prohibited Activities:

- All internet data composed, transmitted, or received is subject to disclosure to law enforcement or third parties. Therefore, all information must be accurate, appropriate, ethical, and lawful.
- Data composed, transmitted, accessed, or received must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, pornographic, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or disruptive. Examples of unacceptable content include, but are not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comments or images that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religion or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.
- Sending uninvited e-mail of a personal nature is also prohibited.
- Unauthorized use, installation, copying, receipt, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material is prohibited.
- Deliberate alteration of system files, accessing any restricted files, creating or propagating computer viruses, causing damage to School computer files, or disrupting computer services is prohibited.
- Making changes to computer configurations without permission from the Technology Department is strictly prohibited. This includes installing software, modifying the operating system or installed applications, adding additional hardware, or moving computer systems from their assigned locations.
- The School expressly prohibits the illegal duplication of software and its related documentation.

Disciplinary Actions:

- Any employee who violates this policy is subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.
- Any employee who uses the School's technology for defamatory, illegal, or fraudulent purposes may also be subject to civil liability and criminal prosecution.

Right to Monitor:

- Employees have no right to privacy with respect to any activities using School-provided email, voicemail, or internet access and services at the School.
- The School reserves the right to review or otherwise monitor any files, messages, or communications sent, received, or stored in the School's computer or telephone systems.

Use of Copiers, Mail and Fax Systems

Employees may not use photocopiers for personal purposes. Employees may not use the School's postage meters and fax machines for personal use. Employees may not receive personal mail at the School.

COMMUNICATION POLICY

This policy has been developed in effort to ensure the school communicates clearly and consistently and whenever possible, avoids conflicts. These policies are not intended to limit creativity but to support faculty and staff through efficient systems and prevent overlap, confusion or gaps.

Family Communication

Professional Communication:

- Communication in person, over the phone, or via email with any family members should be professional in tone.
- Whenever appropriate or requested, families should be provided with an interpreter to communicate and advocate in the language they prefer.
- All requests for interpreters should be made to the CFOO in writing at least two business days in advance of the meeting.

Logging Communication:

- All parent contact should be recorded (logged) in Jupiter as designated.
- Please note that all communication with caregivers, as well as records of communication, are subject to collection at any time by the School Management Team and may be subpoenaed by a court of law.

Approval for Mass Distribution Documents:

- All documents produced for the purpose of mass distribution externally must be forwarded to the employee's immediate supervisor and approved by a member of the Senior Management Team in advance of distribution.
- This includes the following materials:
 - Letters to families of more than 30 students.
 - Letters to students of a group greater than one class (more than 30 students).
- Mailings include a Bulletin by school/grade and any additional items as approved by the Senior Management Team.
- All items to be included in regular mailings must be sent to the Senior Management Team (for faculty) for approval at least two weeks in advance of the mailing.
- A schedule of intended mailings will be shared. To find out when the next mailing will be sent, please contact the Senior Management Team as appropriate.

Digital Communication

With increasing use of email and other mediums, all faculty and staff should be mindful of their tone, timing and content. All emails to School Management and supervisors will be responded to within one (1) business day. If the answer is not readily available, confirmation of receipt of the email will be sent along with a timeline for the expected response.

The use of School computers and mobile devices are intended for work use only. During lunch hours, planning periods, and before and after school-hours faculty and staff must limit use of this equipment for personal business, using discretion regarding content. During work/classroom time, personal use of cell phones is strictly prohibited. Excessive use of personal email, phone or communication will be grounds for progressive discipline up to and including termination.

Internet-access filters are in place. Any websites or content blocked by these filters deemed necessary for instruction should be reported to the CFOO and/or the Technology Manager

All emails should contain subjects so they can be easily filed and relocated if necessary. Email use is not a substitute for face-to-face meetings with colleagues, and this should be kept in mind when chosen as a medium.

EMPLOYEE LAPTOPS, DESKTOPS AND PERSONAL DEVICES

With the approval from the CFOO, employees may install software on their assigned laptops or desktop computers or install personal devices such as PDA, provided, however, that no employee may install any School-owned or leased software on their personal computer systems or electronic devices, and no employee may install any of their own or others' software on the School's systems or devices, without obtaining the express written approval of the CFOO, subject to the requirements below.

Installing Software

Employees are free to install software on the machine provided they:

- Have received the expressed written approval of the CFOO
- Have purchased the software and it is registered and licensed to themselves; • Provide a copy of the licensing agreement and proof of purchase to the Technology Department; • Do not illegally distribute this or any other software to others;
- Understand the software will not be supported by any member of the Technology Department; and • Understand the Technology Department may determine that software they have purchased and installed is interfering with the operation of School required software programs and may require that the employee's personally purchased software be removed.

Broken Parts

Repairs generally covered by warranty will be made at no cost. For non-warranty repairs, the School will contribute, per incident, \$150 or the cost of repair, whichever is less. The employee will be required to pay for the remaining repair or replacement costs, including any labor. If the computer is out of warranty and the repair is through no fault of the employee then the equipment will be replaced at no cost to the employee.

Loss/Theft of Laptop or Accessories

Employees are responsible for keeping laptops in a secure place or in their presence at all times. Employees should report immediately the loss or theft of the computer to the School Management Team and Security. The School will cover the loss of a computer that is stolen from campus or while on official school business. In all other cases, the Employee is responsible for the replacement cost of the computer. It is the Employee's responsibility to investigate and purchase, if deemed necessary, insurance to cover this potential loss and that, if the Employee chooses to insure, the cost of insurance is to be paid solely by the Employee.

Copies of the license and proof of purchase or laptop will be maintained and filed with the Technology Department. If, at any time, any employee's laptop is found to contain unlicensed software, or software that does not have this proof of license, the technology staff will remove the software and install a security policy that will prevent future software installation.

Borrowing Equipment

The School does not lend technology equipment such as computers, projectors, or any other devices to other schools, or to for-profit or not-for-profit charter school organizations. Employees that wish to borrow technology equipment for use off campus must complete the Equipment Request Form to get permission from the Technology Manager and/or CFOO.

Allowing Others to Use School-Issued Laptop

The laptop remains the property of the School and is being made available for employee's use only. Employees may not loan this laptop to other parties such as family or friends.

Returning Assigned Laptop

The laptop is to be used while employed at the School. An employee may keep this laptop over the summer break as long as they have been invited to return for the following academic year and have signed the letter indicating intent to stay. The School reserves the right to request that a laptop be returned to the technology department for periodic check-ups and servicing. Furthermore, if the laptop cannot be found, is returned with damage, or accessories are missing, the appropriate policies governing these areas will be enforced at that time.

Traveling with School-Issued Laptop

Other than school-issued laptops, Chromebooks, or hotspots, employees are strictly prohibited from traveling with school-issued technology. All technology items must remain on site at all times or prior written consent is required by the CFOO.

Employee Owned Property

An employee who brings their personal property onto the School's premises should store it in a secured location. The School is not responsible for any loss, theft or damage to an employee's personal property.

Academic Year's End

Computers, Email Accounts, and Technology Issues Upon Separation of Employment or at the Academic Year's End.

Unless an employee receives express authorization from the Senior Management Team, all computer equipment assigned to an employee must be returned by their last day on campus unless otherwise stipulated by the School Management Team. Network and email accounts for any employee leaving before the end of the school year are terminated on the Employee's last day.

Press/Blogs

First Amendment Protections:

- All faculty and staff are protected by the First Amendment and may speak freely to the press or participate in their personal time in any online blogs or social network sites.

Restrictions on Public Communication:

- Any publicly available communication that negatively impacts or reflects on students, staff, or the School will be grounds for progressive discipline, possible termination, and legal action.

Handling Press Inquiries:

- All calls from members of the press should be forwarded immediately to the CEO regardless of content.
- For this purpose, "Press" includes all written, broadcast, and web-based media.

Social Media

Internet Access and Usage:

- NCHS provides employees with access to the Internet. Employees are prohibited from reading, writing, or otherwise contributing to blogs, chat rooms, online message boards, or online discussion groups during work hours or from using any School-provided equipment or systems unless such activity is directly related to and necessary for an employee to perform their job.

Personal Blogging and Online Activity:

- **Personal Time and Equipment:** Blogging or participating in online forums is a personal activity. When you are away from the office, on your own time and equipment, you may choose to read or contribute to blogs, maintain a personal blog, or participate in an online chat room, message board, or discussion group.
- **Guidelines for Responsible Blogging:** NCHS asks that you understand and respect certain guidelines for responsible blogging or other online participation:
 - Do not identify, “friend,” or otherwise connect with students on social media platforms.
 - Do not identify NCHS, management, co-workers, or students, or discuss the School or individuals in a manner that could disparage the School or its students, defame any individual associated with the School or any student, or damage the reputation of anyone associated with the School or any student.
 - If your blog post concerns your job, prominently post a disclaimer stating that you are expressing only personal opinions that are not endorsed by and do not represent the opinion or viewpoints of the School.
 - Avoid posting pictures or descriptions of conduct that would subject a teacher to school discipline as it could be detrimental to their status as an educator and could negatively impact the academic process.

Disclosures and School Representation:

- If an employee posts something favorable about the services of NCHS using any type of social media, they must disclose that they are employed by NCHS.
- Any employee engaging in social networking or blogging for legitimate business purposes (i.e., on a school-sponsored blog or media site) must get express approval of all content prior to posting.
- Employees engaged in school-authorized social networking or blogging are responsible for complying with all School policies.

Confidentiality and Proprietary Information:

- Staff may not disseminate any NCHS information that could be considered proprietary, confidential, or intellectual property.
- Staff may not use the School’s logo, graphics, trademarks, trade names, or corporate slogans except on school-sponsored media sites or blogs. It is critical to maintain the confidentiality of nonpublic School information.

Monitoring and Compliance:

- NCHS may monitor blogs or School-related chat rooms.
- Failure to abide by the above guidelines or the School’s policies may result in legal or disciplinary action by the School and others.
- If you have any questions or concerns about this Policy, please contact the CFOO.

Cellular Telephone and Electronic Device Usage

The School is aware that employees utilize their personal, NCHS-supplied cellular telephones and other electronic devices for business purposes and for personal reasons. The use of these devices is a distraction in the workplace, causing disruptions during working time and leading to human errors and delays.

Therefore, we ask that personal use of these devices be kept to a minimum. It is best that personal telephone calls be made or received before or after working time, during lunch and/or prep time and made in a private space to ensure privacy of the matter and to avoid instructional interruptions.

Employees must make all efforts possible to avoid using their electronic devices in a public space.

Also, due to the potential for issues such as invasion of privacy, sexual harassment, and loss of productivity, no employee may operate a camera phone on NCHS property or while performing work for Northside Charter High School.

This Cellular Telephone and Electronic Device Usage policy applies to any electronic device that makes or receives phone calls, leaves messages, sends text messages, surfs the Internet, or downloads and allows for the reading of and responding to email whether the device was supplied by NCHS or personally owned.

FRATERNIZATION POLICY

Staff at NCHS form deep, lasting friendships with colleagues or members of the community, and, on occasion, more intimate social relationships may evolve. While NCHS does not strictly forbid dating or intimate relationships among consenting adults, we prohibit any intimate involvements in which one person may have undue influence over the other, particularly, when there is direct reporting or direct supervision between individuals or if the relationship could impact our service to our students. All relationships with students beyond appropriate academic or counseling interactions are strictly prohibited. Upon discovery, any such relationship will result in immediate termination and criminal prosecution if outside age of consent or other illegal issues exist.

Examples of relationships that might be prohibited include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Teacher and Member of School Leadership team
- Supervisors and direct reports
- Personnel responsible for admissions and caregivers of potential students

If an employee develops an intimate relationship with another employee or member of the NCHS community, it is very important that the relationship:

- Be disclosed immediately to the CEO and/or Board Chair;
- Does not involve direct report or supervision between intimately involved individuals;
- Is and continues to be completely voluntary and consensual;
- Is unrelated to and does not impact or interfere with professional responsibilities and duties; and
- Does not make others uncomfortable or affect their professional responsibilities.

Should a situation arise where individuals in a direct report relationship become intimately involved, we require immediate disclosure. When such situations are reported in a timely manner, NCHS will make every effort to retain both parties through appropriate and available action. In the event a suitable arrangement cannot be made, NCHS reserves the right to dismiss one or both parties at its discretion, subject to the policies and procedures governing employee dismissal. Failure to disclose such a relationship shall result in disciplinary action for any involved staff member(s).

MEETINGS, EVENTS AND INVITATIONS

All events/meetings scheduled for engaging or informing families or community members must be scheduled through the School Management Team. This includes meetings, workshops and social events (This does not apply to events that are for students only). All events and documents should work to include translation and interpretation into the most commonly spoken languages in each school. For this reason, all require advance preparation. Except in the case of emergency, all documents and events must be prepared for at least 2 weeks in advance through the School Management Team. Please ensure draft documents are written in language that can accommodate swift and clear translation (no jargon or colloquialisms). An employee should contact their supervisor to initiate scheduling an event before reaching out to the School Management Team for support.

Visitors in the Workplace

All visitors for the day will be listed on the daily security manifest and be required to have a security-issued ID at all times.

Leaving Campus

During planning periods, teaching periods, professional development time and lunch hours, all staff must be accounted for, for safety reasons. To that end, all staff must sign out when leaving and sign back in when returning to the building. Staff must also alert the CFOO so that an accurate count is available in case of emergency.

Staff Leaving Campus to Attend Students Games/Functions

Employees wishing to attend students' games and activities that take place outside of the building must alert their supervisor and CFOO via email by 1pm the day of such events.

Please note that attending the students' games and activities should not interfere with any of the employees' classes and other responsibilities per their domain.

Supervisors are responsible for monitoring and enforcing all personnel policies. If there is questionable action or performance in relation to any personnel policies or procedures the respective supervisor/manager will hold a personal, private discussion with the employee to advise and counsel the employee regarding the issue and method for improvement and the timeline for review.

Fire Drill / Lockdown Drill Responsibilities

- Faculty: evacuate building, go to assigned location, report in, & assist with role
- Staff: evacuate building, go to assigned area, & report in
- Students: evacuate building, to assigned area, & line up in alphabetical order
- For Lockdown Drills, follow instructions to remain out of sight in classrooms, quietly with students until the drill has ended

It is important that everyone take drills seriously and remain quiet during the drill.

ATHLETIC CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

The School encourages staff to organize student base after-school programs and activities as these activities are an effective way to keep children safe and supervised. It is also an opportunity to further engage students in academic, social, and physical activities. However, to ensure maximum safety and cooperation of our students; coaches/activity advisors must:

- Follow the guidelines outlined in the Coaches, Clubs and Special Events Coordinators Guide.
- Notify the CFOO of all activities as the school occupies a shared-space campus and prior approval/permits must be acquired prior to the event planned.
- If a permit is required, please submit the request at least 3 weeks in advance to the CFOO.
- Send an updated list of students that are registered and are cleared for participation in the activity on a weekly basis.
- Send all posters of event/activity flyers to the CFOO for approval before being posted.
- Inform the Senior Management Team via email if an athletic event requires students' early dismissal from school.
- If students are participating in a club/activity during the lunch period, they must be supervised in the classroom. They must not loiter in the hallways. And if they need to utilize the bathroom, they must have a pass.
- Always inform the caregiver of all activities at all times. Caregivers forget—and then the burden will fall on the faculty advisor of that particular club/activity.
- Clubs/Activities/Athletics are a privilege, thus please hold your student-participants accountable for their behavior, character, missed academic assignments and all other required elements of the NCHS Core Values of Commitment, Accountability, Integrity and Respect.
- Submit their weekly timesheet by 8am every Monday.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Employment shall not be offered as a consideration or reward for the political support of any political party or candidate for public office. Furthermore, no employee may engage in any political activity at any time as a representative of NCHS. This will be kept in the file of each employee. No employee may use work time, property or materials of NCHS to try to affect proposed legislation. NCHS may respond to requests for information from local, state and federal officials. All such responses shall be issued from the CEO. Should an employee be invited to testify at a hearing or other activity, permission shall be obtained from the CEO prior to such participation and testimony.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Americans with Disabilities Act provides civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

The School will comply with the requirement to provide reasonable accommodation(s) to any qualified employee or applicant with a known disability to the extent required by law.

Individuals who believe they need accommodation to perform the essential functions of their jobs should submit a written request to the CFOO with appropriate medical documentation to support their request. Employees requesting an accommodation may be required to provide medical certification from the employee's health care provider that includes: (1) identification of the health care provider; (2) the health care provider's diagnosis of the disabling condition; (3) specific limitations and/or suggested restrictions and their relation to the disability; and (4) suggested accommodations. Consideration of a request for an accommodation may be delayed or denied if the appropriate documentation is not provided in a timely manner.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT

Consistent with federal Occupational Safety and Health Act ("OSHA") requirements and to protect the well-being of employees, the School recognizes a need to limit the potential harmful effects of occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious bodily fluids where exposure to these materials could result in infection, illness or death of employees. The Health Safety policy covers all

employees but particularly those who may reasonably anticipate coming into contact with these materials as a result of their job duties. If an employee's job duties may put them into this category, the School will provide that employee with appropriate information.

WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY

General

The School requires its employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics, as such personal ethics relate to the organization, in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. Employees and representatives of the School must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

The matters which should be reported under this policy include suspected fraud, theft, embezzlement, accounting or auditing irregularities, bribery, kickbacks, misuse of the School's assets or suspected regulatory, compliance, or ethics-related issues, concerns or violations. Violations of the School's applicable human resources policies, problems with co-workers or supervisors, or issues related to alleged employment discrimination or sexual harassment, or any other form of unlawful harassment, should be dealt with in accordance with other sections of this Handbook, as it is those policies and procedures that are applicable to such matters.

Reporting Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all directors, officers and employees to report in good faith violations or suspected violations of high business and personal ethical standards, as such personal ethics relate to the organization, and/or applicable legal requirements ("Violations") in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

No Retaliation

No director, officer or employee who in good faith reports a Violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequences because of such a report. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a Violation in good faith is subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within the School prior to seeking resolution outside the School.

Reporting Violations

Employees with questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints regarding the ethical and legal standards noted above should complete a complaint form and submit it to the School's Board of Trustees. The Members of the Board of Trustees are responsible for investigating and resolving all reported Violations and shall advise the Chair of the School's Board of Trustees, and the Finance Committee of all reported complaints and allegations of Violations.

Accounting and Auditing Concerns

The Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls, or auditing. The Finance Committee shall immediately notify the Finance Committee of any such complaint and work with the Board of Trustees until

the matter is resolved. Prompt upon receipt, the Board of Trustees shall evaluate whether a complaint constitutes an accounting complaint, and if so, shall promptly determine what professional assistance, if any, it needs in order to conduct an investigation. The Board of Trustees will be free in

its sole discretion to engage outside auditors, counsel, or other experts to assist in the investigation and in the analysis of results.

Investigations

The Board of Trustees may delegate the responsibility to investigate a reported Violation, whether relating to accounting and auditing matters or otherwise, to one or more employees of the School or to any other individual, including persons not employed by the School selected by the Board of Trustees; provided that the Board of Trustees may not delegate such responsibility to an employee or other individual who is the subject of the reported Violation or in a manner that would compromise either the identity of an employee who reported the Violation anonymously or the confidentiality of the complaint or resulting investigation. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the scope, manner and parameters of any investigation of a reported Violation shall be determined by the Finance Committee in its sole discretion and the School and its employees will cooperate as necessary in connection with any such investigation.

Confidentiality

In making a complaint or submission, an employee of the School may request that such complaint be treated in a confidential manner (including that the School take reasonable steps to ensure that the identity of the employee making the complaint remains anonymous). The School takes seriously its responsibility to enforce this Whistleblower Policy and therefore encourages any employee reporting a Violation to identify him or herself so as to facilitate any resulting investigation. Employees may, however, submit complaints on an anonymous basis. Reports of Violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Acting in Good Faith

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a Violation must act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed may indicate a violation of such standards. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Handling of Reported Violations

The Board Chair or their designee will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five (5) business days, but only to the extent the sender's identity is disclosed or a return address is provided. All reports will be promptly investigated, the scope of any such investigation being within the sole discretion of the Finance Committee, and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

Records

The Finance Committee will retain on a strictly confidential basis for a period of seven years (or otherwise as required under the School's record retention policies in effect from time to time) all records relating to any complaint and to the investigation and resolution thereof. All such records shall be considered privileged and confidential.

Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, this Whistleblower Policy is not an employment contract and does not modify the employment relationship between the School and its employees, nor does it change the fact that employees of the School are employees at-will. Nothing contained herein provides any director, officer, or employee of the School with any additional rights or causes of action, other than those provided by the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.

ETHICS/CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Employees have an obligation to conduct their affairs within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. Actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for them, for a relative, or for anyone else who has a close personal relationship with the employee as a result of School business dealings. For the purpose of this policy, a relative or a person with a close personal relationship is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

No “presumption of guilt” is created by the mere existence of a relationship with an outside firm or vendor. However, if an employee has any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or supplies, the employee must disclose that relationship to the School immediately so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Common conflicts which employees should avoid include, but are not limited to:

- Using proprietary or confidential information for personal gain or to the School's detriment;
- Directly or indirectly accepting gifts, loans, services, entertainment, etc., of more than a minimal value from a vendor or someone seeking to do business with the School (as noted in the Ban on Acceptance of Gifts section);
- Using the School's assets or labor for personal use; and
- Instances where an employee or an employee's relative, or someone with a close personal relationship, has a significant ownership in the vendor or firm with which the School does business.

If the School finds that any employee has engaged in any conduct, which presents a conflict of interest with the School, such employee is subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

All employees will receive and be responsible for compliance with the School's Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy.

CHILD ABUSE

Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse

Child Abuse or Maltreatment Pursuant to §411 et. seq. of the Social Services Law

Pursuant to §413 of the Social Services Law, school officials are required to report instances of suspected child abuse or maltreatment to the State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment (“SCR”). A hotline has been established for reporting by mandated reporters, which include school officials. The hotline number is 1-800-635-1522.

Child “abuse” occurs when a parent or other person legally responsible for the child inflicts serious physical injury upon the child, creates a substantial risk of serious physical injury, or commits a sex offense against the child. In addition, the definition includes instances where the parent (or person legally responsible) knowingly allowed another to inflict such harm.

Child “maltreatment” (which includes neglect) occurs when a child's physical, mental, or emotional condition has been impaired, or is in imminent danger of impairment, by the parent's (or other person legally responsible for the child) failure to exercise a minimum degree of care by (1) failing to provide sufficient food, clothing, shelter or education; (2) failing to provide proper supervision, guardianship, or medical care; or (3) inflicting excessive corporal punishment, abandoning the child, or misusing alcohol or other drugs and, in doing so, cause the child to be placed in imminent

danger.

As mandated reporters, school officials are required to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment when they have reasonable cause to suspect either has occurred. “Reasonable cause” to suspect child abuse or maltreatment means that, based on a school official’s rational observations, professional training, and experience, the official suspects that the parent or other person legally responsible for the child has harmed the child or placed the child in imminent danger of harm.

The following procedures should be followed in reporting instances of child abuse and maltreatment:

- If a School employee learns of or suspects a situation of abuse or maltreatment of a student by his/her parent or person legally responsible for the student’s care, the employee must report the situation to the School immediately. It should be reported to the employee’s supervisor, the student’s school counselor, and any leader on the Senior Management Team.
- If, based on the employee’s report, the School reasonably believes that abuse or maltreatment has occurred, the School must immediately call the SCR hotline at 1-800-635-1522 and make a verbal report.
- The School should ask the SCR representative his or her name and the “Call I.D.” • Within 24 hours of the School’s verbal report to the SCR hotline, he/she must complete and submit to SCR mandated reporter form “LDSS-2221A”. Form LDSS-2221A may be obtained from the CFOO’s office, or from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services website at: www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/forms or by calling (518) 472-0971.
- If a school official is uncertain about whether a situation rises to the level of abuse or maltreatment, the official should contact the hotline to discuss the matter with a trained SCR specialist. • The School shall document for his/her confidential file the events, conversations, and facts associated with an allegation of child abuse or neglect, whether or not those circumstances rise to the level of reasonable suspicion that cause him/her to make a report to SCR.
- All information relating to reports of child abuse or maltreatment shall be strictly confidential.

Child Abuse in the Educational Setting Pursuant to Education Law Article 23-B.

Pursuant to New York Education Law §1126, and the regulations of the Commissioner of Education (8 N.Y.C.R.R. 100.2(hh)), any oral or written allegation to a teacher, school nurse, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, administrator, board member, or other school personnel required to hold a teacher or administrator license or certificate, as well as a licensed and registered physical therapist, licensed and registered occupational therapist, licensed and registered speech-language pathologist, teacher aide or school resource officer, that a child has been subjected to child abuse by an employee or volunteer in an educational setting, shall promptly make a report, on a form provided by the Commissioner of Education, consisting of the following:

- The full name of the child alleged to be abused.
- The name of the child’s parent.
- The identity of the person making the allegation and their relationship to the alleged child victim.
- The name of the employee or volunteer against whom the allegation is made.
- A listing of the specific allegations.

The report must immediately be given to the School Management Team. The report and all other written materials, photographs, and/or videos concerning the allegation and report are strictly confidential and may only be disclosed to law enforcement authorities involved in the investigation of the alleged child abuse, or as expressly authorized by law or pursuant to a court-ordered subpoena. Willful disclosure to a confidential record to an unauthorized person is a class A

misdemeanor.

The duties of administrators upon receipt of a written report alleging child abuse in an educational setting, where the administrator has a reasonable suspicion that an act of child abuse has occurred, shall be as follows:

- If the alleged child-victim made the report, promptly notify the parent of the allegation and provide the parent with a written statement pursuant to §100.2(hh) of the Commissioner's Regulations setting forth the duties of employees and administrators upon receipt of the allegation, additional duties of superintendents, notification by the district attorney pursuant to Education Law §1130, and actions to be taken upon criminal conviction of a licensed or certified school employee pursuant to Education Law §1131.
- If the parent made the allegation, promptly provide the parent with the above-referenced written statement.
- If someone other than the child-victim or parent made the report, ascertain from the reporting person the source and basis of the allegation, promptly notify the parent and provide the parent with the requisite written statement.
- If a public school administrator received the written report alleging abuse, the administrator must promptly provide the superintendent with a copy of the report as well.
- A report of child abuse in an educational setting must be promptly forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement agencies.
- The School shall forward the report of child abuse to the Commissioner of Education if the accused employee or volunteer holds a license or certification issued by the New York State Education Department.
- Any child abuse report that does not, after investigation, result in criminal conviction shall be expunged after five (5) years or at such earlier time that the School determines.

If the alleged abuse was by an employee or volunteer of a school other than one within the school district of the child's attendance, the report must be forwarded promptly to the superintendent of the other district.

Moreover, at least annually, the School shall provide training to all mandated reporters, including all new teachers, school nurses, guidance counselors, psychologists, social workers, administrators, board members, and other school personnel required to hold a teacher or administrator license or certificate regarding requirements of reporting of child abuse in an educational setting. Such training programs shall be in compliance with Education Law Article 23-B and the regulations of the Commissioner of Education (8 N.Y.C.R.R. 100.2(hh)).



CERTIFICATION OF RECEIPT OF PERSONNEL HANDBOOK

I have received a copy of the Northside Charter High School’s Personnel Handbook and understand that I am responsible for becoming familiar with the policies described in it. I understand that the information contained in the Handbook represents management guidelines only, which may be modified from time to time. I understand that neither the Handbook’s policies, nor any representations made by a management representative at the time of hire, or subsequently, are to be interpreted as a contract between the School and any of its employees. I further understand that my employment is voluntarily entered into, that I am free to resign at any time and that the School may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason or no reason at all, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

Print Name: _____ Employee

Signature: _____ Date: _____