



Propel Schools Employee Handbook

This policy applies to all employees; however, in the event of a conflict between the provisions of this Policy and any provision(s) in an enforceable collective bargaining agreement, the provision(s) of this policy that is (are) in conflict with that collective bargaining agreement shall not be applicable to those employees who are covered by that collective bargaining agreement.

A. Equal Employment Opportunity

Propel is an equal opportunity employer. As such, it is committed to being fair, impartial and objective in employment related matters. Employment opportunities are available without regard to race, color, **creed, ancestry, sex or gender (including pregnancy, childbirth, and pregnancy-related conditions)**, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification, gender expression, service in the military, marital status, , genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by **applicable federal, state or local laws and ordinances**. This policy applies to all aspects of employment and all personnel practices, including but not limited to, hiring, promotions, **layoff, recall, leave of absence**, demotions, compensation, benefits, training, transfer, discipline and separation.

When positions are available at any Propel facility, all qualified applicants, including current employees, will be considered consistent with this Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and any laws, rules, and regulations to which Propel is subject.

If it is necessary to transfer, layoff, terminate or recall from layoff any employees, these actions will be performed on a non-discriminatory basis consistent with this Equal Employment Opportunity Policy and any laws, rules, and regulations to which Propel is subject.

All employees will be given equal opportunity to participate in training and education programs appropriate for their positions.

Compensation for specific jobs will be based on non-discriminatory standards, including but not limited to, the area and communities in which Propel operates, the nature of the work to be performed, and the qualifications and experience of the employees performing those jobs.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal, state and local laws, Propel makes reasonable accommodations for qualified employees and applicants **unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on Propel**.. Employees and applicants who seek reasonable accommodations should notify Human Resources of their specific limitations

and, if known, their specific requested accommodations. Principals and Supervisors must direct all accommodation requests to Human Resources. Employees will be asked to supply medical documentation of the need for accommodation. All medical information provided shall be maintained in separate files and shall be kept confidential. Propel will review and analyze the request for an accommodation, including engaging in an interactive process with the employee or applicant, to identify if such an accommodation can be made, or if any other possible accommodations are appropriate. Employees are encouraged to request accommodations before any disability interferes with their work. Propel may not forgive past policy violations even where the violation may have been caused in part by a disability.

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) prohibits employers from requesting genetic information about an employee and his/her family. To comply with this law, Propel asks that employees not provide any genetic information on any company document. 'Genetic information' includes family medical history, results of genetic tests, information that employees or dependents sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus.

Propel respects all recognized forms of religious observance. Employees whose religious beliefs require particular scheduling needs or exemptions from the dress policy, or any other policy of Propel, are encouraged to discuss the issue with their Principal/Supervisor or Human Resources as soon as possible, and in no event less than three weeks before any requested time off. Employees should recognize that Propel may not always be able to grant every request for time off for religious observance.

Any employees with questions or concerns about equal employment opportunities in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of Human Resources. Propel will not tolerate any form of retaliation against individuals who raise issues of equal employment opportunity in good faith.

A.1. Discrimination

As set forth in the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy, Propel does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification, gender expression, veteran status, marital status, family responsibilities, genetic information, or any other basis protected by law.

Employees who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of any protected class (e.g., gender) must report the alleged discrimination to their supervisors. If the supervisor is the person who initiated the alleged discrimination, the employee should report the alleged discrimination to the Superintendent. Additionally, employees who witness discrimination even if they are not the intended target of such discrimination are strongly encouraged to report the alleged discrimination to their supervisors. If the supervisor is the person who initiated the alleged discrimination, the employee should report the alleged discrimination to the Superintendent. All reported or suspected discrimination will be investigated promptly and thoroughly in the strictest confidence. If it is determined that discrimination has occurred Propel will take appropriate disciplinary action, which may include termination of the person responsible for the discriminatory act. Employees making good faith reports of discrimination will not be retaliated against for making such reports.

B. Harassment

Propel recognizes that a work environment free from harassment is essential.

Propel's policies are designed to foster a working environment free from harassment of any type. Examples of unacceptable or harassing behavior include but are not limited to the use of defamatory or abusive words or phrases of a sexual, racial, religious, age or ethnic nature; and derogatory or abusive behavior, actions, jokes, pictures, or materials that demean someone on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification, gender expression, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, or other protected class. Harassment also includes any action that intentionally or unintentionally interferes with an employee's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. Harassment may occur between persons of the same protected class.

Furthermore, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual or other harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. Propel will take all reasonable steps necessary to prevent and eliminate unlawful harassment.

Complaint procedure. Employees who believe that they have been the victim of harassment must report the incident or behavior to their supervisors. If the supervisor is the alleged harasser, the employee should report the alleged harassment to the Superintendent. Additionally, employees who witness harassment even if they are not the intended target of such harassment are strongly encouraged to report the incident to their supervisors. If the supervisor is the alleged harasser, the employee should report the alleged harassment to the Superintendent. All reported or suspected harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated in the strictest confidence. All complaints will be investigated promptly, and confidentiality will be protected to the extent possible. A timely resolution of each complaint should be reached and communicated to the parties involved. If it is determined that harassment has occurred, Propel will take immediate, appropriate corrective action, including discipline, up to and including immediate termination of the harasser. Employees making good faith reports of harassment will not be retaliated against for making such reports.

B.1. Sexual Harassment

While all forms of harassment are prohibited, sexually offensive speech and conduct are inappropriate in the professional educational environment of Propel. Sexual harassment is absolutely prohibited. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome or unwanted sexual (a) attention; (b) advances; (c) requests; (d) physical contact; (e) speech; and (f) other conduct, behavior or actions when

- (i) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- (ii) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the individual;

- (iii) such conduct unreasonably interferes or is intended to unreasonably interfere with an individual's work performance; or
- (iv) such conduct creates or is intended to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment can occur between people of the same sex.

Any employee, Board member or agent of the Board who is found to have sexually harassed a student or employee of Propel will be subject to discipline.

Complaint procedure. Employees who believe that they have been the victim of sexual harassment must report the incident or behavior to their supervisors. If the supervisor is the alleged harasser, the employee should report the alleged harassment to the Superintendent. Additionally, employees who witness sexual harassment even if they are not the intended target of such harassment are strongly encouraged to report the incident to their supervisors. If the supervisor is the alleged harasser, the employee should report the alleged harassment to the Superintendent. All complaints will be investigated promptly, and confidentiality will be protected to the extent possible. A timely resolution of each complaint should be reached and communicated to the parties involved. If it is determined that sexual harassment has occurred Propel will take immediate, appropriate corrective action, including discipline, up to and including immediate termination. Employees making good faith reports of sexual harassment will not be retaliated against for making such reports.

C. Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace Policy

Propel is committed to protecting the safety, health and well being of all employees and other individuals in its workplace. Propel recognizes that alcohol abuse and drug use pose a significant threat to its goals. Propel has established this drug-free and alcohol-free workplace program that balances its respect for individuals with the need to maintain an alcohol and drug-free environment.

A safe and productive drug-free workplace is achieved through cooperation and shared responsibility. Both employees and management have important roles to play. All employees are required to not report to work or be subject to duty while their ability to perform job duties is impaired due to on- or off-duty use of alcohol or other drugs. In addition, employees are encouraged to:

- Support fellow workers in seeking help.
- Use the Employee Assistance Program.
- Report dangerous behavior to their supervisors.

Supervisors are responsible for

- Observing employee performance.
- Investigating reports of dangerous practices.
- Documenting negative changes and problems in employee performance.
- Counseling employees regarding expected performance improvement.
- Clearly stating consequences of policy violations.

The unlawful use, possession, purchase, sale, or distribution of or being under the influence of any illegal drug or controlled substance while on Propel premises is strictly prohibited. Propel also prohibits reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or consuming alcohol while on duty or during work hours.

Communicating Propel's drug-free workplace policy to both supervisors and employees is critical to Propel's success. To ensure all employees are aware of their role in supporting Propel's drug-free workplace program

- All employees will receive an electronic copy of the policy.
- Posters and brochures will be available at all locations.

Any individual who conducts business for Propel, is applying for a position or is conducting business on Propel's property is covered by this drug-free workplace policy. Propel's policy includes, but is not limited to executives, management, full-time employees, part-time employees, contractors, volunteers and applicants.

Propel's drug-free workplace policy is intended to apply whenever anyone is representing or conducting business for Propel. Therefore, this policy applies during all working hours. This policy also applies during or beyond working hours whenever anyone is conducting business or representing Propel, is on Propel property, or is at Propel-sponsored events.

It is a violation of Propel's policy to use, possess, sell, trade, and/or offer for sale alcohol, illegal drugs or intoxicants. Prescription and over-the-counter drugs are not prohibited when taken in standard dosage or according to a physician's prescription. Any employee taking prescribed or over-the-counter medications will be responsible for consulting the prescribing physician or pharmacist to ascertain whether the medication may interfere with safe performance of his/her job. If the use of a medication could compromise the safety of the employee, fellow employees or the public, it is the employee's responsibility to use appropriate personnel procedures (e.g., call in sick, use leave, request change of duty, notify supervisor) to avoid unsafe workplace practices. The illegal or unauthorized use of prescription drugs is prohibited. It is a violation of this drug-free workplace policy to intentionally misuse or abuse prescription medications. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken if job performance deterioration or other incidents occur.

Any employee who is arrested or convicted of a criminal drug violation must notify Propel in writing within 72 hours of the arrest or conviction. Propel will take appropriate action within 30 days of notification. Federal contracting agencies will be notified when appropriate.

Entering Propel's property constitutes consent to searches and inspections. If an individual is suspected of violating the drug-free workplace policy, he/she/they may be asked to submit to a search or inspection at any time. Searches can be conducted of lockers, desks, work stations, and classrooms.

One of the goals of Propel's drug-free workplace program is to encourage employees to voluntarily seek help with alcohol and/or drug problems. If, however, an individual violates the policy, the consequences will be serious.

If an applicant violates the drug-free workplace policy, the offer of employment may be

withdrawn. The applicant may reapply after six months and must successfully pass a post-offer, pre-employment drug test.

If an employee violates the policy, he/she/they will be subject to disciplinary action and may be required to enter rehabilitation. Rehabilitation may be covered by the employee benefit plan. The ultimate financial responsibility for recommended treatment, however, belongs to the employee. An employee required to enter rehabilitation who fails to successfully complete it or repeatedly violates the drug-free workplace policy will be terminated from employment. Nothing in this policy prohibits the employee from being disciplined or discharged for other violations or performance problems.

If an employee participates in rehabilitation, the employee must sign and abide by the terms set forth in a Return-to-Work or Last Chance Agreement as a condition of continued employment.

Propel recognizes that alcohol and drug abuse and addiction are treatable illnesses. Propel also realizes that early intervention and support improve the success of rehabilitation. To support its employees, Propel's policy

- Encourages employees to seek help if they are concerned that they or their family members may have a drug and/or alcohol problem.
- Encourages employees to utilize the services of qualified professionals in the community to assess the seriousness of suspected drug or alcohol problems and identify appropriate sources of help.
- Offers all employees and their family members assistance with alcohol and drug problems through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Allows the use of accrued paid leave while seeking treatment for alcohol and other drug problems.

Treatment for alcoholism /or other drug use disorders may be covered by the employee benefit plan. The ultimate financial responsibility for recommended treatment, however, belongs to the employee.

All information received by Propel through the drug-free workplace program is confidential communication. Access to this information is limited to those who have a legitimate need to know in compliance with relevant laws and management policies.

The drug-free workplace policy does not apply to authorized parties where alcohol is served for social purposes. Abuse of alcohol at such functions, however, will not be tolerated and may subject the abuser to the processes listed in this policy.

D. Smoke-free Workplace

Smoking is prohibited on Propel premises and within 50 feet of the building. This includes, but is not limited to, smoking in any form through the use of traditional tobacco products such as pipes, cigars, and cigarettes, as well as vaping with e-cigarettes.

Smoking is only permitted during break times in designated outdoor areas. Employees using

these areas are expected to dispose of any smoking debris safely and properly.

E. Confidentiality

Propel recognizes that certain information must be kept confidential. Therefore, employee files, including compensation, benefits, personnel and health records are confidential. Only those employees who are required to access such information for business purposes shall have access to employee files. Employees with access to such information are required to keep the information confidential except as required in the performance of their jobs, as required by law, or as authorized by the employee whose information is subject to disclosure. Nothing in this policy prohibits an employee from disclosing his/her own information.

Additionally, all employees have access to confidential student information. Confidential student information may not be discussed, disclosed or otherwise used by employees except in the performance of their jobs, as required by law, or as authorized by the student (or the student's parent) whose information is subject to disclosure.

All inquiries from the media must be referred to the Senior Director of Strategic Communications.

Some employees are given access to confidential business information and trade secrets belonging to Propel (including, but not limited to, budgets, contracts and manuals for the school) by reason of the employment relationship. Because such information and trade secrets constitute valuable and unique assets of the organization, employees may not disclose any confidential business information or trade secrets of Propel at any time during or after employment for any purpose other than the proper conduct of the business and affairs of Propel. In the event of termination of employment, employees must return to Propel all documents that contain or relate in any way to any such confidential information or trade secrets.

This policy is not intended to preclude or dissuade employees from engaging in activities protected by state or federal law or raising complaints about working conditions for they and their fellow employees' mutual aid or protection or legally required activities.

Employee questions about this Confidentiality Policy should be discussed with immediate supervisors. Improper use or disclosure of employee or student confidential information may result in discipline up to and including termination. Employees will not be disciplined for disclosing their own information.

F. Network, Internet, Email, Telephone and Voicemail Use

The Propel computer network has been developed for instructional use by the Propel community. All files created or used on the computer network are the property of Propel and subject to normal review and maintenance procedures. **Propel employees should not have any expectation of privacy in their use of company computer, phone, portable electronic devices, or other communication tools. All communications made using company-provided equipment or services, including e-mail, and Internet activity, are subject to inspection by the company. Employees should keep in mind that even if they delete an email, a voicemail, or another communication, a copy may be archived on the company's systems.**

Propel mandates and expects that students and staff will use the internet/network in a responsible manner. Accordingly, this Policy establishes the rules and procedures for the use of the internet/network along with rules governing behavior and use. Staff must understand that use of the internet/network is a privilege, not a right. Violation of these procedures or rules may result in loss of privilege or appropriate disciplinary action. Propel reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, what appropriate disciplinary action will be applied.

The Propel network is to be used for Propel instructional use only. As users of the network are expected to abide by the following guidelines:

- Only licensed software may be used on the network.
- Games and personal software are not to be installed on the computers. No one shall execute a software program that is not on the server.
- Intentionally altering the files and/or the hardware on Propel computers will be viewed as vandalism.
- Deliberate attempts to spread viruses through the network will be viewed as vandalism.
- Unauthorized copying of school software will be considered theft.
- Each employee will be provided an individual password to be used only by that person to access the network.
- Users are to log off the system as soon as finished.
- There will be no distributing of threatening, obscene or harassing messages over the network or through the printer.
- Users may not engage in advertisement of products or services for sale or participate in “chain letters” or “pyramid schemes.”
- No confidential information is to be distributed to other parties for purposes unrelated to Propel business. This includes reposting of information sent by another party. This does not prevent an employee from sharing his/her own confidential information.
- The illegal use of copyrighted software is prohibited. Any and all damages that may occur as a result of unauthorized usage or access will be the responsibility of the user.
- The use of the network to access obscene or pornographic material is prohibited and will be dealt with as a serious breach of school rules.
- Employees shall not send messages using someone else’s name or read mail or files without the owner's permission.
- Employees shall not intentionally access internet sites containing sexually explicit or hate materials.
- Incidental personal use of the system by employees is permitted if such use does not violate the rules in this policy.

This policy is not intended to preclude or dissuade employees from engaging in activities protected by state or federal law or raising complaints about working conditions for their and their fellow employees' mutual aid or protection or legally required activities.

All use of company-provided communications systems, including e-mail and Internet use, should conform to Propel guidelines/policies, including but not limited to the Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Confidential Information. So, for example, employees should not engage in harassing or discriminatory behavior that targets other employees or individuals because of their protected class status or make defamatory comments. Similarly, employees

should not divulge confidential information such as trade secrets or information restricted from disclosure by law on social media sites.

Propel owns the hardware and software and has unrestricted access to all Email, voicemail and internet communications on its equipment. Email accounts on the Propel system are not private, and Propel retains the right to review, audit, intercept, access and disclose all messages created, received, or sent over its communication system as necessary.

School administration reserves the right to make random audits of the history files that record which sites users have visited. This policy is not intended to restrict communications or actions protected or required by applicable law.

Propel is not, and cannot be held responsible for the loss of material, accidental corruption or any other action that might affect transmission or loss of data. Propel has taken precautions to maintain safety of all users and these guidelines are written and will be enforced in the interest of all users' safety and effective use of the internet.

Employees should pay particular care to the use and security of portable electronic devices when used for business-related purposes, such as laptops, tablets, smartphones, and other data storage media, whether provided by the employer or the employee. Lost or stolen portable electronic devices containing company information may cause breaches of security that result in the loss of company confidential data, the unauthorized disclosure of sensitive employee data, lawsuits against the individual, and lawsuits against the company. Employees should use appropriate password protections for such devices and physically secure them as recommended by IT department administrators.

Violations of the policies and procedures governing the use of the Propel computer network may result in any or all of the following consequences being imposed against the violator:

1. Restriction of network access
2. Discipline up to and including termination.
3. Financial responsibility for repair/replacement of damaged items.
4. Criminal prosecution under appropriate state and federal laws.

The above-listed consequences are not all inclusive. Propel reserves the right to take, at its discretion, any and all appropriate action against persons violating this policy, including actions not set forth above. Employees will not be disciplined for communications or actions protected or required by applicable law.

Telephones and voice mail are for Propel use and are the property of Propel. Propel reserves the right to monitor use of its telephones and voice mail systems. Employees should use their own telephones and voice mail for personal calls and messages. If necessary, employees may use Propel telephones for short, infrequent local personal calls. Employees shall not use Propel telephones to place long distance personal calls. Any employee violating the telephone use policy may be disciplined (*see* Discipline Policy) and billed for personal use of Propel telephones. Employees will not be disciplined for communications or actions protected or required by applicable law.

Personal cell phones should not be used during instructional time or any other time the employee is responsible for supervising students, including but not limited to recess, transitions, and lunch duty.

G. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The use of social media has increased significantly, and Propel understands the importance of employees engaging, learning, collaborating, and sharing through social media. This policy is designed to assist its employees in the use of social media. This policy is intended to supplement, but not replace, existing policies governing the use of the Internet and Email.

Participation in social media is not mandatory. This policy reminds Propel's employees that to the extent they choose to participate in social media, they should do so responsibly and thoughtfully, remembering that whatever they post online reflects upon them and upon Propel. All members of the Propel community should keep this in mind and ensure that when posting they respect the privacy and confidentiality rights of others.

This policy is not intended to preclude or dissuade employees from engaging in activities protected by state or federal law or raising complaints about working conditions for their and their fellow employees' mutual aid or protection or legally required activities.

For purposes of these guidelines, "social media" means **blogs, forums, and social networking sites such as** "Facebook", "Shutterfly", "Instagram", "Twitter", "LinkedIn", and "TikTok", among others.

1. Think first. Assume that anything you post online will remain visible and accessible indefinitely. If you're online, you're on the record – everything on the Internet is public and searchable. Remember that both the time and location of your post is often published along with the actual content of your post. It is possible that the time and location of your post may convey far more information than you intended. There are always consequences to what you publish. What you write is ultimately your responsibility.
2. Use good judgment. By its nature, social media blurs the distinction between public and private as well as personal and professional. Just by identifying yourself as an employee of Propel, you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about Propel. Keep in mind that perception is reality. Strive to add value by providing worthwhile information and perspective. Remember that much of Propel's image is developed by the public's interaction with employees of Propel. Please do us proud.
3. Be accurate, honest and transparent in your disclosures. We believe in transparency and honesty. Anonymity is not an option. Please represent Propel ethically and with integrity. Use your real name, identify that you work for Propel and be clear about your role. Stick to your area of expertise; write what you know. If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, be the first to point it out. But also be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. If you are publishing to a website outside of Propel, please use the following disclaimer "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent Propel Schools' positions, values, strategies or opinions."

4. Student and family involvement with social media must be school related, immediately disclosed and fully transparent. Do not permit students and/or families to access your strictly private social media. Students and/or families should be granted access to your social media only if it is school related. Any social media that can be accessed by students becomes an extension of your classroom. This includes any third party sites to which you publish material. What is inappropriate in your classroom is inappropriate online. Anytime you grant a student access to your social media, you must immediately inform your building principal or immediate supervisor so that Propel can ensure an open, educational, and safe environment for all involved. Failure to notify your building principal or immediate supervisor will result in you being disciplined.

5. Parents or guardians of students must be notified any time a student is granted access to the social media of an employee of Propel. Since any of your social media that can be accessed by students is considered an extension of your classroom, Propel will notify a student's parents or guardians anytime he/she/they has been granted access to your social media. This guideline is specifically designed to keep parents and guardians involved and informed. Staff, faculty, or employees who share social media with Propel's students should be aware that their social media content cannot be made private from Propel or from parents or guardians. Additionally, Propel reserves the right to monitor social media to ensure Propel policies and guidelines (including policies regarding harassment) are being observed.

6. Do not post what you cannot confirm. Do not post false or unsubstantiated rumors or false information. Propel reserves the right to respond to negative or false posts. This guideline will not be applied in a way that interferes with employees' rights protected by law.

7. Do not post confidential or sensitive information. When contributing online you shall not post confidential student information. Employees must still follow all applicable laws (such as Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)) and all applicable school privacy and confidentiality policies. Applicable school privacy policies include, but are not limited to, the sexual harassment, anti-bullying, student records, Internet safety, and e-mail policies. Posting confidential student information will subject you to appropriate discipline up to and including termination. In addition to student information, some topics relating to Propel are sensitive and may not be appropriate subject matter for social media. If you are unsure of the confidentiality or sensitivity of a particular subject, seek advice from your building principal or immediate supervisor before talking about it or simply refrain from the conversation. Propel reserves the right to take appropriate action to remove posts that are improper or posts that violate school policies or the law. This guideline will not be applied in a way that interferes with employees' rights protected by law.

8. Respect your audience. Do not use ethnic slurs, threats, personal insults, obscenity, harassing materials or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in Propel's workplace. Do not pick fights. Be the first to correct your mistakes. Try to frame what you write to invite differing points of view without inflaming others. You do not need to respond to every criticism or barb. And if you do, be professional, kind and considerate.

9. Do not use Propel's identifying images without permission. Do not use any Propel logo, athletic logo or any other marks or images on any social media platforms without the prior written permission of Propel. Do not use Propel's name or images to promote or endorse any product, cause, political party or candidate.

10. Do not use student pictures and videos without permission. Before posting videos and photographs of students to any online forum, including Facebook, YouTube, Shutterfly, a blog or any other media, notify your building principal or immediate supervisor in advance of posting, letting your building principal or immediate supervisor know the content of what you intend to post, where you intend to post it, and the identity of any Propel staff, faculty or students depicted in the media. Photographs, video and other digital content identifying Propel students or their families must not be posted online without prior written approval from your building principal or your immediate supervisor. If permission to publish such material is granted, such material should only be posted to social media that provides reasonable protection against general public access and has tools in place to limit access only to identified or invited persons. At the discretion of Propel, parents or guardians will be notified about the posting of any content identifying students.

11. Be aware of potential liability. You are legally liable for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. By identifying yourself as an employee of Propel, you could cause Propel to be responsible for your content. Do not post proprietary or copyrighted material without appropriate permission. Never post defamatory, libelous or obscene materials.

12. Remember your day job. You should make sure that your online activities do not interfere with your job or commitments to students.

Violations of this policy may result in discipline up to and including termination.

H. Propel Property

Employees may not remove Propel property from Propel premises without prior written approval from their supervisors. Propel is not liable for personal injury incurred during the use of its property for personal projects. Employees accept full responsibility for any and all liabilities for injuries or losses that occur, or for the malfunction of such property. Employees are responsible for returning the property in good condition. Employees will be required to pay for any damages to Propel property that occur while using the property for personal projects.

I. Intellectual Property

Unless otherwise agreed upon in writing, Propel maintains all rights and copyrights associated with inventions, methods and materials its employees or contractors develop while using the information or resources available to them due to their employment or contract with Propel. Such inventions, methods, and materials are the sole property of Propel and are to be used only for Propel, unless otherwise agreed to and approved by the Superintendent.

J. Solicitation

The purpose of this policy is to establish Propel's intent to have a work environment that is free from solicitation efforts that do not relate to Propel business or interest. While Propel actively encourages employees' participation in community activities and organizations outside of work, the time spent at work is more productive and pleasant when not interrupted by solicitations and distribution of materials by employees. Employees may not solicit on work time (when either the employee or the person being solicited is on work time). Employees may not distribute any literature or other non-work related materials either on work time or in work areas, except as otherwise provided below.

1. "Work time" is defined as that time when an employee is scheduled and expected to be properly engaged in performing his/her work tasks. "Work areas" are all areas of the Propel except break rooms and other areas designated for non-work use.
2. Solicitation by Propel Employee
 - a. Approved: Propel sponsored activities
 - b. Prohibited Solicitation: Examples of prohibited activities by staff at Propel during work time or in work areas include, but are not limited to, activities involving:
 - Raffles
 - Charity drives
 - Trips
 - Sports pools
 - Cosmetic or jewelry sales
 - Bake sales
 - Sales of items to raise funds for non-Propel related organizations or entities
 - Food vending (other than licensed by the Propel)
 - Proposing and/or procuring membership in any organization
 - E-mail solicitations
 - Commercial or personal business sales

Nonemployees may not trespass or solicit or distribute materials anywhere on Propel property at any time.

Nothing in this policy is meant to, nor should it be interpreted to, in any way limit employees' rights under any applicable federal, state, or local laws, including rights under the NLRA to engage in protected concerted activities with other employees to improve or discuss terms and conditions of employment, such as wages, working conditions, and benefits. Employees have the right to engage in or refrain from such activities.

K. Media Relations

Employees who would like to generate media coverage about an event, achievement, or program must first contact the Communication Department. It is the responsibility of the Communications Department, in conjunction with the Superintendent, to manage all relationships with the media. If an employee is contacted by the Media for a statement, he/she is to immediately contact the Communications Department, prior to giving a statement. The

Communications Department can be reached via email at communications@propelschools.org or by calling the South Side office.

L. Contracts

Only the Superintendent/CEO, or their designee, may execute contracts, purchase agreements or MOUs on behalf of Propel.

II. EMPLOYMENT

A. At-Will Employment

All employment (including the 60-day probationary period) with Propel is "at will;" that is, the employment relationship can be terminated by the employee or by Propel with or without cause, and with or without notice, at any time except that Propel as the employer cannot terminate the employment relationship for an illegal, discriminatory or retaliatory reason as defined by law.

This "at-will" employment relationship exists regardless of any other written statements or policies contained in these or any other Propel documents or any oral statement to the contrary.

As a professional courtesy, and for the safety and well being of our students, Propel requests that all employees provide at least 30 days' notice prior to leaving the organization.

Nothing in this employee handbook creates or is intended to create an employment agreement, express or implied. Nothing contained in this, or any other document provided to the employee is intended to be, nor should it be, construed as a contract that employment or any benefit will be continued for any period of time. In addition, no company representative is authorized to modify this policy for any employee or to enter into any agreement, oral or written, that changes the at-will relationship.

Any salary figures provided to an employee in annual or monthly terms are stated for the sake of convenience or to facilitate comparisons and are not intended to and do not create an employment contract for any specific period of time.

B. Hiring

The Superintendent or his/her designated representative(s) are responsible for all hiring decisions. The first 60 calendar days of employment is considered to be a probationary period during which Propel and the employee can assess whether the employment relationship is appropriate. If at any time during the 60 day period Propel believes that the employment relationship is not working, it may terminate the employment relationship. As stated above, nothing in this Policy changes the at-will employment status, and Propel does not guarantee employment for any period of time including, but not limited to, the probationary period.

C. Employment Cycle, Full-time and Part-time Designations

The annual employment cycle begins on August 1 and continues through July 31 of the following year. School management sets the actual schedule for employees during that cycle and that schedule is solely within the discretion of school management. Teachers are paid to work 220, eight hour days per annual employment cycle. Any days under 220 that are not assigned within Propel Schools Calendar are scheduled by the Principal as needed for staff meetings, in buildings PDs, parent teacher meetings and other events or meetings and may take place before or after school. Paraprofessionals are scheduled to work 200, eight hour days per annual employment cycle. All employees regularly scheduled to work an average of 30 hours per week (or 130 hours per month) or more are full-time employees. Employees shall remain within their building during all paid working time. Requests to leave the building during the day should be made to the building Principal and may be denied based on the number of employees in the building.

All employees who work an average of fewer than 30 hours per week (or fewer than 130 hours per month) are part-time employees. Full-time employees are eligible for benefits after appropriate waiting periods. Part-time employees are not eligible for benefits. For purposes of determining hours worked, the work week begins on Sunday at midnight and ends on Saturday at 11:59 P.M.

D. Overtime

All overtime must be approved in advance by an employee's supervisor.

In compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and other applicable law, jobs are classified as nonexempt or exempt based on tasks and responsibilities. These job classifications determine eligibility for overtime compensation. Exempt employees are those in certain administrative, executive and professional positions, including all teaching positions, except where otherwise determined by state law. Exempt employees do not receive overtime compensation regardless of hours worked. Teachers and school administrators are exempt from state and federal laws governing overtime pay. Therefore, teachers and school administrators are not eligible for overtime for any hours worked in excess of 40 hours in one work week.

Employees classified as non-exempt (generally support staff and hourly employees) are subject to the overtime provisions of state and federal law. Those nonexempt employees are entitled to time and a half (that is, one and one-half hours) for every hour worked over 40 hours in a workweek. Hours paid but not worked such as holidays and paid time off are not counted as time worked for overtime pay purposes. All employees classified as non-exempt must clock in and out using the timekeeping system. Hours work include any and all time the employee performs work, of any kind, including checking emails, answering telephones and other work tasks. Employees must clock out for any time during which work is not completed.

E. Compensatory Time

Non Exempt Employees may alter their schedules within a given week to account for extra hours worked. Alteration of schedules must be approved by the employee's manager, prior to changing the number of hours worked within a given day. Extra hours worked by Saturday at 11:59 P.M. for the week will be paid as overtime, at time and a half, and no comp time will be

given.

Exempt employees do not track their hours. Managers may allow for flexibility within a given pay period if excess hours have been worked due to an event or project. Employees must request the use of comp time with their manager.

F. Employee Complaint Procedure

Employees with complaints regarding their employment or employment conditions should discuss the complaints with their supervisors. If the discussion with the supervisor does not adequately address the situation, the employee should then discuss the matter with the next level of management. The employee should continue this process to the level of Superintendent if necessary to adequately address the situation. The employee may also contact Human Resources with his/her concern. The Superintendent, at his/her discretion, may confer with the Board of Directors to address the situation.

G. Outside Employment

Employees employed in a full-time position are expected to consider their positions with Propel their primary employment during the school year. Any outside activity, whether employment or volunteer, must not interfere with an employee's ability to properly perform his/her job duties at Propel.

No employee may take an outside job or volunteer with a competing or contracting entity. In addition, no employee may conduct any business of his/her own if it competes in any way with Propel. All outside employment must be approved by a supervisor in writing and in advance of any employee accepting such outside employment. No outside employment may interfere with an employee's job responsibilities at Propel, reflect adversely on Propel or give the appearance of impropriety.

H. Performance Evaluations

Immediate supervisors are responsible for performing employees' annual evaluations. More frequent evaluations may be performed at the discretion of the immediate supervisor. Factors to be considered in performance evaluations include, but are not limited to, job performance, achievements, attitude, attendance and, where relevant, student academic performance.

I. Discipline

Employees may be disciplined for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, the following reasons:

- Absenteeism
- Lateness
- Poor job performance
- Insubordination
- Policy violation
- Theft

- Physical violence (including threats)
- Interference with the work of other employees
- Records falsification
- Alcohol or drug use, possession or distribution (*See Drug and Alcohol Use Policy*)
- Harassment
- Weapons possession (while performing job duties)

Discipline may include counseling, warning (oral or written), suspension or termination depending on the severity of the action for which discipline is imposed. Repeated need for discipline for the same or similar issues may result in more severe discipline for each subsequent violation. **Nothing in this Discipline Policy, however, changes the at-will employment status of employees. (See At-Will Employment Policy.) Employees may be terminated from employment at any time. There is no guarantee of progressive discipline to address disciplinary issues.**

J. Professional Development

Propel encourages and provides many opportunities for the professional growth of its employees. In addition to tuition reimbursement (*see Tuition Reimbursement Policy*) and activities at school, employees may be given time off to attend seminars or other activities relating to their current positions with Propel. Employees must get written approval from their supervisors before attending professional development activities that require time off.

Propel will reimburse employees for obtaining a new certification, if Propel has requested the employee be placed outside of their current certification area. Propel will reimburse for successful completion of the new certification.

K. Appearance

Employees are expected to maintain a professional appearance while at work. Propel strives to maintain a professional atmosphere that is conducive to its educational missions and projects an image of professionalism to students, parents, visitors, and the public. Employees are to exercise common sense and good judgment regarding their clothing and appearance and to dress in a manner that is consistent with the goals of this policy. Generally, employees should maintain a clean and neat appearance and dress according to the requirements of their positions, which may include interactions with students, parents, visitors and the public.

Propel maintains a business casual environment, but some clothing and grooming guidelines should be observed. Below are general guidelines outlining examples of acceptable and unacceptable workplace attire. This list may differ for different positions, so employees with questions about appropriate workplace attire should contact their supervisor or building principal.

Since it is impossible to list every type of clothing, this list is intended as guidance only and should not be considered a complete list.

Appropriate clothing for Propel includes:

- Suits
- Sport jackets or blazers
- Pants, skirts, kilts
- Sweaters, sweater vests
- Blouses or shirts, including polo/golf shirts
- Dresses
- Dress shoes

Clothing items that are NOT appropriate include

- Shorts
- T-shirts
- Sweat suits
- Sweatshirts/hoodies
- Workout pants/leggings
- Halters
- Tube tops
- Midriff-baring tops
- Hats, knit caps, baseball caps
- Skinny-strapped sandals, gladiator sandals
- Flip-flops
- Slippers
- Garden shoes (such as Crocs)
- Sneakers
- Torn, ripped or dirty clothing

Dress down days may be approved by leadership. On those days, jeans and sneakers may be worn and should be in clean and neat condition, without holes, stains, etc.

Employees should wear, at all times while in buildings or with Propel Students, their Propel Identification Badge.

Building principals or managers may exempt certain employees from this dress code if the employee's position so requires. For example, a physical education teacher may be permitted to wear a sweat suit or shorts and a t-shirt. Employees should confirm with the building principal or their manager that they are exempt from parts of this policy.

Any employee who is not dressed in proper professional attire consistent with this policy will be considered unsuitable to work and will be asked to go home and return to work appropriately dressed. In such a case, the employee will not be compensated for time spent away from work. Employees who disregard this policy and its standards will be subject to discipline.

The dress code may be suspended temporarily for special occasions such as holidays. The decision to suspend the dress code for a special occasion will be made by the building principal, who will announce his/her decision in advance.

Any questions about the requirements of this policy or what constitutes appropriate workplace attire should be directed to the employee's supervisor or building principal.

Exceptions to the dress code may be made to accommodate religious, medical/health or other matters. Requests for exceptions to the dress code must be made in writing to the employee's

supervisor or to the building principal. Propel prohibits any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation or retaliation for requesting a reasonable accommodation for grounds protected by applicable law.

Propel expressly reserves the right to change, modify or delete the provisions of this Dress Code and agrees to notify employees of any changes in advance to allow employees to plan accordingly.

This policy is not intended to restrict communications or actions protected or required by applicable law.

L. References

Only the Superintendent may give references for current or former employees. References will be neutral. That is, they will include only position, salary, and years of service.

M. Accidents and Illnesses

Employees. All employee injuries and illnesses that occur on Propel premises must be reported immediately to the employee's immediate supervisor.

Supervisors must complete the necessary reports and submit them to the Human Resources Department. Employees must complete a written statement regarding the on-the-job accident or illness. Failure to promptly and accurately report work injuries and illnesses could affect available benefits. Additional information regarding work-related accidents and illnesses (including information about workers' compensation coverage) is posted at each school and at the Administration Office.

Non-employees. If a student or visitor is injured or becomes ill on the premises, employees should attend to the person and then notify the principal and the Superintendent. Principals must complete the necessary reports and submit them to the Human Resources Department.

N. Expense Reports

School-related expenses must be approved in writing and in advance of the expense being incurred. Expense Reports must be completed through the approved system.. *Please refer to the separate Employee Expense Reimbursement Policy.*

O. Internal Transfers

Employees may apply for an internal transfer to another open position within Propel. Employees must apply for the position online, must notify their current manager/principal, and must currently be in good standing.

P. Break in Service

Employees that leave the organization due to resignation or termination and later are rehired by the organization will maintain their years of service if they return within 6 months. If the

employee returns after 6 months, their service date will reset.

III. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

A. Paydays

Paydays are the 15th and 30th days of every month, except for February when payday will be the 28th or 29th day. If a regular payday falls on a weekend or holiday employees will be paid on the workday before the regularly scheduled payday.

All employees are encouraged to have pay directly deposited into their bank accounts. Employees with direct deposit are responsible for keeping Propel informed of any change in bank account information.

Employees who do not opt for direct deposit will receive their checks at work on payday. Checks not claimed on payday will be mailed to the employee's home address on file with Propel. Employees who do not have direct deposit are responsible for keeping Propel informed of any change in home address.

Employees separated from Propel, whether such separation is the result of resignation or termination, will be paid through their last day of employment plus accrued vacation time and will receive their last pay on the first regularly scheduled payday following their last day of work.

B. Time and Attendance Records

All non-exempt employees are responsible for accurately reporting all time worked on a time record each pay period. Both the employee and the supervisor must approve and verify the hours being paid including hours worked and any overtime payments that will be paid during the pay period. Proper completion of time records is a vital step to ensure that employees are paid properly. All employees must use the official timekeeping system set by Propel, UltiPro Time Management. Failure to clock in and out using the approved system will result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Employees may be sent home if they are sick and/or do not meet the requirements of screening processes in place at that time. Employees sent home are required to use their personal, vacation, and/or sick time.

The Business Office will prepare payroll based upon the timesheets and attendance records submitted through the time management system. .

Employees must bring discrepancies between timesheets and attendance records and pay (or any other pay issues) to the attention of supervisors. Such discrepancies must be brought to the attention of supervisors as soon as the discrepancy is discovered and before the next regularly scheduled payday.

All school based employees will sign in upon arrival to school and will sign out when leaving

the school at the end of the day. Signing in and out will be complete using the UltiPro time clocks. Failure to sign in and out using the approved system will result in discipline, up to and including termination.

C. Holidays

Propel typically will be closed on the following holidays (13 to 15 days per year):

Martin Luther King Day (the first Monday after January 15)
Presidents' Day (the third Monday in February)
Good Friday (the Friday before Easter Sunday)
Easter Monday (the Monday immediately after Easter Sunday)
Memorial Day (the last Monday in May)
Independence Day, July 4
Labor Day (the first Monday in September)
Thanksgiving Day (the fourth Thursday in November)
The day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve (December 24) through New Year's Day (January 1)
Juneteenth (June 19)

If the Holiday falls on a Saturday, the Holiday will be observed on the Friday before and if the Holiday falls on a Sunday, the Holiday will be observed on the Monday following. Employees will not be scheduled to work on holidays. Year round hourly employees will be paid 8 hours and Food Service employees will be paid their normal scheduled work hours as holiday pay.(i.e. 6 or 8 hours)

Holidays are subject to change based on the adoption of the school calendar by the Board of Trustees.

D. Insurance

Propel provides benefits to its full-time employees. The rules and policies governing benefits are available in the plan documents that will be provided to all eligible employees. This policy only summarizes benefits that may be available. Benefits information is available from the Human Resources Department.

Medical. Individual base coverage is available to full-time employees. Plans covering dependents and family members may be available for additional charges. Employees interested in additional coverage should contact the Human Resources Department for premium information. All requests for additional coverage and all changes in coverage must be addressed to the Human Resources Department.

Medical insurance coverage will be effective on the first day of the month following the beginning of full-time employment. Medical coverage will end on the last day of the month in which the employee's full-time employment ends.

Medical Waiver. Propel will offer a medical waiver credit of Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000). This election to waive coverage shall be irrevocable for the coverage year of the election.

Eligible Employees who elect to waive coverage may be eligible to re-enter the Employer's plan as a result of a qualifying life event. In that event, the Employee may re-enter the Employer's Group Plan under the terms and conditions set forth by the Plan. Payment shall occur to active Employees in a lump sum following the end of the plan year, not to occur later than August 15.

The amount will be calculated on a prorated basis when waiver compensation is elected, or eligibility ceases, and the period of participation is less than the 12-month period of coverage. An Employee who is covered under another Propel Employee's health insurance as a spouse, registered domestic partner, or dependent is not eligible for the coverage waiver payment.

Life, accidental death and dismemberment insurance. All full-time employees will be covered by a life, accidental death and dismemberment policy. Propel provides this insurance to full-time employees.

Disability. Propel provides short and long term disability coverage for full-time employees.

Retirement. Propel offers an Alternative Retirement Program for new employees. Propel and employees contribute to the retirement programs. Employee contributions are made through payroll deduction.

Status change. Employees must notify the Human Resources Department of any event or change in status (for example, birth of child, addition or loss of dependent, marriage or divorce, change of address) that might affect insurance coverage. Upon notification, the Human Resources Department will make necessary changes to the insurance coverage and notify the employee of the same.

E. Deductions from Pay/Safe Harbor Exempt Employees

Propel does not make improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees and complies with the salary basis requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Employees classified as exempt from the overtime pay requirements of the FLSA will be notified of this classification at the time of hire or change in position.

Permitted deductions. The FLSA limits the types of deductions that may be made from the pay of an exempt employee. Deductions that are permitted include:

- Deductions that are required by law, e.g., income taxes;
- Deductions for employee benefits when authorized by the employee;
- Absence from work for one or more full days for personal reasons other than sickness or disability;
- Absence from work for one or more full days due to sickness or disability if the deduction is made in accordance with a bona fide plan, policy, or practice of providing compensation for salary lost due to illness;
- Offset for amounts received as witness or jury fees or for military pay;

- Unpaid disciplinary suspensions of 1 or more full days imposed in good faith for workplace conduct rule infractions; and
- Any full workweek in which the employee does not perform any work.

During the week an exempt employee begins work for the company or during the last week of employment, the employee will only be paid for actual hours worked. In addition, an employee may be paid only for hours worked during a period when the employee is using unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

Improper deductions. If an employee classified as exempt believes that an improper deduction has been taken from the employee's pay, the employee should immediately report the deduction to the HR department. The report will be promptly investigated, and if it is found that an improper deduction has been made, the company will reimburse the employee for the improper deduction.

F. Access to Personnel Files

Employee files are maintained by the HR department and are considered confidential. Managers and supervisors may only have access to personnel file information on a need-to-know basis. Employees may inspect their own personnel files and may copy them but may not remove documents from their file. Inspections by employees must be requested in writing to the HR department and will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time or as required under state law. Personnel files are to be reviewed in the HR department. Representatives of government or law enforcement agencies, in the course of their duties, may be allowed access to file information.

G. Workplace Violence Prevention

Propel is committed to providing a safe, violence-free workplace for our employees. Due to this commitment, the company discourages employees from engaging in any physical confrontation with a violent or potentially violent individual or from behaving in a threatening or violent manner. Threats, threatening language, or any other acts of aggression or violence made toward or by any employee will not be tolerated. A threat may include any verbal or physical harassment or abuse; attempts to intimidate others; menacing gestures; stalking; or any other hostile, aggressive, and/or destructive actions taken for the purposes of intimidation. This policy covers any violent or potentially violent behavior that occurs in the workplace or at company-sponsored functions.

All Propel employees bear the responsibility of keeping our work environment free from violence or potential violence. Any employee who witnesses or is the recipient of violent behavior should promptly inform their supervisor, manager, or HR department. All threats will be promptly investigated. No employee will be subject to retaliation, intimidation, or discipline as a result of reporting a threat in good faith under this guideline.

Any individual engaging in violence against the company, its employees, or its property will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. All acts will be investigated, and the appropriate action will be taken. Any such act or threatening behavior may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Propel prohibits the possession of weapons on school property at all times, including our parking lots. Additionally, while working, employees may not carry a weapon of any type. Weapons include, but are not limited to, handguns, rifles, automatic weapons, knives that can be used as weapons (excluding pocketknives, utility knives, and other instruments that are used to open packages or cut string and for other miscellaneous tasks), martial arts paraphernalia, stun guns, and tear gas. Any employee violating this policy is subject to discipline up to and including dismissal for the first offense.

Approved By	Date
Dr. Tina Chekan	
Board of Trustees	