

Envision

Science Academy



**Stimulate the whole mind.
Educate the whole child.**

Employee Handbook 2022 – 2023

Envision Science Academy
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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Envision Science Academy is to provide innovative instruction through experiential learning with a focus on science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) in order to prepare elementary and middle school students to compete, lead, and excel in the global marketplace.

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Welcome

By coming to work at Envision Science Academy (ESA), you join a fellowship of talented professionals focused on creating a collegial and stimulating environment. The information provided in this handbook will further your understanding of our core principles and how we operate.

Hiring Policy

The purpose of the Envision Science Academy Hiring Policy is to ensure a specific outline is available to the school administration in the recruiting and hiring process of all staff positions. All new hires must be hired in compliance with the hiring procedures as outlined by this policy. This policy addresses requirements for posting/advertising, screening and selection, pre-employment testing, offering employment and recordkeeping in accordance with federal and state laws and regulations requiring non-discrimination and affirmative action in employment.

Objectives

The ideal ESA team member will be a passionate, enthusiastic, driven, hard-working, adaptable and optimistic individual that will live the mission statement of Envision Science Academy. Listed below are the steps that will be followed when considering any individual (full or part-time) for potential employment:

- Job Description – the school Executive Director will develop a clear job description that includes, employee classification, performance expectations, preferred requirements, non-negotiables, and salary-range. Prior to posting, this description will be approved by the Board or an assigned committee.
- Posting Position – the school will post open positions through a variety of channels including internal and external websites, social media, referrals, career and school fairs, community outreach, flyers/brochures, newspaper, and word of mouth, with a deadline to apply.
- Application Submitted – potential applicants will submit their resume listing their credentials and certification.
- Applicant Screening – a pool of applicants will be identified and pre-screened by a committee or designee to identify the most qualified applicants for the position. Job seekers who do not meet basic qualifications will not continue in the selection process and may be notified of their status by the Executive Director or designee. This process may include an initial phone interview.
- Host Applicants – potential candidates will tour the school and be invited to teach a mock lesson and/or submit sample lesson plans, projects or portfolios.
- Interview Applicants – designated hiring team will conduct face to face interviews with candidates selected from the pool of candidates best suited based on their experiences and

interactions during the school visit. A consistent methodology will be utilized for all candidates to gauge integrity, work ethic, motivation, strategies, style, teamwork, etc., as they relate to the open position.

- Recommendation to Board – potential team members, and proposed salary, will be selected and presented to the Board of Directors for approval
- Offer Letter – approved candidates will receive an offer of employment letter outlining the terms and conditions for employment
- Pre-Employment Screening – a criminal background check will be conducted, three supervisory references will be contacted and a pre-employment drug screening will need to be performed within 72 hours of receipt of the offer.

Substitute Teachers

Each substitute teacher candidate must complete an Envision Science Academy Employment Packet, inclusive of the confidentiality agreement document, and be interviewed by a school administrator. The administration of the school must make a positive recommendation to the Board for employment in order for the candidate to be placed on the school's Substitute Teacher List.

Each candidate must agree to, and pay for the initial processing fee of, an ESA criminal background check and receive clearance to be employed. After the completion of one full-day or two half-days of substitute assignments, the candidate will receive a reimbursement of the initial processing fee.

To be eligible to be employed as a substitute teacher a candidate must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Be a certified teacher, either in North Carolina or in another state, or
2. Hold an Associates Degree or equivalent from an accredited college or university and successfully complete the Effective Substitute Teacher Training course or similar school approved training.

Substitute teachers are considered to be employees of the school. As such, they are held to the same standards of professional conduct as all other employees. Any violation of these standards may result in immediate termination of employment as a substitute teacher.

Licensure Requirements

At ESA we seek the most effective educators. We believe such educators have earned and maintain a current teaching license. At ESA, a professional employee must, at all times, hold or work towards a North Carolina license appropriate to the position in which he or she is employed. Licensure renewal is the responsibility of the individual, not of the school.

Employment Applications

ESA relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application and the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

At Will Employment

All employment at Envision Science Academy Charter School is “at will.” This means that both employees and Envision Science Academy Charter School have the right to terminate employment at any time, with or without advance notice (although we request and try to give thirty days’ notice, depending on the circumstance), and with or without cause. There should be no expectation, on the part of the employee, of compensation beyond the date of termination.

Criminal and Educational Background Check

A criminal background check will be conducted of all applicants and employees, including substitutes. A criminal background check may also be conducted on an individual, random, ongoing, or rotating basis of current employees (including substitutes), as well as on independent contractors and volunteers whose services involve contact with students. If an applicant is hired prior to the completion of the criminal background check, the employment will be conditional pending the results of the check. Applicants are required to answer completely and accurately questions on their application with regard to previous criminal history. Failure to do so will subject the applicant to not being hired and an employee to being dismissed. Applicants and employees shall consent in writing to initial and post-hiring criminal background checks and to providing fingerprints and other identifying information as requested by ESA. To the extent permitted by law, failure to consent or provide relevant information will result in rejection of an applicant or separation from employment of an employee.

At a minimum, the following initial criminal background check will be conducted:

- Statewide criminal background checks for applicants who have lived and worked within North Carolina for the five years before the date of application
- Federal and state criminal background checks for applicants who have lived or worked outside of North Carolina during the five years before the date of application
- Employment history
- Educational history
- Professional and personal references

The applicant will be rejected and the employee will be separated from employment if the criminal background checks and supporting records reveal a "criminal history," defined as the conviction of a crime, whether a misdemeanor or felony, that indicates the applicant or employee (1) poses a threat to the physical safety of students, staff, or others, or (2) has demonstrated that he/she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his/her duties as a public school employee.

Conviction of a crime, as used in this policy, includes the entry of (1) a plea of guilty, nolo contendere, no contest or the equivalent; or (2) a verdict or finding of guilty in a court of law or military tribunal. ESA shall consult with legal counsel or obtain a certified copy of an applicant's or employee's conviction notice prior to any final employment decision based on the criminal history. If ESA considers criminal history in making a decision adverse to an applicant or employee, the administration will make written findings with regard to how the information was used. ESA will provide to the State Board of Education (SBE) information on where to obtain the record of conviction of a person who is certified or licensed by the SBE.

If a criminal background check reveals that an applicant or employee was charged with but not convicted of a crime, whether misdemeanor or felony, the administration may conduct a further investigation into the person's conduct and the circumstances surrounding the charge to determine the person's fitness for employment. Applicants and employees must notify administration immediately if they are arrested, charged with, or convicted of a criminal offense (including entering a plea of guilty or *nolo contendere*) other than a minor traffic violation (i.e., speeding, parking, or a lesser violation). Applicants and employees who have been charged or convicted with driving while impaired or driving with a revoked license must immediately notify administration. Notice must be in writing, must include all pertinent facts, and must be delivered to administration no later than the next scheduled business day following the arrest, charge, or conviction, unless the applicant is hospitalized or incarcerated, in which case the applicant must report the alleged violation within 24 hours after his or her release. Upon judicial action in the matter, the applicant must report the disposition and pertinent facts in writing to administration no later than the next business day following adjudication.

ESA shall not require candidates to disclose any expunged criminal records (arrests, charges, and/or convictions) and shall not ask candidates to voluntarily disclose such information without first advising that disclosure is not required. Information obtained through the implementation of this policy will be kept confidential as provided in the North Carolina General Statutes and regulations. These records shall be kept in a locked, secure place, separate from the individual's personnel file. Procedures for implementing this policy, including a list of individuals entitled to access criminal history information, may be developed and administered by the Board and/or administration. If ESA conducts criminal background checks that are subject to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, it will provide applicants or employees with all required notices and disclosures before conducting the check or taking adverse employment action against the applicant or employee.

The Board has determined that every position within the school, regardless of whether the position is executed in school or elsewhere, potentially entails contact with students, either on a regular, occasional, or emergency basis. For that reason, no individual who is a registered sex offender will be hired for any position within the school.

I-9 Immigration Reform

Envision Science Academy complies with the Immigration Reform and Control Act, employing only those persons who are legally eligible to work in the United States. ESA complies with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 by employing only United States citizens and noncitizens who are authorized to work in the United States. All employees are asked once the job offer is accepted to provide original documents verifying the right to work in the United States and to sign the verification form required by federal law (INS Form I-9). If an individual cannot verify his or her right to work within three days of hire, ESA must terminate the employment.

Salary

It is important to note that ESA employees are employees of the nonprofit organization that holds the charter. They are not employees of the State of North Carolina. The ESA Board of Directors will strive to compete with the state's salary structure per years of experience. Salaries will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the employee's contract. Increases in salary may

occur when (a.) the state scale is amended (b.) teacher credentials and experience levels change (c.) performance stipends are awarded. If an employee is hired during the academic school year, the new employee's salary will be based on the salary scale utilized by ESA in the beginning of that academic year.

Payroll Classification

You may have heard the terms “exempt” and “non-exempt” used as classifications in other companies. These classifications are established by federal guidelines and are based on the scope and responsibilities of your job. “Exempt” employees are not eligible for overtime pay while “non-exempt” employees are. Non-exempt employees are required to fully complete and submit a timesheet each month to their direct supervisor. Full time non-exempt employees work and eight (8) hour workday. Each full time non-exempt employee shall be entitled to thirty (30) minutes of unpaid time for lunch. You will be made aware of this distinction at the time of your hire, promotion, or transfer.

REGULAR, FULL-TIME employees are those who are not temporary and regularly scheduled to work 40 or more hours per work week. Generally, they are eligible for ESA's full benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

PART-TIME employees are those who are not temporary and regularly scheduled to work less than 40 hours per work week. While they do receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security), they do not receive all of ESA's other benefits. However, if a part time employee works 30 hours per week, or more, on a regular basis, they will be eligible for the school's health insurance. In addition, part time employees may be eligible to participate in the school's retirement plan.

TEMPORARY employees are those who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the work force, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain that status unless and until notified of a change. While temporary employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Social Security), they are ineligible for ESA's other benefits. Temporary employees may be secured through an outside agency or paid directly through ESA's payroll. In either case, the individual's status as a temporary employee remains.

Employment Paperwork

Employment is not official until the Envision Science Academy Board formally approves the recommendation from the Executive Director. To complete the employment process, the following forms must be completed and turned into the Human Resources Department no later than the employee's first day of employment. Failure to do so may delay the first pay check or insurance coverage.

Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of ESA to provide an equal employment opportunity to all qualified individuals

without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation. Our equal employment opportunity practice applies to all recruiting, hiring, training, transfers, promotions, job benefits, pay and dismissal practices as well as educational assistance and social and recreational activities. While we encourage a collegial, team-oriented environment, we will not condone humor or fun at the expense of anyone based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation. We are all responsible for compliance with this Policy. In particular, employees must further the implementation of this policy.

Nepotism

The employment of immediate family can cause various problems including but not limited to charges of favoritism, conflicts of interest, family discord and scheduling conflicts that may work to the disadvantage of both the organization and its employees. For the purposes of this section, the term "immediate family member" means a spouse, parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent, or grandchild. The term includes the step, half, and in-law relationships

The term also includes domestic partners (a person with whom the employee's life is interdependent and who shares a common residence) and, a daughter or son of an employee's domestic partner. It is the goal of the organization to avoid creating or maintaining circumstances in which the appearance or possibility of favoritism, conflicts or management disruptions exist. The organization may allow existing personal relationships to be maintained or employ individuals with personal relationships to current employees under the following circumstances:

- No voting members of the Board shall be an employee of a for-profit organization that provides substantial services to the school for a fee;
- No employee of the charter school shall be immediate family to any member of the Board of Directors;
- No employee of the charter school shall be a voting member of the Board of Directors;
- No employee that is immediate family of the Executive Director shall be hired without the Board of Directors evaluating their credentials, and establishing a structure to prevent conflicts of interest, with evidence, that this process has occurred;
- They may not create a supervisor/subordinate relationship with an immediate family member;
- They may not vote on any Board action in regard to immediate family member;
- They may not supervise or evaluate a family member;
- The relationship will not create an adverse impact on work productivity or performance;
- The relationship may not create an actual or perceived conflict-of-interest;
- They may not audit or review in any manner the individual's work.
- They may not be employed if a member of the employee's immediate family (spouse, children, parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, step family members, in-law family members) serves on the organization's Board or any Committee or Council which has authority to review or order personnel actions or wage and salary adjustments which could affect his/her job.

No personal employee relationship covered by this policy will be allowed to be maintained, regardless of the positions involved, if it creates a disruption or potential disruption in the work environment, creates an actual or perceived conflict of interest or is prohibited by any legal or regulatory mandate.

This policy must be considered when electing, hiring, promoting or transferring any employee. Should relationships addressed within this policy be identified with either candidate for employment or, current employees the matter should be immediately reported to the Executive Director and/or Board of Directors and the following policies and procedures will be followed:

- A determination will be made whether the relationship is subject to the organization's Nepotism policy based on the conditions described above.
- If the relationship is determined to fall within one or more of the conditions described in this policy the Executive Director in consultation with the affected employees and the Board of Directors will attempt will to resolve the situation through the transfer of one employee to a new position or identifying some other action (e.g., Supervisory reassignment) which will correct the conflict or issue identified. If accommodations are not feasible then, with affected employee suggestions, the Executive Director in consultation with the organization's Board of Directors shall determine which employee must resign in order to resolve the situation.

The organization reserves the right to exercise appropriate managerial judgment to take such actions as may be necessary to achieve this intent of this policy. The organization reserves the right to vary from the guidelines outlined in this policy to address unusual circumstances on a case by case basis.

It is the responsibility of every employee to identify to the organization's Executive Director any potential or existing personal relationship which falls under the definitions provided in this policy. Employees who fail to disclose personal relationships covered by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including the termination of employment.

Disability Accommodation

Envision Science Academy Charter School is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of federal, state and local laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability. It is Envision Science Academy's policy not to discriminate against any qualified employee or applicant with regard to any terms or conditions of employment because of such individual's disability or perceived disability so long as the employee can perform the essential functions of the job. Consistent with this policy of nondiscrimination, Envision Science Academy will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability who has made Envision Science Academy aware of his or her disability, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on Envision Science Academy. Employees with a disability who believe they need a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job should contact the Director of Student and Academic Services. Envision Science Academy encourages individuals with disabilities to come forward and request reasonable accommodation.

Consistent with the non-discrimination in employment policy, all students of Envision Science

Academy Charter School are admitted, are accorded rights and privileges, and have access to programs and activities made available to them at Envision Science Academy in a non-discriminatory manner. Envision Science Academy does not discriminate in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. All testing and evaluation materials and procedures used for the purpose of evaluation, testing, assessments and/or for placement of children with disabilities are selected and administered so as not to be discriminating.

Staff Evaluation

A staff evaluation is an official document used to keep record of employee performance. It plays a key role in improving employee performance. All staff members will be evaluated by the Executive Director or Designee at mid-year (formative) and at year-end (summative) to examine whether or not targeted goals are being achieved. Additional evaluations can be conducted at the discretion of the Executive Director and/or Deans. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide objective feedback to employees and help them focus on their areas for personal and professional growth. A copy of the report of the evaluation shall be given to the person being evaluated, and a copy will be filed in the employee's personnel file. Results from evaluations do not create an expectation with respect to continued employment.

Executive Director Evaluation

The Governance Committee, or Designee, shall conduct an annual evaluation of the Executive Director. Such evaluation shall be based upon the written job description, success in achieving the set outcomes of the charter, as well as implementing the tenets of the charter. The evaluation timeframe will be a formative mid-year report (by January) and a final report to the Board completed by June of each academic year. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide objective feedback to the Executive Director and help him/her focus on areas for personal and professional growth. A copy of the report of the evaluation shall be given to the person being evaluated, and a copy will be filed in the employee's personnel file. Results from evaluations do not create an expectation with respect to continued employment.

Issuing Contracts

Contracts are issued after approval by the Board based on the Executive Director's recommendations. Contracts may be renewable, subject to mutual agreement between the staff member and the Executive Director. The contracted months of employment for each position is determined by the Board annually.

Pay Day

Salaries are paid monthly in 12 equal payments, regardless of length of contract. Non-exempt employees must turn in their time sheets to their supervisor by the designated date. The preferred method for payment is direct deposit into the financial institution accounts of your choice.

Hours of Operation

All full-time employees at Envision Science Academy are salaried employees. As such, the length of the working day is determined by the needs of the school. However, the minimum number of hours for the standard working day shall be 8 hours per day for a full day. Start and

stop times will be determined based upon the start and stop time of the student schedule. Staff should check with their respective Dean if specific times are needed. All staff may be assigned duties before and/or after school, in addition to attendance at required meetings.

Overtime

Overtime applies only to non-exempt employees and is defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in any one work week. Your supervisor must authorize overtime. Time worked in excess of 40 hours will be paid to non-exempt employees at a rate of one and one-half times the regular hourly rate of pay. Holiday pay, paid time off, or other paid days off, do count toward the 40-hour requirement for overtime. Time off for paid or unpaid leave of absence does not count toward the 40-hour requirement for overtime.

Benefit Plans

All regular, full-time employees of ESA are eligible for additional benefits such as group health insurance and the retirement plan. Detailed information regarding the benefits package is available during the hiring process and will be reviewed during your orientation with ESA. Benefits coverage will end as of the last day worked. If elected, certain benefits coverage may be continued at the Employee's expense under COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act). Benefits may be altered or terminated at any time by the school.

Holidays

Annual holidays are designated and published on the school calendar at each academic year. Employees will be paid for the listed holidays, even though they do not report to work. Staff who are on a leave of absence when a holiday occurs are not eligible for holiday pay.

Leave Days

All staff will earn 1 leave day per month. Leave time will be cumulative up to 30 days. Employees with accumulated leave time may contribute time to another employee at their discretion once the intended recipient has exhausted all of their available leave time. Upon separation of employment for any reason except for termination, accumulated leave time will be paid out at a rate of \$100.00 per day according to the table below:

Years of Service	Number of Days Annually
0 to 5	0
6 to 15	Up to 10
16 to 25	Up to 20
26+	Up to 30

All values for years of service must be earned as an employee of Envision Science Academy for this purpose.

Staff may request to be paid for unused leave days at a rate of \$100.00 per day. A maximum of 6 days can be redeemed at the end of December and June for a possible total of 12 days redeemed. The request must be submitted by the 1st of the month and approved by the Executive

Director. These funds will be included in the December and June paychecks respectively. Note: In order to redeem these days in December, the employee must have a minimum of 8 leave days at the time of the request. In order to redeem days in June, the employee must have a minimum of 6 full leave days at the time of the request.

Vacation Days

Vacation days are not cumulative and will not be paid out upon separation of employment for any reason. Vacation days will be earned according to the table below and are inclusive of days built into the school calendar.

Years of Service	Number of Days Annually
0 to 5	15
6 to 15	18
16 to 30+	21

As with leave days, the above indicated years of service must be earned as an employee of Envision Science Academy.

Additionally, all 12-month employees will receive 5 days of paid vacation which can only be taken between the last teacher workday of the school year and the first required working day of the next school year. This time is not cumulative and is independent of the number of years of experience the employee has earned with Envision Science Academy. If employment is terminated by either party (Envision Science Academy or the employee) prior to the last teacher workday of the school year, the employee will not be entitled to the 5 days of paid vacation. If vacation days are taken at the beginning of the 12-month contract term, and employment is terminated prior to the last teacher workday of the school year, the employee must reimburse the school by the number of unaccrued vacation days taken.

Personal Days

Each full-time employee will earn personal leave days, earned at the rate of 0.2 days per month for a total not to exceed 2.0 days per year. Personal leave days may be taken at any time during the school year. Personal leave days are non-paid days, i.e., if an employee takes a personal leave day, he/she will have an amount deducted from their salary an amount equal to one day of pay for each personal day taken. Personal leave days are not cumulative.

Any deviations from the Leave, Vacation, and Personal Days policies will be at the discretion of the Executive Director. The Board of Envision Science Academy will review the policies annually with the goal of enhancing the policies for the benefit of employees as the finances of the school allows.

Additional Restrictions on use of Leave, Vacation and Personal Days

Leave, Vacation, and Personal Days must be submitted for approval and will be approved at the discretion of the Executive Director or his/her designee. **A request is not an approval.** Staff are strongly discouraged from making plans prior to receiving approval for requested Leave or Paid

Time Off. Paid Time Off may not be used for any of the following instances unless the request is approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee:

1. On the first day the employee is required to report for the school year;
2. During the first 15 school days;
3. On required teacher workdays;
4. On days scheduled for state testing;
5. On the day before or the day after a holiday;
6. School breaks or other closures, or
7. During the last 15 school days of the school year.

COVID-19 Vaccines, Return to Work During COVID-19 or other Event

At Envision Science Academy, in person, on campus teaching is essential to our mission and the students and families we serve. As such, all employees are expected to be on campus working or teaching unless instructed by the Executive Director or board of directors otherwise.

Subject to local, state and federal law, regulation and orders, this policy governs return to work following a School closure, or any other significant interruption caused by an act of god, illness, weather event or pandemic. This policy may be modified at any time for any reason and should be interpreted to comply with all applicable laws.

Following the School's closure for COVID-19 or any other unusual event, employees are expected to return to the workplace when directed to by the Executive Director or board of directors. If an employee believes that they are unable to work, then the employee shall notify the Executive Director immediately. The Executive Director will evaluate the situation in accordance with the School's policies including the FMLA and ADA. If those policies do not apply to an employee's situation, and an employee has exhausted sick/PTO, then the employee is expected to return to work on campus. Failure to return to work on campus when instructed to, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Our school is grateful for the vaccine priority status the State has extended to educators and share in the excitement as many of our faculty and staff receive vaccinations. As a school, we believe in the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines and encourage all faculty and staff to be vaccinated. Given the Emergency Authorization Status of current COVID-19 vaccines, we do not require vaccines as a condition of employment at this time. However, once COVID-19 vaccines are no longer subject to Emergency Authorization Status, or should the School believe it is in the best interest of the School community, COVID-19 vaccinations may be required with exceptions for those who are unable to be vaccinated due to health or religious belief protected by Title VII. Should an employee need to exercise those exceptions, they should contact the Executive Director who will follow the procedures required by those policies.

We recognize and respect that receiving a COVID-19 vaccine is a confidential medical decision involving many factors and we respect employees in making the decision they believe is in their best interest. To that end, we ask that ALL members of the School community respect the privacy of others and refrain from questions or discussions about vaccines. Casual conversations on this topic, inquiries as to whether or not someone has been vaccinated, etc. are strongly

discouraged. In keeping with best practices and current recommendations from NCDHHS, the CDC, and our COVID-19 Task Force, the School's policies, procedures and mitigation strategies will remain in place until further notice for all members of the School community, regardless of their vaccination status. However, the School reserves the right to change, modify or eliminate such procedures or mitigation measures at any time. This means that the School may treat vaccinated and unvaccinated employees differently.

For employees who have received the COVID-19 vaccination, the School requires that you provide the Executive Director with a copy of your vaccination record. This will assist the School in its decision-making should there be potential exposure or outbreaks on campus or in our community. All vaccine records will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed except to those with a need to know. When providing your vaccine record, please only include a copy of the vaccine information and no other personal or medical information.

Any employee that is exposed to COVID-19 as defined by the CDC or NCDHHS or tests positive for COVID-19 shall inform their supervisor immediately in accordance with the procedures set forth in this handbook or otherwise communicated to the employee. The School shall advise the employee on next steps in accordance with the CDC and NCDHHS guidance. Failure to report a positive test or potential or actual exposure, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Based on current guidance, vaccinated employees will not be required to quarantine after exposure. While at this time the School is not requiring COVID-19 vaccinations, please be mindful that your personal decisions may have consequences at the School. Non-vaccinated employees that are exposed to COVID-19 will be required to follow the most current CDC, NCDHHS and COVID-19 Task Force guidance and policies. This means that unvaccinated faculty and staff may need to quarantine if exposure to COVID-19 occurs as defined by the CDC and NCDHHS. Those staff and faculty required to quarantine **will not** be permitted to telecommute and will be required to use any available paid time off. Once paid time off is exhausted, any days missed will be unpaid. Should an employee be subject to repeated quarantines, it may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment at the School.

Mask Policy

At ESA, we take our duty to provide a safe and healthy school environment seriously and will not tolerate conduct that jeopardizes the safety of others. We believe that our school is a community where we care for each other and think not just about ourselves but about our community when making decisions, especially where decisions could directly and seriously harm others.

To that end, we are taking a layered approach to COVID-19 which includes the following:

1. Promoting vaccinations for all eligible individuals
2. Minimizing exposure to COVID-19
3. Screening/testing where applicable
4. Continuing robust cleaning and hygiene practices
5. Managing through isolation and quarantine suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case or exposure.

Generally, when the School’s board of directors adopts a mask optional policy, students and staff will be permitted to decide whether to mask or not. Notwithstanding the foregoing, even in a mask optional setting, masks will be required at the discretion of the Executive Director or designee in the following circumstances:

1. In accordance with guidance from the Strong Schools Toolkit, the NCDHHS, and/or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”)
2. Where an individual tests positive for COVID-19
3. Where an individual has symptoms of COVID-19
4. Where an individual has experienced a potential exposure to COVID-19
5. On any school related trips using non-parent transportation
6. In accordance with state or federal law, including but not limited to the Americans with Disabilities Act and Amendments.

For the safety of others, when a mask is required, the school requires a 2-layer cloth face mask or medical mask. Mesh masks are never permitted and will be confiscated. Masks must cover the nose, mouth and chin.

It is always important to be mindful that there are many reasons why an individual may or may not mask. All employees are expected to be supportive of their co-workers' choices with respect to masking. And, all parents/students/guardians are expected to be supportive of staff and students with respect to their choices. Any staff member who violates this policy will be subject to discipline. Any student who violates this policy will be subject to discipline under the Schools Code of Conduct. Any parent/guardian who violates this policy will be contacted by the Executive Director.

This policy may be updated, amended, modified or rescinded at the discretion of the Board.

Staff Travel Policy

At the School, we encourage our staff to enjoy their time off and travel with family and friends. With safety always a priority at School, we ask all staff members to consult with the State Department and CDC website prior to any travel.

In the event that a staff member travels to an international location with a CDC level 2 or 3 travel warning for any communicable disease, including COVID-19, or to an area in the United States where a state of emergency has been declared related to any communicable disease such as COVID-19, the staff member must complete a Travel Disclosure Form at least 48 hours prior to their expected return/arrival to campus.

Staff members who have engaged in travel to a location with a Centers for Disease Control (CDC) level 2 or 3 travel <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices> warning for any communicable disease, including COVID-19, will be required to self-isolate for 14 days upon return from such travel or for such time as recommended by the CDC or state/local government entity. Self-isolate means:

- Remain at home
- Do not work unless the School determines that the staff member can telework.
- Do not come to work and attend other group gatherings such as:

- social events
- meetings

In addition, any staff member who has travelled to any region, including to any region in the United States where a state of emergency has been declared related to a communicable disease, including the COVID-19, may be asked to self-isolate for up to 14 days upon return from such travel. And, any staff member who has interacted with anyone who has contracted or is suspected to have contracted such communicable disease, including COVID-19, may be asked to self-isolate for up to 14 days or for such time as recommended by the CDC or state/local government entity. The decision to require a staff member to self-isolate shall be made by the Executive Director in their sole discretion.

Finally, given the fluid and unpredictable nature of communicable diseases, in the event that the Executive Director determines that any other type of travel warrants staff member self-isolation upon return, the School in its sole discretion reserves the right to take such action. In such circumstances, the Executive Director will notify the impacted staff member as soon as possible of the self-isolation parameters.

If a staff member is required to self-isolate under this policy, and the School determines that they cannot telework during self-isolation, the staff member may use any unused personal and/or sick days they have remaining. In the event a staff member has exhausted all paid time off, the remaining time off will be unpaid.

If there is a conflict between this policy and another school policy, this policy shall control. The School is an inclusive community and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity or any other classification protected by law. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent a staff member from taking leave protected by any other law, including the Family and Medical Leave Act or the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and Amendments.

Transfer of Leave

Any earned leave from another organization shall not transfer to ESA.

Leaves of Absence

ESA recognizes that its employees may have personal situations that require them to be absent from work. In such instances, the school may, upon the employee's request and with a complete explanation, grant reasonable time off or formal leaves of absence, in accordance with this policy, for justifiable reasons. Time spent on leave of absence is not considered as time worked for the purposes of overtime compensation. Please discuss with your supervisor any need for a leave of absence.

Family and Medical Leave

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) typically applies to companies with more than 50 employees. The school will follow the spirit of the FMLA and use it to guide its policies. The Family and Medical Leave Act provides that eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for one or a combination of the following reasons:

1. The birth and/or care of a newborn child of the employee (leave must be taken within 12 months of the child's birth).
2. The placement of a child with the employee through adoption or foster care (leave must be taken within 12 months of the child's placement).
3. In order to care for the employee's spouse, child or parent who has a serious health condition.
4. A serious health condition, which renders the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her position.

Employees are eligible for FMLA leave if they (1) have been employed by the school for at least 12 months (these months do not have to be consecutive); (2) have worked at least 1250 hours in the 12-month period immediately preceding the leave; and (3) are employed at a worksite where 50 or more employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles of that worksite.

FMLA will run concurrent to all paid and unpaid leaves of absence as allowed by law. This includes short-term disability and paid time off.

An eligible employee must apply for a FMLA leave in writing at least 30 days before the leave is to commence or as soon as possible if providing a 30-day notice is not possible. Appropriate forms must be submitted to your supervisor to initiate a FMLA leave and to return the employee to active status following such a leave. An employee requesting FMLA leave must provide the school with appropriate medical or other certification of the reason for the leave of absence. Failure to properly request leave or provide certification may result in a delay or denial of leave.

If a FMLA leave is taken because of a serious health condition, the leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule if such leave is medically necessary. If a FMLA leave is taken because of the birth or placement of a child, intermittent leave or a reduced leave schedule is not permitted unless approved by the school.

During leave, an employee will not accrue benefits. Employment benefits accrued by an employee prior to the time a FMLA leave begins will not be forfeited.

During a FMLA leave, an employee with medical benefits coverage will remain entitled to such coverage. However, the employee must continue to contribute his or her share, if any, of the premium of such coverage. Failure of an employee to pay his or her share of such premium in a timely fashion may result in a loss of coverage. If an employee does not return to work after the expiration of a FMLA leave, the employee will be required to reimburse the school for any premiums paid on his or her behalf during the leave of absence.

In general, an employee who returns to work from a FMLA leave of no longer than 12 weeks in duration is entitled to be reinstated, without a reduction in pay or benefits, to the same or an equivalent position with the school. An employee who fails to return to work following a FMLA leave may forfeit reinstatement and/or be terminated.

Maternity/Paternity Leave Policy

Time off for maternity or paternity leave may be achieved through the use of leave days, vacation days, personal days, and the Family and Medical Leave Act. Once these days are

exhausted, any further absences will be considered days without pay. Other ESA employees may donate accrued leave days to personnel who are in need of maternity/paternity leave. Please refer to the policies related to the aforementioned leave days in the Handbook for more information.

Workplace Injury Leave

Employees who sustain an injury during the course of performing their work are covered under the North Carolina Workers' Compensation Laws. Any work-related injury or illness must be reported to your supervisor immediately and an accident report will be completed. Where appropriate, the school will refer you to a physician for treatment. Any time required away from work due to an occupational injury or illness is determined by the treating physician. The physician will monitor your progress until you return for full duty.

Bereavement Leave

ESA recognizes that losing an immediate family member is traumatic and painful. ESA offers bereavement leave to help you through this difficult time. In the unfortunate event of a death in the immediate family, a leave of absence of up to 3 days with pay will be granted to full-time regular employees. These 3 days are to be taken consecutively within a reasonable time of the day of the death or day of the funeral.

For this purpose, immediate family is defined as:

- Spouse
- Child
- Step-child
- Parents (including in-laws)
- Step-parents
- Siblings
- Step-siblings
- Grandparents
- Grandchildren
- Other as approved by the Executive Director

Employees are encouraged to notify their supervisor of circumstances and time off needed as soon as possible. An employee may also submit a request for unpaid time off. Bereavement leave is paid at a straight time rate and does not count toward the 40-hour requirement for overtime pay. Employees on normal leave, holiday, leave of absence, or FMLA leave will not be eligible for bereavement leave pay. While the school will make every effort to exercise the greatest degree of understanding during these difficult times, it is also anticipated that the employee will also use his/her best judgment.

Military Leave

Employees who are members of the Armed Forces Reserve or National Guard will be granted fifteen (15) days of paid military leave per year to fulfill a military obligation. When an

employee is required to meet for military training, the employee may be allowed to use paid military leave or other eligible paid leave. An employee has an obligation to make a concerted effort to arrange training that does not conflict with an assigned work schedule. Periods ineligible for paid military leave include (1) duties resulting from disciplinary actions imposed by military authorities and (2) inactive duty training performed for the convenience of the member. Employees should notify their supervisor and provide documentation of their obligation to report for military training as soon as they are aware of the obligation.

Termination

Employment with Envision Science Academy (ESA) is voluntarily entered into, and an employee is free to resign at any time, with or without cause. Similarly, ESA may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice or cause, as long as there is no violation of applicable federal and state law.

Resignation

Notice of resignation should be submitted to the Executive Director or Board of Directors at least thirty (30) calendar days before the final working day. All resignations must be in writing and shall include the announcement of intent to resign and the date of the last day to be worked. Envision Science Academy requests that each employee participates in an exit interview with the Executive Director prior to separation of employment. A copy of the resignation will be placed in the employee's personnel file. Any employee who resigns and then later returns to Envision Science Academy (ESA) will do so as a new employee. Salary, benefits, leaves, etc. will be determined by the position accepted and not by those granted during the period of previous employment.

Non-Renewal

There are no automatic rights to renewal of contracts for staff members. All employees are at-will employees and contracts may be terminated or non-renewed by either party, with or without cause.

Appeals

Employees may appeal any decision to terminate a contract before its expiration. Employees may also appeal any decision not to renew a contract when the employee contends it is an act of employment discrimination against any category described in ESA's Equal Employment Opportunity statement. Appeals should be made in writing to the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall forward the appeal to the Board for review. The Board will review the appeal no later than the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.

Expenses and Travel

If it is necessary for you to travel in support of school business, your supervisor should approve the expense in advance. The resulting expenses must be recorded in an expense report and approved by your supervisor. Employees traveling on school business are expected to book economy class fares and to exercise good judgment in their spending on meals and accommodation. In general, the least expensive itinerary should be selected that is consistent with a reasonable standard of comfort and convenience. Selection of ground travel – rental car versus taxi, etc. – should also reflect a preference for the most economical mode that is

consistent with a reasonable level of convenience. If a personal vehicle is used for school business travel, the mileage reimbursement rate will be based on the State rate.

Physical/Mental Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Sexual Misconduct, and Sexual Molestation Prevention

Envision Science Academy does not permit actual or threatened acts of physical or mental abuse, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or sexual molestation (“Prohibited Conduct”) to occur in the workplace, or at any activity sponsored by, or related to, your employment. In order to make this “zero—tolerance” policy clear to all employees, volunteers, and staff members, we have adopted mandatory procedures that all employees, volunteers, family members, board members, individuals, and victims must follow when they reasonably suspect, learn of, or witness Prohibited Conduct.

Abuse, misconduct, or molestation means each, every, and all actual, threatened or alleged acts of physical or mental abuse, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, or sexual molestation performed by one person, or by two or more persons acting together.

Reporting Procedure

All employees, volunteers, or staff members who learn of, have a reasonable suspicion of, Prohibited Conduct must immediately report it to the Executive Director. If the victim is an adult, the abuse, misconduct, or neglect will be reported by the designee to the local or state police and/or to Adult Protective Services (APS) Agency. If a child is the victim of abuse, misconduct, or neglect, the designee will report the matter to the local or state police and/or to Child Abuse Agency. Appropriate family members of the victim will be notified immediately of suspected child abuse, misconduct, or neglect.

Investigation & Follow Up

We take all allegations of Prohibited Conduct seriously. Once reported, we will promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigate the allegations to determine whether there is a reasonable basis to believe that the Prohibited Conduct has occurred and whether the target of the investigation committed the Prohibited Conduct. The investigation may be undertaken by an internal team comprised of fellow employees or we may hire an independent third party. We will fully cooperate with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or regulatory agencies and we may refer the complaint and the result of our investigation to those agencies. We reserve the right to place the target(s) of the investigation on an involuntary leave of absence or reassign that person to responsibilities that do not involve personal contact with individuals or students. To the fullest extent possible, but consistent with our legal obligation to report suspected and/or Prohibited Conduct to appropriate authorities, we will endeavor to keep the identity(ies) of the target(s) and the alleged victim(s) confidential.

If the investigation substantiates the allegations, our policy provides for disciplinary penalties, including but not limited to termination of the target’s relationship with our organization.

Retaliation Prohibited

We prohibit retaliation against anyone, including an employee, volunteer, board member, student, or individual, who in good faith reports Prohibited Conduct. Retaliation against a participant in the

investigation is also prohibited. Anyone who retaliates against someone who has made a good faith allegation of Prohibited Conduct, or intentionally provides false information to that effect, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Title IX Discrimination and Harassment Policies For Students and Staff Members

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

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

A. PROHIBITED BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES

1. Discrimination or Harassment

Students, employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. In accordance with Title IX, ESA expressly prohibits discrimination or harassment, based on sex or gender and prohibits sexual harassment (including sexual violence) and gender-based harassment. Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. It includes unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex, requests for sexual favors in exchange for benefits (quid pro quo), and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person’s will or where a person is incapable of giving consent. A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion. In accordance with Title IX, ESA also prohibits gender-based harassment, which is unwelcome conduct based on a student’s sex, harassing conduct based on a student’s failure to conform to sex stereotypes.

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

2. Retaliation

ESA prohibits intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under Title IX. Intimidation, threats, coercion,

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

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

B. APPLICATION OF POLICY

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

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

C. DEFINITIONS

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

1. Discrimination

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

2. Harassment

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

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

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

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

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

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

3. Conduct Not Covered by This Policy

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

TO REPORT A VIOLATION OF THIS POLICY: PLEASE REFER TO ESA’S TITLE IX REPORTING AND GRIEVANCE POLICY.

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

TITLE IX COORDINATOR’S DUTIES, NOTICE, REPORTING AND GRIEVANCE POLICY

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

ESA’s Title IX Coordinator is:

Ms. Xaviera T. Johnson

xjohnson@enviionscienceacademy.com

590 Traditions Grande Blvd, Wake Forest, NC 27587 | 919.435.4002

A. TRAINING AND PROGRAMS

The designated Title IX Coordinator shall establish training and other programs that are designed to help eliminate unlawful discrimination or harassment and foster an environment of understanding and respect for all members of ESA community. Information about this policy and the related complaint procedure must be included in the training plan. The training or programs should:

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

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

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

Moreover, training for Title IX personnel, including the Coordinator, Investigator(s), Decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of sexual harassment. ESA will post materials used to train Title IX personnel on their websites for a minimum of

seven (7) years after posted, if any, or make materials available for members of the public to inspect.

B. NOTICE

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

C. TITLE IX COORDINATOR

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

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

D. EVALUATION

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

E. CONFIDENTIALITY

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

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

F. REPORTING TITLE IX VIOLATIONS

1. For Students:

- a. To report discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment/misconduct based on sex/gender, students or their parents should contact a trusted teacher or advisor, grade-level Dean, Executive Director and/or Title IX coordinator immediately and file a complaint.
- b. Employees are required to report any actual or suspected violations of this policy. When anyone reports harassment and/or discrimination to a school employee, that employee shall notify the Title IX Coordinator, grade-level Dean, or Executive Director, as soon as possible and within 24 hours.
- c. If the Executive Director is involved in the allegation, then another administrator will immediately inform the Chair of the Board of Directors.

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

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

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

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

G. DEFINITIONS

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

1. "Complainant" is as an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. This means that any third party as well as the complainant may report sexual harassment. While parents and guardians do not become complainants

(or respondents), parents and guardians have a right to act on behalf of parties (including by filing formal complaints) in Title IX matters.

2. “Respondent” is as an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.
3. “Formal complaint” is as a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that ESA investigate the allegation of sexual harassment and state that at the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant was participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of ESA with which the formal complaint is filed. A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information required to be listed for the Title IX Coordinator, and by any additional method designated by ESA.
4. “Document filed by a complainant” means a document or electronic submission (such as by e-mail or through an online portal provided for this purpose by ESA) that contains the complainant’s physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the person filing the formal complaint. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a complainant or a party during a grievance process, and must comply with requirements for Title IX personnel to be free from conflicts and bias.
5. “Supportive measures” are individualized services reasonably available that are non-punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, or deter sexual harassment. ESA’s selection of supportive measures and remedies shall be based on what is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

H. MANDATORY RESPONSE AND PROCEDURAL OBLIGATIONS

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

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

1. ESA will offer supportive measures to the person alleged to be the victim (referred to as the “complainant”).
2. The Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the complainant confidentially to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the complainant’s wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.
3. ESA will follow the grievance process set forth herein before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures, against a respondent.

4. ESA will not restrict rights protected under the U.S. Constitution, including the First Amendment, Fifth Amendment, and Fourteenth Amendment, when complying with Title IX.
5. ESA will investigate sexual harassment allegations in any formal complaint, which can be filed by a complainant, or signed by a Title IX Coordinator.
6. A complainant's wishes with respect to whether ESA investigates should be respected unless ESA determines that not pursuing an investigation would be deliberately indifferent (or that pursuing an investigation is necessary for community safety or similar reasons), in which case the Title IX Coordinator may sign complaint even if the complainant does not file a formal complaint (doing so will not be viewed as adversarial toward the respondent).
7. If the allegations in a formal complaint do not meet the definition of sexual harassment as defined in ESA's Title IX policy, or the alleged conduct did not occur in ESA's education program or activity, against a person in the United States, ESA must dismiss such allegations for purposes of Title IX. However, ESA may still address the allegations in any manner ESA deems appropriate under ESA's code of conduct or other policies.
8. Treat complainants equitably by providing remedies any time a respondent is found responsible, and treat respondents equitably by not imposing disciplinary sanctions without following the grievance process set forth herein.
9. Remedies, which are required to be provided to a complainant when a respondent is found responsible, must be designed to maintain the complainant's equal access to education and may include supportive measures; however, remedies need not be non-disciplinary or non-punitive and need not avoid burdening the respondent.
10. All Title IX personnel (Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, people who facilitate any informal resolution process) shall be free from conflicts of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents.
11. There is a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
12. ESA's grievance process shall not use, rely on, or seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.
13. Any provisions, rules, or practices that a school adopts as part of its grievance process for handling formal complaints of sexual harassment must apply equally to both parties (complainant and respondent).
14. The standard of evidence to determine responsibility is the preponderance of the evidence standard for all formal complaints of sexual harassment, whether the respondent is a student or an employee (including faculty member).

I. SUPPORTIVE MEASURES, REMEDIES AND DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

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

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

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

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

Remedies Include:

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

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

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

- Training or retraining school employees on ESA’s responsibilities to address allegations of sexual violence and how to conduct Title IX investigations;
- Developing materials on sexual harassment, which should be distributed to all staff and students;
- Conducting bystander intervention and sexual harassment prevention programs with students and/or staff;
- Issuing policy statements or taking other steps that clearly communicate that ESA does not tolerate sexual harassment and will respond to any incidents and to any student who reports such incidents;
- Conducting, in conjunction with student leaders, a School climate check to assess the effectiveness of efforts to ensure that ESA is free from sexual violence, and using that information to inform future proactive steps that ESA will take;
- Targeted training for a group of students if, for example, the sexual harassment created a hostile environment (i.e., on an athletic team);
- When a school is unable to conduct a full investigation into a particular incident (i.e., when it received a general report of sexual violence without any personally identifying information), it should consider remedies for the broader student population in response.

Disciplinary sanctions include:

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

J. INVESTIGATIONS

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

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

1. The burden of gathering evidence and burden of proof must remain on ESA, not on the parties.
2. ESA must provide equal opportunity for the parties to present fact and expert witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.

3. ESA must not restrict the ability of the parties to discuss the allegations or gather evidence (e.g., no “gag orders”).
4. Parties must have the same opportunity to select an advisor of the party’s choice who may be, but need not be, an attorney.
5. ESA shall send a written notice to the parties (complainant and respondent) of any investigative interviews, meetings, or hearings.
6. ESA shall send the parties, and their advisors, evidence directly related to the allegations, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 days for the parties to inspect, review, and respond to the evidence.
7. ESA shall send the parties, and their advisors, an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence, in electronic format or hard copy, with at least 10 days for the parties to respond.
8. ESA shall dismiss allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of sexual harassment set forth in ESA’s Title IX policy or did not occur in a school’s education program or activity against a person in the U.S. Such dismissal is only for Title IX purposes and does not preclude ESA from addressing the conduct in any manner ESA deems appropriate.
9. ESA may, in its discretion, dismiss a formal complaint or allegations therein if the complainant informs the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant desires to withdraw the formal complaint or allegations therein, if the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by ESA, or if specific circumstances prevent ESA from gathering sufficient evidence to reach a determination.
10. ESA shall give the parties written notice of a dismissal (mandatory or discretionary) and the reasons for the dismissal.
11. ESA may, in its discretion, consolidate formal complaints where the allegations arise out of the same facts.
12. ESA shall protect the privacy of a party’s medical, psychological, and similar treatment records and shall not access or use such records unless ESA obtains the party’s voluntary, written consent to do so.

K. DECISION-MAKER

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

1. Start with the presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
2. All Complainants are afforded rape shield protections, deeming questions and evidence about a complainant’s prior sexual behavior irrelevant, unless offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged misconduct or offered to prove consent.
3. Use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching her/his decision.
4. Require objective evaluation of all relevant evidence, inculpatory and exculpatory, and avoid credibility determinations based on a person’s status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.

5. After sending the investigative report to the parties and before reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker(s) must afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.
6. Issue a written determination regarding responsibility with findings of fact, conclusions about whether the alleged conduct occurred, rationale for the result as to each allegation, any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent, and whether remedies will be provided to the complainant.
7. The written determination must be sent simultaneously to the parties along with information about how to file an appeal.

L. GRIEVANCE PROCESS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

M. INFORMAL RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR STUDENTS

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

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

N. POLICY APPLICATION

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

Title IX Notice

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity. Sexual harassment, which includes sexual assault and other sexual misconduct, is a form of sex discrimination. Under the School’s Policy, the School prohibits sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking and retaliation. The School complies with Title IX and has appointed **Ms. Xaviera T. Johnson** as the Title IX Coordinator with overall responsibility for Title IX compliance. He/She can be reached at:

Ms. Xaviera T. Johnson

xjohnson@enviionscienceacademy.com

590 Traditions Grande Blvd, Wake Forest, NC 27587 | 919.435.4002

Any student, employee, or applicant for employment or admission to the School who believes that he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of sex, in violation of Title IX, or has been a victim of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or other sexual misconduct, may file a complaint with the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will assist the complainant in identifying the appropriate School policy (with its grievance procedure) to resolve the complaint in a prompt and equitable manner. The Title IX Coordinator may consult with other School administrators, as needed, to resolve the complaint in the most effective manner.

The Title IX Coordinator is knowledgeable and trained in state and federal laws that apply to matters of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other sexual misconduct, as well as School

policy and procedure.

Non-Title IX Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Process

Equal Education Opportunities

ESA provides equal education opportunities for all students and does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, sex, disability, nationality, religious affiliation or any other protected class. The School adheres to the legal obligations and requirements under all state and federal laws, including without limitation, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Individuals with Disabilities Act Amendments of 1997, including identification, evaluation, and provision of an appropriate education.

ESA takes seriously all complaints of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. The process provided in this policy is designed for those individuals who believe that they may have been discriminated against unlawfully, bullied, or harassed in violation of the ESA's Equal Education Opportunities Policy. Individuals who have witnessed or have reliable information that another person has been subject to unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying also should report such violations in the manner provided in this policy. Reports may be made anonymously and reports do not need to be made in a particular format or on a particular form. This policy applies to all discrimination, harassment or bullying on the basis of race (including Title VI), disability (including Section 504), nationality, religious affiliation or any other protected class.

This policy does not apply where an individual seeks to assert allegations regarding or related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or free appropriate public education of a student under Section 504 or the IDEA, such allegations may be raised through the procedures governing such matters. This Policy also does not apply to Title IX complaints, behavior falling within Title IX or Title VII complaints. Please refer to the ESA's Title IX policies for Title IX and VII matters.

If you have any questions as to what complaint process to use to address your concern, please contact the Executive Director or Title IX Coordinator, who will direct you to the proper process.

A. Reporting by Employees or Other Third Parties

1. Mandatory Reporting by ESA Employees

Any employee who witnessed or who has reliable information or reason to believe that an individual may have been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of ESA Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy must report the offense immediately to an appropriate individual designated in subsection B.1., below. An employee who does not promptly report possible discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

2. Reporting by Other Third Parties

All members of the ESA community including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors are also strongly encouraged to report any act that may constitute an incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

3. Anonymous Reporting

Reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

4. Investigation of Reports

Reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying under this policy will be investigated sufficiently to determine whether further action under this policy or otherwise is necessary, and ESA officials shall take such action as appropriate under the circumstances. At the option of the alleged victim, the report may be treated as a complaint by the alleged victim under this policy.

B. Complaints Brought by Alleged Victims of Discrimination, Harassment, or Bullying

1. Filing a Complaint

Any individual who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of the ESA's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy is strongly encouraged to file a complaint orally or in writing to the following individuals as applicable:

- a. the ESA counselor, teacher, dean of students, principal or assistant principal of the ESA for any claim of discrimination, harassment or bullying, including Title VI complaints;
- b. the Title IX coordinator for claims of sex discrimination or sexual harassment;
- c. the Section 504 coordinator or the ADA coordinator for claims of discrimination on the basis of a disability; or
- d. any member of the Board if the alleged perpetrator is the Principal.

2. Time Period for Filing a Complaint

A complaint should be filed as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the complaint. Complaints submitted after the 30-day period may be investigated at the discretion of ESA officials and outside the formal process described in Section C of this policy; however, individuals should recognize that delays in reporting may significantly impair the ability of ESA officials to investigate and respond to such complaints.

3. Informal Resolution

The ESA acknowledges that many complaints may be addressed informally through such methods as conferences or mediation. The ESA encourages the use of informal procedures such as mediation to the extent possible; however, mediation or other informal procedures will not be used to resolve complaints alleging sexual assault or sexual violence or complaints by a student of sexual harassment perpetrated by an employee. Informal procedures may be used only if the parties involved voluntarily agree. Any informal process should be completed within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 30 days unless special circumstances necessitate more time.

C. Process for Addressing Complaints of Alleged Incidents of Discrimination, Harassment, or Bullying

1. Initiating the Investigation

- a. Whoever receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or bullying pursuant to subsection B.1. shall immediately notify the Principal who shall designate an individual

to conduct an investigation and respond to the complaint, such individual may be a ESA employee or outside consultant.

- b. As applicable, the investigator shall immediately notify the Title IX , or other relevant coordinator of the complaint, and, as appropriate, may designate the coordinator to conduct the investigation.
- c. The investigator shall explain the process of the investigation to the complainant and the alleged perpetrator.
- d. Written documentation of all formal reports and complaints, as well as the ESA system's response, must be maintained in accordance with the ESA's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy.
- e. Failure to report, investigate, and/or address claims of discrimination, harassment, or bullying may result in disciplinary action.

2. Conducting the Investigation

- a. The investigator is responsible for determining whether the alleged act(s) constitutes a violation of the Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy. In so doing, the investigator shall impartially, promptly, and thoroughly investigate the complaint. The investigator shall interview (1) the complainant; (2) the alleged perpetrator(s); (3) individuals identified as witnesses by the complainant or alleged perpetrator(s); and (4) any other individuals, including other possible victims, deemed likely to have relevant information. The alleged perpetrator shall be notified of the general nature of the allegations. The investigation will include a review of all evidence presented by the complainant and/or alleged perpetrator.

If the investigator, after receipt of the complaint, an interview with the complainant, and consultation with the board attorney, determines that the allegations submitted, even if factual, do not constitute discrimination, harassment, or bullying as defined in ESA's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, the matter will be treated outside the scope of this policy. Information regarding the investigator's determination and the process for addressing the complaint will be provided to the complainant.

- b. The complaint and investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Information may be shared only with individuals who need the information in order to investigate and address the complaint appropriately and those with a legal right to access the information. Any requests by the complainant for further confidentiality will be evaluated within the context of the legal responsibilities of the ESA system.
- c. The investigator shall review the factual information gathered through the investigation to determine whether, based on a preponderance of the evidence, the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying, giving consideration to all factual information, the context in which the alleged incidents occurred, the age, and maturity of the complainant and alleged perpetrator(s), and any other relevant circumstances.

3. Notice to Complainant and Alleged Perpetrator

- a. The investigator shall provide written notification to the complainant of the results of the investigation within 15 days of receiving the complaint, unless additional time is

necessary to conduct an impartial, thorough investigation. The investigator shall specify whether the complaint was substantiated and, if so, shall also specify:

- i. reasonable, timely, age-appropriate, corrective action intended to end the discrimination, harassment, or bullying, and prevent it from recurring;
 - ii. as needed, reasonable steps to address the effects of the discrimination, harassment, or bullying on the complainant; and
 - iii. as needed, reasonable steps to protect the complainant from retaliation as a result of communicating the complaint.
- b. Information regarding specific disciplinary action imposed on the alleged perpetrator(s) will not be given to the complainant unless the information relates directly to the complainant (e.g., an order requiring the perpetrator not to have contact with the complainant).
- c. If the investigator determines that the complaint was substantiated, the perpetrator(s) shall be subject to discipline or other corrective steps, as set forth in ESA policy. If the corrective steps involve actions outside the scope of the investigator's authority, the Principal or designee will be notified so that responsibility for taking the corrective steps may be delegated to the appropriate individual.
- d. The alleged perpetrator will be provided with a written summary of the results of the investigation in regard to whether the complaint was substantiated, whether the alleged perpetrator violated relevant law or ESA policies by his or her actions, and what, if any, disciplinary actions or consequences may be imposed upon the perpetrator in accordance with ESA policy. The perpetrator may appeal any disciplinary action or consequence in accordance with any ESA's policy governing disciplinary action. However, an appeal by the perpetrator of disciplinary action does not preclude ESA officials from taking appropriate action to address the discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

4. Appeal

- a. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, he or she may appeal the decision to the Principal. The appeal must be submitted in writing within ten days of receiving the notice of the results of the investigation. The appeal must state with particularity whether the complainant is appealing (1) the investigator's determination of whether the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of the ESA's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, or (2) the ESA's response to any violation, including the appropriateness of any remedial measures taken by the ESA. If the complainant is appealing pursuant to option (2), he or she must state what additional measures the complainant believes should have been taken by the ESA. The Principal or designee may review the documents, conduct any further investigation necessary, or take any other steps the Principal or designee determines to be appropriate in order to respond to the complaint. The Principal or designee shall provide a written response within 10 days after receiving the appeal, unless further investigation is needed. The Principal's decision is final.
- b. If the alleged perpetrator is the Principal or the Principal declines to hear the appeal and refers it to the Board of Directors, the complainant may appeal the decision in writing within ten days of receipt directly to the Board of Directors. The appeal must state with particularity whether the complainant is appealing the Principal's decision with regard to (1) the investigator's determination of whether the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of ESA's Non-Title IX Prohibition

Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, or (2) the ESA's response to any violation, including the appropriateness of any remedial measures taken by the ESA. If the complainant is appealing pursuant to option (2), he or she must state what additional measures the complainant believes the ESA should have taken. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Board Chair shall appoint a panel of not less than two members of the Board to hear and decide the appeal. The panel shall make reasonable efforts to meet and consider the appeal within twenty days after the chairperson refers the grievance to the panel. The panel shall review the complaint on the record unless it determines that additional information may be presented. No new evidence, written or verbal, may be presented without the prior knowledge and consent of both parties. At the Board Panel's discretion, they may hold a hearing and ask each party may make a brief oral presentation of no more than twenty minutes to summarize his or her position. The panel has the authority to ask questions, extend time limits, exclude extraneous or duplicative information, and otherwise maintain an efficient and fair appeal hearing. If a hearing is held, it will be recorded and shall be held in closed session. The Board panel may affirm, reverse or modify the decision. The Board panel shall use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching its decision. The Board panel will provide a final written decision within twenty days after the Board hearing unless the panel determines that additional time is needed for further review. The decision of the Board panel shall be final.

D. Timeliness of Process

If any ESA official charged with investigating the complaint or reviewing the investigation fails at any step in the process to communicate a decision within the specified time limit, the complainant will be entitled to appeal the complaint to the next step unless the official has notified the complainant of the delay and the reason for the delay. The ESA official shall make reasonable efforts to keep the complainant apprised of progress being made during any period of delay. Delays that interfere with the exercise of any legal rights are not permitted.

Failure by the complainant at any step in the process to appeal to the next step within the specified time or to attend a scheduled meeting or hearing under this policy will be considered acceptance of the results of the investigation and the ESA's response to the complaint, unless the complainant provided notice of the delay and the reason for the delay and the ESA consented in writing to the delay.

E. General Requirements

1. No reprisals or retaliation of any kind will be taken by the Board or by any ESA employee against the complainant or other individual on account of his or her filing a complaint or report or participating in an investigation of a complaint or report filed and decided pursuant to this policy. Disciplinary or other action may be taken against the complainant or other individual if the person knew or had reason to believe that the complaint or report was false or knowingly provided false information.
2. All meetings and hearings conducted pursuant to this policy will be private.
3. The complainant may be represented by an advocate, such as an attorney, at any meeting with the ESA under this policy. Should the complainant choose to be represented by an attorney, an attorney for the ESA may also be present.

4. Nothing in this policy shall prevent the Principal or Board from suspending the alleged perpetrator without pay during the course of the investigation or taking any other action deemed appropriate where the alleged perpetrator is an employee.

F. Records

Records will be maintained as required by ESA's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy.

Standards for Professionalism

We expect employees to dress and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with a productive workplace and the professional standards of their function. This expectation applies to any activity in which an employee could be deemed to be representing ESA, before, during and after normal school hours. ESA desires that each employee takes sufficient care and pride in his/her appearance so as to exercise a mature discretion in maintaining a suitable professional appearance at all times. ESA's standards for professionalism extend beyond personal appearance. This includes the expectation that employees represent themselves professionally through their communication, organization, planning, follow-through, and dedication to creating a positive experience for students, parents and the community.

Dress Guidelines for Staff

Comfortable business casual dress is recommended for all staff. Clothing and shoes should be consistent with one's responsibilities (e.g. athletic wear for coaching). Whenever you are on campus, you are representing Envision Science Academy and may encounter prospective families touring the school. These guidelines apply whenever the school is open for students. Staff in violation of the dress guidelines will be asked to correct the violation. Interpretation of the dress guidelines shall be determined by the administration but would be consistently applied to all employees.

- Clothing should be neat, clean, wrinkle-free, modest and appropriately-sized (not baggy or too tight). Note: thin knit dresses and skirts are not appropriate for professional dress.
- Clothing should be free from holes, tears, and excessive fading.
- All dresses, skirts, and the tops of slits in skirts, should be at an appropriate, non-distracting length.
- Men's shirts must be tucked in at all times, unless conducting PE, coaching, or outdoor field trips.
- Women's tops, necklines, and waistlines should not be distracting.
- Dress or Casual (not athletic) shoes are appropriate. Unsafe shoes such as Crocs, flip flops, thongs, or excessively high heels should be avoided.
- Makeup and jewelry should be conventional and non-distracting.
- Body piercings and tattoos should not be distracting. Jewelry of any type that is considered to be distracting by the administration must be removed. Tattoos that the administration consider to be inappropriate must be covered.
- Hats, caps, bandanas, or other headwear should not be worn inside unless for documented religious reasons.
- Hairstyles, including facial hair, should be professional, clean, neat, and, in general, not pose a distraction.

- T-shirts, jeans, and shorts are prohibited, unless appropriate in relation to context (e.g. spirit day, outdoor field trip, PE, etc.).

Guidelines for Conduct

ESA expects all employees to behave ethically and responsibly. While this goes without saying for the vast majority of people who will join ESA, unfortunately, it is necessary to state explicitly those illegal or unethical violations that will lead to disciplinary action, including termination.

Actions that are in violation of school policy include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Falsifying school records.
2. Immoral or indecent conduct on school property, while at school functions, or while representing the school. This includes harassment or intimidation.
3. Stealing school property, government property, or the property of any employee.
4. Willful damage to school property or the property of other employees or students, or willful acts that may endanger or result in injury to others.
5. Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs; possession, sale or use of marijuana or other illegal drugs on school property.
6. Gross negligence in the performance of duties resulting in damage to school property or products, employee property, or student property, or injury to student, staff or other persons.
7. Possessing weapons or explosives on school property.
8. Use of abusive, intimidating or disrespectful language, including mean spirited jokes and comments (see harassment section).
9. Excessive absences or tardiness. Absences that exceed the employee's accrued number of leave days, not approved by the Executive Director/designee, are considered excessive.
10. Failure to report personal injury resulting from an on-the-job accident immediately after it occurs.
11. Conviction of a criminal offense that interferes with the individual's or the school's ability to work effectively.

Abuse and Molestation

This organization has zero tolerance for abuse and will not tolerate the mistreatment or abuse in its programs. Any mistreatment or abuse by an employee or volunteer will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or volunteer service and cooperation with law enforcement.

One-on-one Interactions

Most abuse occurs when an adult is alone with a student, or when a student is alone with another student. Our organization aims to eliminate or reduce these situations and prohibits private one-on-one interactions unless approved in advance by the organization administration. If you observe suspicious one-on-one interactions between employees and students, you should report this to Xaviera Johnson or Dr. Charles Fuller immediately by emailing at xjohnson@envisionscienceacademy.com or cfuller@envisionscienceacademy.com or by calling 919-435-4002. You can also use the SSARS anonymous reporting system which is found on the student services page on our website.

One-on-one prevention

One-on-one interactions may occur as part of this organization's programming under authorized circumstances.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the organization clearly communicates expectations for employees and volunteers and gives examples of appropriate behavior when one-on-one interactions may occur. In those situations where one-on-one interactions are authorized, employees and volunteers should observe the following guidelines to limit the risk of abuse or false allegations of abuse:

- Meet in a public place where you are in full view of others.
- Avoid physical interactions during one-on-one meetings. If unavoidable, ensure physical and verbal interactions align with this organization's established policies and are limited to the task at hand.
- Staff should avoid being one-on-one with students in a closed room when possible. If this is required due to matters of sensitive nature, interactions should always take place in a room with an unobstructed window which is possible to be in the view of others.
- Inform other employees and volunteers that you are alone with a student and encourage them to randomly drop in or pass by the interaction.
- To the extent possible, ensure one-on-one interactions occurring behind closed doors are scheduled in advance or are communicated with the supervisor. Meetings requiring closed doors should always occur in rooms with unobstructed windows which are possible to be seen by others.
- Ensure one-on-one interactions are documented, especially if behind closed doors.
- Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.
- If a student requires assistance in the restroom, best practice is to have two adults present to ensure proper interaction.

Reporting

Because our organization is dedicated to maintaining zero tolerance for abuse, it is imperative that everyone, including students, actively participate in the protection of students. All ESA staff members are mandatory reporters. This means that if any staff observes any suspicious or inappropriate behaviors and/or policy violations on the part of other employees, volunteers, or other students, it is their personal responsibility to immediately report their observations to either Xaviera Johnson, Charles Fuller, and the appropriate authorities (child protective services, law enforcement, etc.). Remember, at our organization, the policies apply to everyone.

Bathroom Check Policy

Teachers should not send more than one child to the restroom at a time unless the whole class is taking a teacher supervised bathroom break.

Attendance

Each employee contributes on a daily basis to the success of our school. Therefore, employees are expected to be on the job unless there are reasonable circumstances that prohibit attendance. The school believes its staff is mature and professional enough to exercise good judgment to

keep time to address personal matters during normal working hours within reason. Requests for occasional absences for such purposes must be made in advance to the employee's supervisor. If you will be late, or are unable to report to work, notify your supervisor a minimum of one hour prior to the start of your scheduled workday, unless circumstances prevent. Similarly, if you need to leave early, notify your supervisor as far in advance as possible, but no later than one hour prior to your departure, unless circumstances prevent.

Because attendance is imperative to meet the school's needs and objectives as well as the successful operation of our school, chronic absenteeism or failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Failure to report to work or notify your supervisor for 3 consecutive school days will be considered voluntary resignation.

Employee Children at Work

On days when school is in session, employees are expected to devote their full attention to providing for the safety and educational needs of all Envision Science Academy students. On these days, employees are prohibited from bringing non-ESA enrolled students with them to work.

In situations in which an employee decides to bring their child/children to campus on professional development, remote learning days, and/or teacher workdays, the child/children must be adequately supervised by their parent and not interfere with the professional working environment. All staff should be aware that professional development days are often very intensive and require meetings and/or face to face training that would make it difficult for staff to supervise young children. Staff children will be expected to abide by all applicable school safety measures. Envision Science Academy will assume no liability in the event of accident or injury for any child/children brought to school by employees on workdays regardless of the child/children's enrollment status.

Disciplinary Action

Formal disciplinary counseling will include your written commitment to an action plan for improving performance. Generally, disciplinary action will occur in a progressive sequence:

1. Initial warning.
2. Formal warning and performance improvement plan.
3. Final warning and performance improvement plan.
4. Discharge.

However, it is not necessary for all four steps to be followed. A warning may be issued at any step depending on the seriousness of the offense. Also, offenses do not have to be of the same nature to constitute a violation serious enough to move on to the next step of the sequence. Performance improvement plans will generally remain active for a period of one year.

Conflict of Interest

ESA believes honesty and integrity are fundamental core values in all its areas of activity. As part of the school's commitment to ensure the integrity of its work, the alignment of that work with its mission and objectives, and compliance with external expectations and obligations, it is

important that there is a clear policy establishing how we identify and address conflicts of interest that might otherwise jeopardize these important criteria. Employees are permitted to work for a charity or community service organization without expressed or written permission.

The school recognizes a formal obligation to identify when a significant conflict of interest may exist between a vendor, partner, or collaborator and any member of the Board of Directors (and their immediate family members) or school administration. Therefore, the school will routinely confirm whether such interests exist prior to undertaking such external relationships, and if so, document that interest and the procedures to be adopted for managing or eliminating the conflict. In the event that such an interest has failed to be disclosed, the school will reserve the right to review and revise the agreement(s) governing the relationship, including the right to terminate the agreement(s).

Conflict of Interest Review: Two members of the Board (preferably, the financial and legal members) will be designated as the responsible school officers for ensuring all conflict of interest policies are properly implemented and modified as necessary over time. They will also be responsible for reviewing individual cases to determine whether a conflict of interest exists and how such a conflict of interest may be resolved. If a conflict arises concerning these two Board members, the other members of the Board will collectively resolve and mediate the conflict. Such resolution may include the following alternatives:

- Disclosure
- Modification of the proposed role or work to eliminate the area of conflict
- Divestiture of the interest that represents the conflict
- Regular review of work product by a designated school official or independent party

As far as is consistent with a recommended resolution, the school will attempt to keep personal financial information confidential.

Other Employment Outside of ESA

Employment at ESA must be considered your primary job. Staff who choose to have a second job, either part or full-time, must ensure that such employment does not conflict with their duties and responsibilities to ESA. This includes required extra-curricular activities such as faculty meetings, professional development, open houses, etc. Conflicts of interest based on this issue may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Facilities Care and Safety

Envision Science Academy made a significant investment in the construction of our school campus for the continuous pursuit of our mission. It is the goal and responsibility of all users to maintain this valuable asset. Care and safety guidelines include but are not limited to the following:

- Fire and safety codes and regulations must be strictly adhered to at all times.
- Proper care and safety should be exercised to protect the facility and all furniture, fixtures and equipment from loss and misuse, and the life of the aforementioned should be extended through proper maintenance programs.
- Alterations to existing facilities, or installation of equipment, signs, posters, or decorations on or about the school premises is prohibited without prior written approval.

- The facility will be opened, attended and closed by an authorized school employee.
- Keys, entry cards, and access codes must remain in the possession of authorized school employees at all times.
- Sticky Tack, Command strips, tape, and other damage-free temporary hanging adhesives may be used on the walls for hanging items. Staples, nails, tacks, screws, and other items that may create holes may not be used. If temporary adhesives are not sufficient, permission must first be obtained from the appropriate Dean and a custodian must be contacted to complete the requested work.
- Bulletin boards may be used in the hallways to hang student work.
- Painting the walls, windows, doors, floors or ceilings is not permitted without expressed permission.
- The only acceptable appliance in the classroom is a micro-fridge. Other appliances, such as a microwave, coffee maker, etc., are not allowed in the classroom.
- Hallways are to be free of backpacks, lunch boxes, clothing, and other items that may be unsightly and present a tripping hazard.
- No items are to be stored under the stairwells, unless the area is designated as storage.
- The windows on the classroom doors are not to be covered.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace

As part of our commitment to provide a safe workplace for our employees and students and to promote a smoke, alcohol and drug-free community, ESA has established this policy on the use or abuse by employees of alcohol, drugs or other psychoactive substances. Being under the influence and/or the possession of, the use, transfer, sale, manufacture or distribution of illegal substances or alcoholic beverages on school property during working hours, or while representing the school, are violations of school policy. In addition, any employee convicted under a drug statute for a violation occurring in or outside the workplace must notify his/her supervisor no later than five (5) days after such violation. Disciplinary action will be taken for drug-related activities, regardless of whether they happened during working hours or on an employee's own time. ESA reserves the right to randomly test for drugs and alcohol at any time. We recognize that employees suffering from alcohol or drug dependence can be treated. We encourage any employee to seek professional care and counseling prior to any violation of this policy. Violation of this workplace policy will result in corrective action up to and including termination from the school.

Weapons in the Workplace

Except where permitted by law, ESA strictly prohibits weapons of any type on school property or at any school sponsored event. This includes visible and concealed weapons even if the owner has obtained the necessary permits. Violation of this policy will subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination from the school.

Open Communications

We have an earnest desire for ESA to be a successful school, and at the same time, to provide an exciting and rewarding career for everyone. To achieve this, we must maintain a strong foundation of open dialogue and communication. It is core to the ESA culture. All employees should stay aware of changes in objectives, procedures, policies, and general information, and also need to communicate ideas, suggestions, personal goals or problems as they affect the

workplace.

Personal Cell Phones and Emails

We rely on the maturity and judgment of our staff to minimize time spent on personal matters while at work. Let your supervisor know if you have a personal situation that will require an unusual amount of attention. ESA will not pay for personal long-distance calls. Teachers and other staff should not use personal cell phones during instructional time or required meetings. If an employee has a special circumstance that they feel requires use of the cell phone during this time, they should inform the supervisor in advance.

Personal Computers and the Safeguard of School Information

Personal computers, an internet connection, and electronic mail access are provided as the tools to enhance your effectiveness on the job. Electronic mail may include email, voice mail, text messaging, instant messaging, and other forms of electronic communication.

While the primary purpose of these tools should be school related, we allow software that is not purchased by ESA to be installed and used as long as the software or application is legally acquired, downloaded, loaded, or copied and does not interfere with school purchased software and systems. This includes educational gaming, audio, and video software, as well as other programs that are not directly related to ESA purposes. The school reserves the right to remove, or ask the employee to remove, any software. The school expects the employee to act responsibly and to avoid loading any software or application that jeopardizes the integrity of the school or the information systems.

Employees should be aware that the school will not subsidize any ventures such as side businesses, religious or political causes through the use of ESA computers or the electronic mail system.

The electronic mail system is school property. All messages composed, sent, or received on the electronic mail system are and remain the property of ESA. They are not the private property of any employee. The confidentiality of any message should not be assumed. Even when a message is erased, it is still possible to retrieve and read that message. Further, the use of passwords for security does not guarantee confidentiality. All passwords should be kept confidential but must be disclosed to the school upon request.

The electronic mail system is not to be used to create any offensive or disruptive messages. Among those which are considered offensive are any messages which contain sexual implication, racial slurs, gender-specific offensive comments, or any other comment that offensively addresses someone's age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, race or disability. Likewise, software or applications loaded by the employee should not lead to offensive or inappropriate behavior.

The electronic mail system is not to be used to send (upload) or receive (download) copyrighted materials, proprietary information, or similar materials without prior and appropriate authorization. The electronic mail system is not to be used to solicit non-ESA business from students, parents/guardians, or any other community stakeholders. Stakeholder email addresses

and other contact information may never be provided to anyone (beyond ESA Board or staff) without the permission of school administrators or Directors.

ESA reserves and may exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access, and disclose all messages created, received or sent over the electronic mail system for any purpose. The contents of electronic communication properly obtained for legitimate business purposes may be disclosed within the school without the permission of the employee.

Notwithstanding the school's right to retrieve and read any electronic mail messages, such messages should be treated as confidential by other employees and accessed only by the intended recipient. Employees are not authorized to retrieve or read any electronic mail messages that are not sent to them. Similarly, employees should not attempt to access a file or retrieve stored information unless authorized to do so by their supervisor. Any exception to this policy must receive prior approval by the mailbox owner or his/her supervisor.

Any employee who discovers a violation of this policy should notify his or her supervisor. Violations of this policy are grounds for disciplinary action including termination.

Media Relations Policy

ESA is committed to providing the media with accurate information. To avoid discrepancies, specific guidelines should be followed when a media inquiry is received. All media inquiries regarding ESA and its operation must be immediately referred to the Executive Director who is authorized to make or approve public statements regarding school business. Unless specifically designated by this person, you are not authorized to make those statements. If you wish to write or publish an article, paper or other publication on behalf of ESA, you must first obtain approval from the Executive Director.

ESA will generally provide a response to media inquiries within 24 hours. Should the response require a detailed technical explanation, a spokesperson will be designated to address the issue. The spokesperson will be chosen carefully, based on their area(s) of expertise.

Media inquiries include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Press releases
- Advertisements
- Requests for interviews
- Information on:
 - Management changes
 - Financial data
 - Working conditions
 - Wages

Online Social Networking Policy

Envision Science Academy is committed to maintaining a good relationship with its employees and the community. The way the public views ESA is vital to its success. While Envision Science Academy has no intention of controlling employee actions outside of work, employees should practice caution and use discretion when posting content on the Web. Employees have the

right to use social media for personal expression on their own time and Envision Science Academy will not violate employee privacy by attempting to access content that has not been made available publicly. This policy serves as a notice on the practice of social networking for all employees to read and understand. As more concerns develop and legislation is released, this policy is subject to change.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- To guarantee a constructive relationship between the company and its employees
- To manage risk and preserve Envision Science Academy's positive reputation
- To discourage the use of company time for personal social media activities
- To promote awareness among employees of the number of individuals who can access information presented on social networking sites

It is important that employees use their time while at work to conduct school business. Employees are not blocked from access to social networking sites on ESA computers because, under some circumstances, social networking is a powerful tool that can be channeled to gain positive publicity for the school and to connect with the community. However, access to such websites does not mean they can be used at any time. The use of any social media sites or tools for any non-instructional purpose is prohibited during working hours.

Prohibited Conduct

Having your own individual social networking account and using it on your own time is certainly permissible. However, keep in mind that some actions on your personal site are visible for the entire social networking community and may no longer be considered private matters. Any actions on social media that are deemed harmful to the school, its employees, students and other members of the Envision community are prohibited

As stated above, the purpose of this policy is to protect Envision Science Academy's brand and prevent the disclosure of confidential information. It is not Envision Science Academy's intent to interfere with its employees' legal rights.

Change in Status

Should you change your address, phone number, email address, dependent status, etc., it is important that you notify the school administration as soon as possible.

Security and Visitors

Envision Science Academy holds security as a high priority for the protection of students, staff, parents/guardians, and the school campus. For security purposes, all doors other than the front door will remain locked from the outside at all times. Security cameras will provide an extra layer of protection. Entrances will be posted with signs reminding visitors to sign in/out and that no weapons are allowed on campus. All visitors (including volunteers) to the campus will report to the main office through the front door, sign in, and obtain and wear an identification badge. Visitors without an identification badge will be escorted back to the main office to retrieve one. A log of visitors will be maintained in the main office. Visitors must sign out and return the identification badge before leaving campus. Students are not allowed to leave campus unless they have been signed out by an authorized person. All volunteers and staff will be required to

submit to a criminal background check. At times, building access for visitors and volunteers may be suspended due to health and safety protocol.

Fire/Tornado/Crisis Drills

For fire drills, please make sure students line up and leave the room quickly and quietly. There should be no talking. Students will exit their classroom and follow the route shown on the emergency exit plan posted by the door of the classroom which guides them to the closest exit. Teachers should make certain to turn off the lights, close their doors, and take their roll book. When students are lined up outside, teachers should take roll and report any missing students to the administration. Teachers should wait for the “all clear” before returning their students to the classroom. Based on code regulations, we will have one fire drill per month.

There may be one or two tornado drills during the school year. All students should move into the hallways to avoid the windows in the classroom. Teachers should refer to the school’s tornado and severe weather plan for specific information.

The Crisis Management Team consisting of teachers and administrators will act in the event of a crisis. A crisis management plan will be developed, adopted, and maintained by the team to ensure effectiveness. The plan includes alerts, evacuation plans, security, communication procedures, etc. Crisis drills will be scheduled and conducted regularly by the team. Staff will be trained on safety and crisis plans and procedures, and they will train the students.

Weather Policy – Inclement Conditions

Envision Science Academy does not follow Wake County Public School System for school delays and closings. In the case of inclement weather, official notification for delays or closings will be posted on WRAL and its affiliated radio and television stations under “Public Schools.” Emails will be sent to all staff members, and information may be posted on the school’s website and official social media sites. Employees are expected to use their best judgment in deciding whether to come to work. They may take a leave day, take a non-paid day, or make up the day at a time agreeable with their supervisor.

For the first 3 student days missed due to inclement weather or other causes in each school year, exempt employees are not required to make up time due to “extra” time worked for various after-school meetings, parent conferences, events, etc. Non-exempt employees must make up time to avoid losing pay for the missed days. Non-exempt employees may make up time in the following ways, based upon administrative decision:

- Use leave days, if the employee has accrued leave
- Take the time without pay
- Make up time, hour for hour, during a week that the employee works less than 40 hours. For example, if school is closed on Monday, the employee can make up time by working extra on Tuesday through Saturday.
- Make up time, at the overtime rate, during a week that the employee is already working 40 hours. To make up a full day, the employee would work 6 hours (at overtime rate) to make up a regular 8-hour work day.

Any student days missed beyond the 3 three will be made up. On days that the school has delayed opening or early dismissal due to inclement weather or other unforeseen events, these days are not required to be made up. The school will designate make up days in each semester.

Year-End Check Out

At the end of each school year, teachers will need to check out with the school office before leaving for the summer. Check out responsibilities include inventory of curriculum and other materials, completion of student grades, ordering supplies for the next year, and room preparation for the summer. Contact information for the summer should be left with the main office.

Additional Information

While we have tried to cover the most common questions, we recognize that no policy manual can completely address every situation. We encourage you to ask your supervisor for clarification.

RECEIPT OF 2022-2023 ESA EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

I have received a copy of the 2022-2023 Employee Handbook. I understand that this handbook is intended as a general guide to the policies and procedures of Envision Science Academy; and I agree to abide by these policies. It is understood that changes in policy may occur anytime in the school year. Any such changes would supersede existing policies in the Handbook.

My signature acknowledges that I have read and understand the contents of this Handbook.

Employee Signature

Date

Employee Printed Name