Employee Handbook

Orenda Administration	2951 Williams Drive Georgetown, TX 78628 P: 512-869-3020 F: 512-869-3030 www.orendaeducation.org

Campuses

Gateway College Preparatory School **Head of School:** **Missy Dean**	3360 Westinghouse Road Georgetown, TX 78626 P: 512-868-4947 F: 512-868-4946

Gateway Tech High School **Principal:** **Beth Kelly**	2951 Williams Drive, Bldg. 2 Georgetown, TX 78628 P: 512-868-5299 F: 512-869-3030

Kingsland School **Principal:** **Kimberly Arnold**	2112 W. Ranch Road 1431 PO Box 629 Kingsland, TX 78639 P: 325-388-0020 F: 325-388-0021

Nolan Creek School **Principal:** **Wendy Gamble**	505 E. Avenue C Belton, TX 76513 P: 254-939-4491 F: 254-939-4492

Orenda Charter Schools is an equal opportunity employer and provides educational programs and services which do not discriminate on the basis of age, national origin, race, sex, color, religion, disability or against any other legally protected group. Complaints should be addressed to the superintendent, Carla Silber at 512.869.3020.

Employee Handbook

Table of Contents

A Message from the Founder and CEO **7**
Company History **8**
Mission, Vision, and Core Values **9**
Staff Guidelines **10**
Basic Principles 10
Accuracy of Information 10
Pre-employment Affidavit for Applicants and Applicants Offered Employment 10
Employment Application & Other Forms 10
Employee Election Form to Withhold Certain Information from Public Access 11
Ethical Practices 11
Equal Employment Opportunity 13
Sexual Harassment 13
Americans with Disabilities Act 14
Federal and State Worksite Postings 14
Immigration Law Compliance 14
Nondiscrimination Based on Religion 15
Nondiscrimination Based on Military Service 15
Drug Free Workplace 15
Tobacco Products and E-Cigarettes 15
Employment at Will 16
Arrest & Conviction Occurring After Employment Begins 17
Your Job and Opportunities 17
Job Openings 18
Employment Eligibility 18
Criminal History Background Checks 19
Prohibition Against Employing Individuals Convicted of Certain Offenses 19
New Hire Reporting 21
Performance Management 22
Orientation 23
New Employee Orientation 23
Evaluation Process 23
Job Performance Improvement 24
Growth Plan/Disciplinary Action 24
Employee Development 25
Assignment and Reassignment 25
Leaving Your Employment 25
Re-employment 26

Working Together 27
Standards of Conduct 27
Confidentiality 27
Employee Records 28
Conflict Resolution 29
Relationships at Work 32
Employment of Relatives and Fraternization 33
Non-Disclosure 34
Smoke Free Workplace 35
Solicitation 35
Your Work Environment 36
Workplace Safety 36
Personal Safety and Security 37
Former Employees 37
Information Security 37
Confidentiality 38
Attendance 39
Standards 39
Notification Requirements for Illness and Emergencies 39
Excessive Absenteeism/Tardiness 39
Job Abandonment 40
Absence from Duty 40
Leave Policy 40
State Personal Leave 41
Scheduling Time Off 41
Local Sick Leave 42
Employer Responsibilities 42
Enforcement 42
Local Personal Leave 45
Bereavement 45
Military Leave of Absence 46
Workers' Compensation 48
Leave Compensation & Over Time 49
Managing Leave Accounts 49
Securing Substitute for Absences 50
Employment Standards 51
Audio and Video Recording 51
Special Rules for Social Studies Courses 51
Child Abuse Reporting and Programs 51
Company Communication 52
Copy Machines 52
Copyrighted Material 53

Custodial/Maintenance Services 53
Dress Code for Staff 53
Facility Modifications 54
Freedom from Bullying and Cyber-bullying 55
Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation 55
Incident Report 58
Insurance 58
Inventory 58
Orenda Property Use 59
Outside Employment 59
Payroll Dates 59
Personal Property 59
Prohibited Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Duties and Instructional Requirements 59
Staff Duty 60
Staff Meetings 60
Traffic Violations 60
Volunteers and Contractors 60
Classroom Procedures 61
Daily Tasks 61
Field Trips 61
Grade Policy 61
Lesson Plans 62
Liability 62
Progress Reports and Report Cards 62
Promotion and Retention 63
Student Attendance 63
Textbooks and Instructional Materials 63
No Expectation of Privacy 64
Technology Equipment 64
Equipment Incident Report 65
Student Welfare: Computer Technician Reports of Child Pornography 66
Use of Electronic Media and Electronic Communications 66
Use of Artificial Intelligence 68
IT Repair Acknowledgement Form 68
Keys and Security Badges 70
Exterior Doors 71
Emergency Procedures 72
Required Drills 72
Alternate Evacuation Site 72
School Closures 72
Ethics Non-Compliance Reporting 73
Fraud, Dishonesty, and False Statements 73

Required Staff Development.....74
Acceptable Use Policy.....78
Drug and/or Alcohol Testing Consent Form and Policy Acknowledgment Form 80
Employee Handbook Receipt 82

Board of Directors	Travis Graves, President Mick Swope, Vice-President Tory Gant, Secretary Armando Enriquez, Member Jennifer Carter, Member Richard N. Rickey, Ex-Officio
Administration	Richard N. Rickey, Founder & CEO Carla Silber, Superintendent Margina Escobar, Chief Financial Officer Teresa Moreno, Director of Human Resources Albert Rodriguez, Director of Technology Adam Price, Director of Community Relations & Development Misty Granderson, Director of Special Education Jessica Shugars, Director of Academic Programs Shelley Williams, Director of Operations
Orenda Education — Sponsoring Entity	Travis Graves, Board President Richard Rickey, CEO

A Message from the Founder and CEO

Welcome to Orenda Education! We are pleased that you have joined us and we know that your professional contributions will assist us in being a leader in providing quality educational services.

As an employee of Orenda, it is your responsibility to be knowledgeable about the contents of the employee handbook. Please take time to read it carefully, familiarizing yourself with its contents as soon as possible, because the handbook should answer many of your initial and ongoing questions about your employment with Orenda.

While the information contained in the handbook should give you answers to most of the general questions you might have about your job or Orenda's programs and practices, it is not intended to cover every situation that might arise. If you have questions about these guidelines or need further information about a specific policy, please consult with your supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

We hope that you find the Orenda Employee Handbook full of helpful and valuable information about the policies, benefits, practices, and opportunities available to guide and assist you in performing to the best of your ability and developing and realizing your potential as a valued employee.

Again, we are glad you have joined us and look forward to an association that is professionally rewarding and serves the best interests of students.

Richard N. Rickey

Richard N. Rickey, Founder and CEO

Company History

Incorporated in 1995, Orenda Education started out as a private not-for-profit organization that operated an emergency shelter for children who had been abused or neglected. The organization grew and eventually owned and operated a comprehensive behavioral healthcare system serving children and adolescents that included an emergency shelter, a psychiatric hospital, a residential treatment center and a psychiatry group practice clinic.

Orenda obtained a school charter in 2001 (generation 7) from the Texas State Board of Education and launched Orenda Charter Schools, a subsidiary of Orenda Education in January, 2002 to serve the school age patients being served in the Orenda behavioral healthcare system. A new school philosophy and structure was introduced. Teachers who fit the new educational model were hired. The Circle of Courage educational philosophy and curriculum was implemented and by the second year students began making dramatic strides in academic performance.

In 2005 the Orenda Education governing board decided to focus the organization's mission solely on the education of students. The hospital, residential treatment center and clinic were sold. The net proceeds from the sale of the company's healthcare programs and assets are being utilized to open additional Orenda schools.

Orenda celebrated our 30-year anniversary in 2025! Our organization has grown from a handful of employees to over 200 staff that serve over 1900 students in 4 schools.



Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Mission:

To create new and innovative school choice opportunities for families seeking an alternative to the large, more traditional public school system.

Vision:

To be a leader in the charter school movement, providing life-changing academic instruction to students who may not reach their academic and human potential in the large, more traditional public school system.

Core Values:

Belonging – Mastery – Independence – Generosity

Orenda schools are based on the "Circle of Courage" philosophy. The Circle of Courage is an integrated, holistic approach to child development and learning intended to promote a sense of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity. The Circle of Courage serves as a moral character development guide for our faculty and our students and helps set the tone for the students to become successful academically.

At the core is our commitment to provide a school culture where all our staff and students feel welcomed and know they are a vital part of the school community (**Belonging**).

We believe that each student has unique talents and gifts that must be discovered before the student can begin to feel competent. Increased competency enhances self-esteem and provides the motivation for further achievement (**Mastery**).

At Orenda schools, our goal is to provide a stimulating academic experience where students can grow, develop and have ownership over their learning. Our schools are a place where students can have the freedom to learn in their own style, at their own pace and through their own interests (**Independence**).

We also believe every student has a tremendous capacity for good will. We teach the importance of being generous and unselfish and expect our students to serve the school and the community through participation in our various service clubs (**Generosity**).

Staff Guidelines

Basic Principles

Orenda Education is dedicated to full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations governing our work. We conduct our business affairs and employment relationships in the most professional and ethical manner possible. The policies contained in this section of the employee handbook describe the basic principles that guide our compliance programs and employee relations practices.

Accuracy of Information

Orenda Charter School relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other information presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Employees are expected to provide truthful and accurate information in connection with their employment at Orenda Charter School.

Any falsification or misrepresentation in connection with application materials, or during the course of employment, is a serious offense and may lead to discharge from employment or non-selection of an applicant.

Pre-employment Affidavit for Applicants and Applicants Offered Employment

All applicants for employment for educator positions (as defined by Texas Education Code §21.003) must submit a pre-employment affidavit indicating whether the applicant has ever been charged with, or adjudicated for, having an inappropriate relationship with a minor.

An applicant offered employment for an educator position (as defined by Texas Education Code §21.003) must submit a Pre-Employment Affidavit for Applicant Offered Employment prior to the start of employment with Orenda Charter School.

Link to Affidavit Form

Employment Application & Other Forms

- **I-9 Employment Eligibility Form ("EEVF") required by the Department of Homeland Security**
  - **Must be completed prior to the start of employment**
- W-4 Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate
- Signed Offer Letter
- Employee Election Form to Withhold Certain Information from Public Access
- Acknowledgement of Receipt of Personnel Handbook
- Authorization for Automatic Deposit
- Applicable Healthcare/Benefit Forms

- Notice Regarding Workers Compensation Benefits
- Pre-Employment Affidavits

Current employees may be required to update or execute any of the above forms. Any employee who fails or refuses to complete the above forms or to provide Orenda Charter School with requested documentation in a timely manner may be subject to the loss of employment benefits, the delay of employment benefits, disciplinary action, or withdrawal of the employment offer.

Employee Election Form to Withhold Certain Information from Public Access

Employees of Orenda Charter School may elect whether to keep certain information about them confidential and not subject to disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act. Unless an employee chooses to keep it confidential, the following information about an employee of Orenda Charter School may be subject to public release if requested under the Texas Public Information Act:

- Home Address
- Home Telephone Number
- Social Security Number
- Emergency Contact Information
- Information that reveals that the individual has family members

Employees must complete and submit the Public Access Option Form to the Campus Principal no later than the 14th day after the date the employee begins employment with Orenda Charter School to keep certain information about them confidential under the Texas Public Information Act. Human Resources shall provide the employee with the Public Access Option Form upon employment with Orenda Charter School.

The 2024 Attorney General Public Information Act Handbook contains a sample Public Access Option Form.

Ethical Practices

Orenda Education is committed to providing quality services in a highly ethical manner. The purpose of the Policy on Ethical Practices is to help prevent violations of law and also to establish standards of conduct so that Orenda has a reputation for unquestioned ethical practices. Orenda employees, associates and board members are expected to maintain their conduct according to the principles outlined in the Policy.

Conflicts of Interest

Each employee owes a duty of loyalty to our company. Employees shall avoid any activity that may involve, or may appear to involve, a conflict of interest with their obligations to Orenda or the school in which they work.

Orenda employees shall not use any information about Orenda or its schools for their personal benefit. Employees should disclose business information only as required in the performance of their job duties or as expressly authorized by Orenda. Violation of this policy may result in personal liability to the employee for any benefit gained from improper use of such information or any damages sustained by Orenda or its subsidiaries as a result of improper disclosure of such information.

Employees should immediately disclose any potential conflicts of interest involving Orenda or its schools and themselves or their immediate families (including spouse or children). The Disclosure Statement form should be used for this purpose. This can include vendors, relationships with other employees, other outside employment, etc.

If you believe an inappropriate, improper, unethical, or illegal practice is occurring, or has occurred at Orenda, you must report the activity immediately. You are encouraged to inform your immediate supervisor or, in lieu of that, any member of management, the Company Chief Executive Officer or a Company Board Member.

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This section of the Handbook establishes only the framework within which Orenda Charter School wishes to operate. Orenda Charter School's framework is also guided by applicable state and federal law governing conflicts of interest and nepotism applicable to Texas open-enrollment charter schools and nonprofit tax-exempt entities. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Contact Human Resources for more information or questions about conflicts of interest.

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All Orenda Charter School Employees shall avoid employment, financial, business, social, or other relationships that might be opposed to the interests of Orenda Charter School Or might create the appearance of impropriety, or might cause a conflict with the performance of their duties. Employees shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner that avoids even the appearance of conflict between their personal interests and those of Orenda Charter School

Conflict of interest situations may arise in many ways. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Employment with a vendor/contractor, regardless of the nature of the employment, while employed by Orenda Charter School
- Contract award with a vendor in which an employee or his or her family have a substantial ownership or management interest.
- Ownership of, or substantial interest in, a company that is a supplier of Orenda Charter School
- Acting independently as a consultant to an Orenda Charter School Supplier.



- Accepting expense-paid invitations to sports or entertainment events from a long-time friend who is also an Orenda Charter School Vendor.
- Socializing with vendors or persons interested in doing business with Orenda Charter School Under circumstances that create the appearance of impropriety.

Any employee who may have a conflict situation, actual or potential, shall report all pertinent details in writing to his or her supervisor. If the proper resolution is not apparent to the supervisor, the supervisor shall refer the matter to the Superintendent of Schools or designee for resolution. If a conflict of interest develops accidentally or unexpectedly, the matter shall be reported to the supervisor immediately.
Nothing in this policy is meant to interfere with Orenda Charter School's desire to encourage staff members to take part in civic, church, and other public services where opportunities to exhibit good citizenship are present.

Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy of Orenda that all persons are entitled to equal employment opportunity regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other status or trait protected by state, federal, or local law. Additionally, it is the Company's policy to provide promotion and advancement opportunities in a nondiscriminatory fashion.

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of Orenda that, as an employee, you and your work environment shall be free from all forms of sexual harassment. Unwanted verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature by any employee, supervisor, manager or vendor, including sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other such conduct is illegal and strictly prohibited.

What is Sexual Harassment? Sexual harassment does not refer to behavior or occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, and that fails to respect the rights of others, and, therefore, interferes with our work effectiveness.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that either implies or clearly states that your employment is dependent on submission to such conduct or behavior. It also includes employment decisions that are made concerning you based on your submission to, or rejection of, such conduct and conduct that has the purpose or effect to create sexually intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment may be overt or subtle. Whatever form it takes – verbal, non-verbal, or physical – sexual harassment is insulting and demeaning to the recipient and will not be tolerated in the workplace. The prohibition against sexual harassment applies not only to the workplace during normal business hours but also to all work-related social functions, whether on company property or not, and to business-related travel.

Reporting - It is imperative that you be aware of the avenues for reporting harassment that are

available to you. If you feel you are being subjected to sexual harassment in the workplace by a co-worker, manager, supervisor or other individual (whether employed by the Company or not), or if you believe your employment is being adversely affected by such conduct, you should report the alleged act immediately to your supervisor or the Director of Human Resources.

Investigative Process - All complaints will be handled in a timely and confidential manner in order to protect you, encourage the reporting of any incidents of sexual harassment and protect the reputation of any employee wrongfully charged with sexual harassment.

All employees, managers and supervisors are expected to comply with this policy and cooperate in any investigation surrounding allegations of sexual harassment. Investigation of a complaint normally includes conferring with the parties involved and any named or apparent witnesses. You will not be subject to coercion, intimidation, retaliation, interference or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation.

Disciplinary Action - Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, will be taken based on the outcome of the investigation and the seriousness of the offense.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Orenda complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and does not discriminate against any individual in recruitment, interviewing, hiring, or during the course of employment with the company. As required by law, Orenda will provide reasonable accommodation for a known disability of an applicant or employee, unless the accommodation would cause an "undue hardship" on the operation of our business.

Federal and State Worksite Postings

Required state and federal postings are found at each Orenda Charter School facility. The following postings can be found in an area common to all employees at their facility: Employee Rights Under the Fair Labor Standards Act; Job Safety and Health: It's the Law; Employee Rights and Responsibilities Under the Family and Medical Leave Act; Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law; Your Rights Under USERRA; Employee Polygraph Protection Act Notice ("EPPA"); Texas Payday Law; Texas Whistleblower Act Notice ("TWA"); Unemployment & Payday Law; Notice to Employees Concerning Workers' Compensation in Texas; and the Texas Hazard Communication Act Notice ("THCA") to Employees. Postings are in both English and Spanish for all employees to read.

Immigration Law Compliance

Orenda Charter School is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States and does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.



Nondiscrimination Based on Religion

Orenda Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of any aspect of religious observance, practice, or belief unless the school demonstrates that it is unable to reasonably accommodate the religious observance or practice of an employee or applicant without undue hardship to Orenda Charter School's business.

Nondiscrimination Based on Military Service

Orenda Charter School will not deny initial employment, reemployment, retention in employment promotion, or any benefits of employment on the basis of membership in a uniformed service, performance in a uniformed service, application for uniformed service, or obligation to a uniformed service.

Orenda Charter School will not take adverse employment action or discriminate against any person who takes action to enforce protections afforded by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 ("USERRA").

Drug Free Workplace

Orenda is committed to providing a safe work environment and to fostering the well-being and health of its employees. That is jeopardized when any Orenda employee illegally uses drugs on or off the job, comes to work under the influence, possesses, distributes or sells drugs in the workplace, or abuses alcohol or inhalants on the job.

Tobacco Products and E-Cigarettes

State law prohibits smoking, using tobacco products, or e-cigarettes on all school-owned property and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities, on or off school property. This includes all buildings, playground areas, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. Drivers of school-owned vehicles are prohibited from smoking, using tobacco products, or e-cigarettes while inside the vehicle. Notices stating that smoking is prohibited by law and punishable by a fine are displayed in prominent places in the school building. Any violation of this policy may result in immediate termination.

For purposes of this policy, "e-cigarette" means an electronic cigarette or any other device that simulates smoking by using a mechanical heating element, battery, or electronic circuit to deliver nicotine or other substances to the individual inhaling from the device. This also includes any and all vapors, inhalants, electronic cigarette devices or other devices or paraphernalia used with vapors, other inhalants or chemicals.

All personnel shall enforce this policy on Orenda Charter School property.

Violations - It is a violation of company policy for you to use, possess, sell, trade, offer for sale, or offer to buy illegal drugs or otherwise engage in the illegal use of drugs on or off the job. It is also a violation of company policy for you to work under the influence of or the impairment by alcohol. Further, you are



prohibited from using prescription drugs illegally, i.e., to use prescription drugs that have not been legally obtained or in a manner or for a purpose other than as prescribed.

Disciplinary Action - If you are found in violation of this policy you will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. The goal of this policy is to balance our respect for individuals with the need to maintain a safe, productive and drug-free environment. The intent of this policy is to offer a helping hand to those who need it, while sending a clear message that the illegal use of drugs and the abuse of alcohol are incompatible with employment at Orenda.

Treatment - Benefits may be available for alcohol/substance abuse treatment if you are enrolled in a health plan offered by Orenda. Both inpatient and outpatient coverage is available to the extent specified in the plan document. You should review your summary plan description for an explanation of the approved benefits. You will not be subject to discrimination or retaliation in the workplace should you seek treatment or if you are considered to be recovering from addiction.

Testing - To maintain a Drug Free Workplace, Orenda reserves the right to conduct pre-employment substance abuse testing. Orenda will not discriminate against applicants for employment because of a past history of drug or alcohol abuse. It is the current illegal use of drugs and/or abuse of alcohol in violation of Company policy that Orenda will not tolerate.

Orenda reserves the right to test any employee for drug, alcohol or inhalant use if there is probable cause to believe that the employee is working while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Search of Personal Property - In the course of an investigation of drug use, inhalant use and/or use of alcohol in violation of the policy, Orenda reserves the right for a Company employee or representative to conduct a search of your person, desk, locker, automobile, briefcase, purse, or any other personal property that has been brought onto the company's property.

Employment at Will

Orenda employs you for an indefinite term and your employment may be terminated with or without cause, at any time, at the will of either you or the Company. No employee of the Company is authorized to represent or offer to any applicant, prospective employee or present employee, employment on terms other than this without specific written authorization from the Orenda CEO. It should be clearly understood that this Employee Handbook does not constitute a contract of employment or any other type of contract. The Company may change or modify these or other policies or procedures relating to employment matters from time to time as it considers appropriate in its sole discretion either in individual or corporate-wide situations without notice to you.

All corporate policies and procedures are interpreted and applied by the Company at its sole discretion, and its decisions in this regard are final. Under no circumstances are the policies and procedures set out in this Employee Handbook, or in other communications to you, promises by the Company that your employment will always be governed by them.

Arrest & Conviction Occurring After Employment Begins

An employee must notify his or her Principal or immediate supervisor within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of any felony, and any of the other offenses listed below:

- Crimes involving school property or funds;
- Crimes involving attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle any person to hold or obtain a position as an educator;
- Crimes that occur wholly or in part on school property or at a school-sponsored activity; or
- Crimes involving moral turpitude.

Moral turpitude includes, but is not limited to: (a) dishonesty; (b) fraud; (c) deceit; (d) theft; (e) misrepresentation; (f) deliberate violence; (g) base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor; (h) crimes involving any felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any misdemeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance; (i) felonies including driving while intoxicated; and (j) acts constituting abuse or neglect under SBEC rules. If an educator is arrested or criminally charged, the Superintendent is also required to report the educator's criminal history to the Division of Investigations at TEA.

The requirement to report a criminal history after employment begins shall not apply to minor traffic offenses. However, a first offense of DWI or DUI must be reported if the employee drives or operates (or is authorized to do so) an Orenda Charter School vehicle or other mobile equipment. Failure to timely report may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Conviction may not be an automatic basis for termination, unless the conviction makes an employee ineligible for employment in a Texas public school. Orenda Charter School shall consider the following factors (or other appropriate considerations as deemed by Orenda Charter School in determining what action, if any, should be taken against an employee who is convicted of a crime during employment:

- The nature of the offense;
- The date of the offense;
- The relationship between the offense and the position to which the employee is assigned; and
- The best interests of Orenda Charter School and its students.

Your Job and Opportunities

To a large extent, your individual success and the successful performance of your department depend upon the quality of teamwork between you and your supervisor. One of your supervisor's fundamental responsibilities is to inform you of your job duties and answer questions about your job. This section of the employee handbook will provide you with additional information on other aspects of your work, such as internal job opportunities, employment eligibility, performance evaluation and training and development within the Company.



Job Openings

It is the policy of Orenda to fill job openings from qualified candidates. Generally, you should be employed at least six months before applying, internally, for posted positions unless your supervisor gives you express permission.

Job openings are usually posted on the Company's web site or through other notice methods by Human Resources. Qualified, interested employees have the opportunity to apply for open positions upon notifying their current supervisor of their interest.

Internal transfers must be in good standing which includes performance, attendance, punctuality, attitude, and circle of courage values that support and incorporate our mission and vision. In addition, internal transfers will complete the regular job opening process such as application, interview, etc. If chosen for an open position by the Hiring Manager, HR will be notified and an offer letter will be made. In addition, the Superintendent will approve the transfer to ensure an appropriate transition plan between roles is in place.

It is at the discretion of the Superintendent and HR to promote an employee without having to go through the application process if the employee has proven themselves over the course of a year or more. The employee would have to be in good standing with excellent evaluations, attendance, and meets the Circle of Courage philosophy.

Employment Eligibility

Authorized Workers - It is the policy of Orenda to hire only authorized workers. Persons who are not citizens of the United States will be considered for employment on the same basis as citizen applicants, subject to the laws and regulations of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 and those agencies having jurisdiction over aliens. Orenda will verify the employment eligibility and identity of each new hire. Human Resources must attest that examination of the document(s) specified on the I-9 Immigration and Naturalization Form has been made.

Age Requirements - Candidates for employment must have reached at least their sixteenth birthday. The age limitation stated above is the only limitation related to age and employment utilized by Orenda.

Employment of Relatives - It is the policy of Orenda that relatives shall not be hired, transferred, promoted and/or demoted on either a temporary or regular basis into positions of a supervisory/subordinate relationship.

Marriage of Employees - In the event that the marriage of two employees results in either the husband or wife being in a supervisory/subordinate relationship, a transfer, promotion or demotion of one of the employees is required within six months after the date of marriage. If no suitable opening is available, one of the employees will be required to give proper termination notice or the employee with the least Orenda service will be involuntarily terminated.



Criminal History Background Checks

Orenda Charter School will obtain criminal history records from a law enforcement or criminal justice agency for all prospective volunteers, contractors, and applicants for employment, including substitutes, as required by Chapter 22 of the Texas Education Code prior to employment or the commencement of volunteer service. Additionally, as allowed by state law, criminal history checks of employees (or volunteers and contractors whose duties are performed where students are regularly present) may be obtained at any time during employment or volunteer services.

Criminal history records must also be obtained and reviewed prior to the employment of any driver for student transportation (bus drivers, bus monitors, and bus aides) either directly or through a commercial service. The Board of Directors shall be informed of a criminal record of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude and must affirmatively vote to employ such driver, monitor, or aide.

Information collected on an individual to comply with the requirements listed above is confidential and may not be released except as authorized by law or with the consent of the person who is the subject of the information.

All employees and applicants must complete the Authorization for Criminal History Background Check form.

Pre-employment Screening - Background investigations, including criminal background checks, are conducted on all new and/or rehired personnel within the guidelines of Orenda policy (and/or Federal, State, and local law, if different), when an offer of employment has been extended. Additionally, pursuant to Senate Bill 9, all employees of Orenda Education must be submitted to Texas Education Agency (TEA) for a review of criminal history reports and to be identified for fingerprinting through FAST Fingerprint Pass. Employment with Orenda is conditional based on the result of the screening and an adverse report could result in termination of employment.

Prohibition Against Employing Individuals Convicted of Certain Offenses

Orenda Charter School may not hire an individual who is prohibited from serving as an officer or employee of an open-enrollment charter school under Texas Education Code § 12.120(a). Additionally, Orenda Charter School shall discharge or refuse to hire an employee or applicant for employment if it obtains information through a criminal history review that:

- The employee or applicant has been convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication community supervision for an offense for which a defendant is required to register as a sex offender under Chapter 62, Code of Criminal Procedure; or:
- The employee or applicant has been convicted of:
    - A felony under Penal Code Title 5, if the victim of the offense was under 18 years of age at the time the offense was committed, or

- An offense under the laws of another state or federal law that is the equivalent to an offense under item 1 above (relating to registration as a sex offender).

However, while Orenda Charter School may not be required by law to discharge or refuse to hire an employee or applicant if the person committed an offense under Title 5, Penal Code, and:

- The date of the offense is more than 30 years before:
  - June 15, 2007 in the case of an employee's employment by Orenda Charter School as of that date; or
  - The date the applicant's employment will begin, in the case of a person applying for employment with Orenda Charter School after June 15, 2007; and
- The employee or applicant for employment satisfied all terms of the court order entered on conviction.

Orenda Charter School may make employment decisions in accordance with its policy regarding employment of personnel with criminal histories (or arrested or charged with a criminal offense). Orenda Charter School's policy regarding employment of personnel with criminal histories is as follows:

As allowed by Commissioner of Education rule, a person may not serve as an Orenda Charter School officer or employee if the person has been convicted of:

- A misdemeanor involving moral turpitude or any felony;
- An offense listed in Texas Education Code § 37.007(a); or
- An offense listed in Code of Criminal Procedure, Article 62.001(5).

Additionally, Orenda Charter School shall discharge or refuse to hire a person listed on the registry of persons not eligible for employment in Texas schools, as maintained and made available by the Texas Education Agency ("TEA").

Orenda Charter School may discharge an employee if it obtains information of the employee's conviction of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude that the employee did not disclose to Orenda Charter School or the State Board of Educator Certification ("SBEC").

Except as required by state or federal law or as determined by Orenda Charter School to be in the best interest of student and employee safety (and in accordance with applicable law), Orenda Charter School does not automatically prohibit employment or refuse to consider an application for employment solely on the grounds that an applicant/employee has a prior criminal record. Orenda Charter School does not prohibit employment or refuse to consider an application for employment based solely on the grounds that the applicant/employee has been arrested. Instead, Orenda Charter School reviews these circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

Orenda Charter School reserves the right to annually (or more frequently) perform criminal history record checks on current employees.



Licensing and Certification - If you are in a position that requires licensure or certification you must maintain current, up-to-date licensure or certification with the appropriate state or national board or agency. Orenda will verify all licenses and, if permitted by applicable state requirements, may maintain a copy of your current, valid, and required licenses, registrations and/or certifications. You will not be allowed to continue working without the required current licensure or certification for your position.

You are responsible personally for maintaining current license, registration, and/or certification at all times. You must present your renewal to Human Resources and/or your supervisor before the expiration date. The new verification form or licensure copy will be filed in your personnel file.

Annual Salary Increases – The Board reviews recommendations for salary increases for staff during the budget approval each summer. In order to be eligible for the approved salary increases you must have been in your current position/role for the minimum 90 work days for TRS service credit.

New Hire Reporting

Federal and state law requires Orenda Charter School to provide information about all new or rehired workers to the Employer New Hire Reporting Operations Center in the Texas Office of the Attorney General.

Orenda maintains different employment categories based upon the frequency and number of hours of work normally scheduled for the employee.

Regular, Full Time - You are a regular full-time employee if you work, on a regularly scheduled basis, more than 30 hours per week and your employment is for no definite term. All benefits offered by the Company are available to you as a regular full-time employee.

Regular, Part Time - You are a regular part-time employee if you work, on a regularly scheduled basis, less than 30 hours per week but at least 15 hours per week. Regular part-time employees are employed for no definite term and are entitled to limited employee benefits.

Exempt v. Non-Exempt Designation. Each employment position is designated as either non-exempt or exempt as required by the federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

Exempt Positions. Exempt employees are expected to work the hours necessary to complete their assigned work to the satisfaction of their supervisor without regard to scheduled hours and without expectation of additional compensation. Exempt employees are not entitled to overtime compensation. Generally, teaching and administrative positions are designated as exempt positions. Extra duties beyond the hired role can receive stipend pay (pre-determined) or approved through a Personal Service Agreement (PSA) form such as Saturday school work or Summer School. All extra duty is pre-determined and approved with specific details regarding the extra duty. Staff should not request stipend pay for extra duty after the fact with no prior approval. Stipend work is pre-approved before the work begins and a stipend pay sheet or PSA form is completed with details and approvals by the supervisor/Principal and Superintendent. The form is then submitted to the payroll department for payment processing to the employee. Note:

instructional, extracurricular and athletic stipends are paid in the July payroll.

1) Teaching positions are classified as exempt positions if:
   a) The primary duty is teaching, tutoring, instructing or lecturing in the activity of imparting knowledge; and
   b) They are employed and engaged in this activity as a teacher in an educational establishment.

2) Administrative positions are classified as exempt positions if:
   a) The position is compensated on a salary basis at a rate of $913 or more per week; and
   b) The primary duty is performance of office or non-manual work directly related to the management or general business operations of the employer or the employer's customers; and
   c) The primary duty includes the exercise of discretion and independent judgment with respect to matters of significance.

Non-Exempt Positions. Non-exempt employees are entitled to minimum wages and overtime pay. Overtime payment is pay at a rate of at least one and one-half times an employee's "regular rate of pay" for any hours physically worked (not including leave time) over 40 hours in a workweek. Generally, paraprofessionals are classified as non-exempt employees. All non-exempt employees must review their timecards daily & weekly to ensure for accuracy. Direct supervisors must review and approve their employees' time cards weekly.

A non-exempt employee is never permitted to work "off the clock". While all hours worked will be compensated appropriately, an employee's failure to report hours accurately whether too low or too high is cause for disciplinary action. Employees should immediately report to HR any effort by a supervisor to participate, encourage, or even permit an employee to work "off the clock" in violation of this overtime provision.

Non-calendar work days (or off calendar days) requested by a non-exempt employee (such as weekend, holiday, or calendar breaks) must be formally pre-approved by completing a Personal Service Agreement (PSA) form. The form is approved by the supervisor/Principal and Superintendent before work can begin. Non-exempt staff working off calendar days cannot work alone – a supervisor must be present.

Performance Management

A good orientation helps you adjust to your new work environment and become a productive team member more quickly. Giving you the information and attention needed to start a new job reduces the possibility of future misunderstandings or problems.



Orientation

During orientation, you will have an opportunity to hear about and discuss a variety of issues affecting your employment including information about the history and development of the Company and the facility, benefits, compensation and corporate compliance. In addition, organizational structure and department functions may be discussed. Orientation into the department, when appropriate, will normally be conducted by your immediate supervisor. A departmental orientation should include a review of your functional role and the setting of performance goals and objectives.

New Employee Orientation

During the first few weeks of employment, an employee must attend an orientation that will include the following subject areas:

1. A review of this personnel manual;
2. A tour of the campus;
3. Receipt of credentials necessary for parking, access to the school building and computers, and other materials as appropriate for the employee's employment position;
4. Prevention techniques for, and recognition, of sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children.

Evaluation Process

Your supervisor is responsible for establishing qualitative and quantitative job expectations for the positions he or she supervises. It is his or her responsibility to discuss these expectations with you and rate your performance in relationship to these standards.

<u>Orenda Teacher Evaluation and Support System (O-TESS)</u>
Orenda uses the T-TESS rubric with a modified evaluation process. The O-TESS process consists of beginning-of-year goal setting, mid-year goal progress coaching conference, a minimum of three walkthroughs, 4-minute scheduled observation, and end-of-year summative conference.

<u>Orenda Principal Evaluation and Support System (O-PESS)</u>
Orenda uses the T-TESS rubric with a modified evaluation process. The O-PESS process consists of beginning-of-year goal setting, mid-year goal progress coaching conference, principal self-assessment, and end-of-year summative conference.

<u>Other Non-Academic Positions</u>
Annual evaluations will be conducted with your supervisor through the standard evaluation process (not O-TESS or O-PESS).

If you are a new employee, your supervisor will conduct a performance review after your probationary period which is the first 90 days of service. Your supervisor should review your performance on at least an annual basis and document the quality of your performance for each objective as compared to the performance standards established for your job.



Annual performance evaluations are done at the end of the academic year. However, your supervisor may wish to complete a formal review when:

- Counseling becomes necessary due to deficiencies in your job performance, or
- Your job performance has improved significantly (and consistently) since the last Performance Evaluation, or
- Your position responsibilities have changed significantly.

Once your supervisor has reviewed your Performance Evaluation with you, it should be signed to indicate receipt of the Performance Evaluation and submitted to Human Resources for inclusion in your personnel file. Refusal to sign the evaluation does not void the process or prevent the document from being included in your file.

Job Performance Improvement

Your supervisor should consistently provide you with ongoing feedback about your job performance. Creating a growth plan, performance coaching and other positive performance improvement actions may be taken to correct deficiencies when your performance is not meeting expectations.

A three-step approach to correcting relatively minor but continuing or serial performance deficiencies is used at Orenda. Performance coaching includes verbal counseling, one or more written warnings and finally, termination from employment if you are unsuccessful in improving performance to expected levels.

Depending on the severity of the situation, steps may be eliminated when deemed appropriate. When a very serious offense is involved, immediate termination may be appropriate and will supersede the three-step corrective action approach. Violations requiring investigation may also warrant suspension prior to final action.

Growth Plan/Disciplinary Action

Employment with Orenda Charter School is based on mutual consent and both the employee and Orenda Charter School have the right to terminate employment at-will, with or without cause or advance notice. Orenda Charter School may use progressive discipline at its discretion.
Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

1. Verbal warning.
2. Conference with a supervisor and/or the Principal.
3. Written warning.
4. Imposition of an employee growth plan / performance improvement plan.
5. Suspension with or without pay.
6. Termination of employment.

The progression of these steps depends upon the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences. There may also be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed.



Employee Development

It is the Company's policy to do all that it reasonably can to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and skills of all Orenda employees. The Company also seeks to establish and maintain a work environment that fosters the growth and development of your career and contributes to your overall job satisfaction. Orenda also encourages you to be involved in professional organizations that will enhance your position in the Company and furnish you with ongoing continuing education that provides both personal and professional benefits.

Orenda Charter School is committed to the professional development of all its employees. For educators, Orenda Charter School provides training before the start of the school year, on-site coaching and modeling throughout the school year, day-to-day instructional leadership, and access to external workshops. For non-instructional staff, Orenda Charter School provides technical training before the start of the school year and throughout the year.

In addition, all employees are encouraged to pursue external professional development opportunities in the form of workshops or additional certification. Employees should talk with their supervisors about additional development opportunities and specific career paths. Supervisors must approve professional development before it is taken if time off will be required to attend the session/course.

Assignment and Reassignment

All personnel are subject to assignment and reassignment by the Superintendent or designee, and may also be directed to perform additional or supplemental duties from time to time. Unless specifically required by applicable law or approved by the Board of Directors and/or the Superintendent, no additional financial compensation is provided for additional or supplemental duties. Orenda Charter School's criteria for approval of reassignments will be consistent with school policy regarding equal opportunity employment.

Any employee may request reassignment to another position for which he or she is qualified. All interested employees who meet a position's minimum qualifications are encouraged to apply. Selection is based on the school's needs and a candidate's qualifications and performance. Decisions concerning job vacancies will be based on each individual's job qualifications, experience, and abilities and in accordance with applicable state and federal law. Orenda Charter School reserves the right to select candidates from outside the school.

Leaving Your Employment

Since employment with Orenda is based upon continuing mutual consent, either you or Orenda may discontinue employment at any time with or without cause or notice.

Resignation with Notice - We request that you provide a written notice of your intent to leave Orenda employment.

- The notice should be at least two weeks (10 business days) for non-exempt employees



- and at least four weeks (20 business days) for exempt employees prior to the last day of employment.
- Your notice of resignation should include the reason for leaving and the last day you will work.
- You must be actively at work on your final day of employment.

If you resign from the Company with proper notice (minimum of two weeks – 10 business days) you may be considered favorably for future re-employment with the Company.

Resignation without Notice - If you provide no prior notice or less than the requested notice you will be considered to have terminated without notice. Since this type of resignation is documented as such in your file, it may negatively affect your chances for future employment with Orenda.

Involuntary Termination - You are considered to be released from the Company when you are terminated due to a lack of work, reorganization, reduction-in-force, or other management decision that is based on factors outside of your control.

Discharge - Discharge occurs when you are not satisfactorily performing your assigned work or when your misconduct is serious enough to warrant termination.

Benefits at Termination - Human Resources will provide you with information concerning your benefits at termination. Benefits end the last day of the month in which you leave employment. Human Resources may also conduct an exit interview with you to determine the reason for termination and as a method to uncover problems/situations that may have led to your termination decision.

Staff Development Repayment – Staff who attended training within the twelve (12) months prior to their separation date will be responsible for reimbursing Orenda any registration fees paid for training, including, but not limited to, AVID, Advancement Placement, and professional conferences.

References - All requests for references on former employees or requests for information on current employees should be directed to and only handled by the Human Resources Department. Dates of employment, positions held, and location are the only information that will be provided on current or former employees.

Providing unauthorized references for current or former employees including verbal, personal, professional or "off the record" references are in violation of Orenda policy and may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Re-employment

If you are an applicant for re-employment, you will be considered on the basis of your qualifications and experience, including your previous work record with the Company.

Although the reasons for prior termination do not automatically exclude or qualify you for re-hire, they are important factors that should be considered in determining your suitability for re-employment. To be eligible for re-hire, you should have left the Company in good standing. Good standing is voluntary termination with appropriate notice or involuntary termination for which the employee was not at fault.

Standards of Conduct

All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interests of the district and to be courteous to students, one another, and the public.

Employees are expected to observe the following standards of conduct:

- Recognize and respect the rights of students, parents, other employees, and members of the community.
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and coworkers.
- Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
- Notify their immediate supervisor in advance or as early as possible in the event that they must be absent or late. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, tardiness, and failure to follow procedures for reporting an absence may be cause for disciplinary action.
- Know and comply with campus and district policies and procedures.
- Express concerns, complaints, or criticism through appropriate channels.
- Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately.
- Use district time, funds, and property for authorized district business and activities only. This includes keeping personal conservations and tasks to a minimum (5 minutes or less) and not sleeping during work time.

All district employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, district policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Alleged incidents of certain misconduct by educators, including having a criminal record, must be reported to SBEC not later than the seventh day after the superintendent knew of the incident. See Reports to the Texas Education Agency below for additional information.

To maintain an orderly, safe, and respectful work environment, Orenda will respond to and correct inappropriate employee behavior or conduct. Minor violations of Orenda policy or work rules may warrant only a written warning, while severe or repeated violations may warrant immediate termination.

When your personal conduct does not conform to the philosophy or policies of Orenda, the Company may take disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Confidentiality

During the course of your employment, you often learn confidential and restricted information regarding Company operations, employees or students. Company information should be treated with the utmost confidentiality and should not be discussed with any person outside the Company.



The law requires that you keep information about student health and other personal information in the strictest confidence. Personal information concerning a student should never be discussed, except on a need-to-know basis, either inside or outside the Company and may never be released without proper authorization.

Release of confidential information is not only a serious breach of ethics, but also may involve legal proceedings and loss of job. Inquiries by any person or organization should be directed to your supervisor or the CEO/Superintendent. Release of information that is considered confidential will subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Media Inquiries - Inquiries of a routine, informational or local school campus nature regarding a specific Orenda school should be directed to the school Principal or to the Department of Community Relations and Development. You should refer all specific inquiries from the media regarding Orenda, and/or Orenda plans in general to the Orenda Superintendent.

Legal Inquiries - All contact by or inquiries from attorneys or other legal counsel not representing Orenda should be directed to the Orenda Superintendent immediately.

Employee Records

Personnel files are business records of the Company and are the property of Orenda. Orenda maintains accurate up-to-date confidential employee records within the Human Resources Department.

You may review your personnel record, with a member of the Human Resources staff in attendance, with at least two business days' notice. You may not copy any documents in the file without prior approval of Human Resources. Review or photocopying of personnel documents by former employees is not permitted except as required by law.

Orenda Charter School maintains a personnel file on each employee. This file includes the employee's job application, résumé, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, and other employment records.

All information in an employee's personnel file will be made available to the employee or his or her representative in the same manner that public information is made available under the public information laws found in Texas Government Code Chapter 552.

An employee or his or her authorized representative has a special right of access, beyond the right of the general public, to information held by Orenda Charter School that relates to the employee, and that is protected from public disclosure by laws intended to protect the employee's privacy interests. Orenda Charter School may not deny to the employee or his or her representative access to information relating to the employee on the grounds that the information is considered confidential by privacy principles under the Texas Public Information Act ("TPIA"). However, Orenda Charter School may assert, as grounds for denial of access, other provisions of the TPIA or other laws that are not intended to protect the employee's privacy interests.

If Orenda Charter School Determines that information in an employee's records is exempt from disclosure under an exception of Texas Government Code Chapter 552, Subchapter C, other than an exception intended to protect the privacy interest of the employee or his or her authorized representative, it will, when required, submit a written request for a decision to the Attorney General of Texas before disclosing the information. Orenda Charter School Will release the information to the employee requesting the information in accordance with applicable law.

Employees who wish to review their own personnel file should contact Human Resources.
Many personnel records may also be public information and must be released upon request in accordance with state law. Pursuant to a written Open Records Request under the TPIA, employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld from disclosure:

- Home Address,
- Phone number, including personal cell phone number,
- Information that reveals whether they have family members, and
- Emergency contacts.

Please complete and return to Human Resources the "Texas Government Code § 552.024 Public Access Option Form" included with this Handbook if you wish to opt-out and have the above-identified information "exempted" from disclosure under the TPIA. New or terminated employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request; otherwise, personal information will be released to the public in accordance with the TPIA. A request to deny public access to personal information is effective only for public information requests made after the date the employee submits to Human Resources the request to deny access. With respect to certain medical information protected by state and federal law and evaluation documents exempted from disclosure under state law, Orenda Charter School will seek to exempt and protect such documentation from disclosure to the extent permitted by law.

Conflict Resolution

Differences between people is a natural state, therefore conflict between individuals is to be expected as we have many differences in personality, upbringing, and opinions. Free speech and open dialogue is how we go about starting the process that leads to understanding, appreciation and compromise, allowing us to live in relative harmony while still maintaining our individualism. Great organizations create a safe atmosphere for their people to express themselves, while also providing a clear path for conflict resolution. Contained here is the pathway we have chosen at Orenda Education.

As a general rule conflicts have three levels of intensity and three levels of resolutions.

Level 1 Conflicts. These are small interpersonal disturbances between people. One individual may think something is wrong, annoying, or unfair. It could be that an employee is confused about their role, or has a conflict with a rule, a policy or a procedure. Usually, these conflicts just need some clarification to clear up misunderstandings. It's not a full-blown problem or crisis – yet.

Level 1 Conflicts Resolution Process: An informal one on one conversation takes place so that the differences in opinions and feelings between individuals can be expressed and misunderstandings can be quickly resolved. Here just a short conversation or a quick informal meeting can bring about resolution. No further action is required.

Level 2 Conflicts. A level 2 conflict is more serious. Here people may disagree strongly on facts, with opinions that vary greatly. For example; people may disagree very strongly with a rule, policy or procedure. Here the stakes are higher. For example; an individual feels some task, or new job thrust upon them (or taken away), is unfair, or could negatively impact their ability to be successful in their job. Here emotions may start to run hot. For the school teacher or staff member it is when you are angry at a school leader or other staff member. When you feel hurt or disrespected. When you start to say negative things about someone to other school staff members. When you don't respect a school leader's authority or when you are about to rally other staff to your point of view about a leader. When you fear a leader or staff member.

For the school leader it is when you see or hear of a teacher or staff member doing, not doing or saying something that will harm student learning, and the school culture. When you feel disrespected, or not understood, and you begin to feel resentment toward the teacher or staff. When you think someone's attitude, behavior and language is a poison to the school culture. When you know a staff member is rallying other staff against you, or in opposition to a policy or procedure that you've implemented.

Level 2 Conflicts Resolution Process: A **"Courageous Conversation"** meeting is set up between two individuals to resolve the conflict.

Step 1. Create the conditions for a healthy Courageous Conversation.

This should be a one-on-one conversation. Don't "gang up", or "pile on" by bringing in some other people. Decide on a safe place to talk. A neutral site is best. This could be off-campus over coffee. Now do some interpersonal self-reflection. How you think about the conflict you have with them, or that they have with you is key. What is your attitude and belief about the difficult situation? Check your motives. Avoid wanting to win, shame, embarrass or "gotcha" motives. Put yourself in their shoes. What do you imagine they want?

Step 2. Preparation before having a courageous conversation.

First, watch the video # 10 titled Conflict Resolutions Through Courageous Conversations on the Orenda Education You Tube Channel. Second, after watching the video ask yourself what is it you really want to accomplish with the conversation. Come up with a common purpose and mutual benefit that both you and the other might have. "I want the school and students to thrive". "I don't think that policy is fair because……" "I want to have fun and not have all this conflict". "I want us both to enjoy working here". "I want you to feel safe here", "I want you to understand me, and I want to understand you better", etc. Third, make sure the topic of the conversation is specific enough so that some progress can be made from the dialogue. Narrow it down to a simple statement of disagreement. One paragraph at most.

Step 3. Starting the Conversation and How to Maintain Safety



Once together, start by assuring them that the purpose of the conversation is to improve our relationship and understanding of each other. Next, let them know they are safe to express themselves without judgement. Also let them know this discussion will be held strictly confidential. What is said here, stays here. Now say something positive about the person, the value you believe they bring to the school. Something you have seen that they do well. Somehow, they have contributed to the school mission. If you can't think of any, maybe you haven't spent time getting to know them on a more personal basis or observing their work (which you must fix).

Finally, express and confirm a mutual purpose and benefit. Assure them that you care about their goals, what they want, and that you want to trust their motives. If you need to apologize for something you did in the past, do so. The tone of your voice and your body language should be calm, open and welcoming to what the other has to say.

Step 4. During the Conversation

Stay calm and respectful. Remember as you talk that you are there to pursue honesty, peace, and safety, not win-lose. Avoid "gotcha's", win at all costs, and counter punches to hurt or embarrass them. Don't become defensive of yourself. How? Know how to detect safety issues by paying attention to the content of what the other is saying. Watch for signs you, or the other person, is feeling fear. If you do, you must address, reaffirm safety, and then state what you don't want (fear, silence, resentment, etc.) before continuing. Instead, clarify again what you both want, and then bring those mutual goals back to the conversation table.

Step 5. If the Conversation Gets Off Track, Bring it Back to Safety and Mutual Purpose

How? It's not unusual for one of you to fall back into old patterns and become angry, hurt, or push the others buttons during the conversation. Here are some distractions and disruptions tactics to look out for that can derail a healthy conversation.

The dodger tactic. A person changes the topic, or brings in a host of other conflict issues to overwhelm the other person. One person has a litany of complaints against the other.

Response: Don't take the bait. Bring the conversation back to a shared singular purpose and mutual benefit you both agreed upon.

The twister tactic: A person misrepresents your point of view or tries to stick you with some label or tag that doesn't represent your true thoughts or intentions.

Response: Correct the record. "No, that is not what I'm saying, or what I want. Here is what I mean".

The wrangler tactic: Nothing is ever good enough for this person. They just want to argue and don't stay focused on one shared purpose or mutual benefit. All they really want to do is keep you frustrated. They won't accept that your point of view has any validity.

Response: Don't brawl with them, or let them change the rules. Get it back to safety and remind them of the common purpose and mutual benefit we started the conversation with.

The liar tactic: This person offers not just one lie, but many misrepresentations of you. They try to overwhelm you with the burden of proof.

Response: Plug the lie(s) by picking out just one lie and replace it with facts and the truth. You can't respond to every lie. Refocus the conversation back to safety and mutual purpose.

In summary, recognize the purpose behind these derailing tactics and the old strategy of win-lose, but also recognize it is getting off track and recommit to seek mutual purpose and safety. Revisit the mutual purpose, or invent a new purpose and brainstorm new strategies if needed. If the courageous conversation doesn't resolve the conflict, move to Level 3 resolution.

Level 3 Unresolved Conflicts. Here the one-on-one Courageous Conversation(s) have reached a stalemate with no significant progress toward a mutual resolution. Now the process follows the "One Over One Rule". The one over one rule at Orenda Education, and Orenda Charter School District, is that everyone is accountable to someone (see the district and campus specific organization charts for these reporting relationships). Accountability flows up the chart. From the CEO and Superintendent who are responsible to the Orenda Board of Directors, to the teacher who is responsible to a section head or principal, or a district staff member who is responsible to a department director, all major decisions are to be approved by, and conflicts resolved by, the person that employee is accountable too.

Level 3 Unresolved Conflicts Resolution Process:

Step 1. Ask for a "courageous conversation" with the person's supervisor.

Step 2. Fill out the short Level 3 Unresolved Conflict Meeting Request Form in the Employee Tools Section of the Orenda Education web-site. Only the allowed word count on the form to explain the conflict and what has been done to date to resolve the conflict is allowed. No additional information or attachment will be accepted. Please note, this filled out form must also be copied and sent to the person you have the conflict with.

Step 3. A courageous conversation will now take place with the person you have the unresolved conflict with and that person's supervisor. The Supervisor shall start, monitor, and end the conversation, using the same principles for courageous conversations described above. The supervisor summarizes any resolution that was reached between the parties.

Step 4. The supervisor's decision on matters of the conflict is final. No further appeal is granted. For example, a conflict with a teacher is decided by the person that teacher reports too. A conflict with a Principal/HOS is decided by the person the Principal/HOS reports too. A conflict with the Superintendent and/or CEO is decided by the Board of Directors.

Relationships at Work

It is your responsibility to establish and maintain an appropriate and professional relationship with staff, students, parents, and visitors. In a like manner, Orenda is committed to your safety and well-being and discourages the expression or demonstration by staff, student, parents, and visitors of inappropriate social and/or sexual behavior toward any Orenda employee. You are required to report



any such inappropriate behaviors expressed or exhibited toward employees or by fellow employee members towards others.

Some relationships between employees can interfere with company morale, create the risk of favoritism, or give the appearance of favoritism. Relationships of a romantic or sexual nature may also lead to claims of sexual harassment if only one party later wishes to end the relationship. You should understand that while you may date another employee, if you feel pressured to date or otherwise become involved romantically with anyone that you do not wish to be involved with, you should notify Human Resources.

While Orenda does not seek to interfere with your personal life or your off-duty conduct, we do feel it is appropriate to discourage romantic or sexual relations between employees in order to maintain a professional atmosphere free from distractions, favoritism and improprieties. Under no circumstances, can an employee have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student. This would be subject to an investigation up to and including termination along with any additional reporting requirements.

Employees who become involved in a mutually romantic relationship with another employee cannot also have a worker – supervisor reporting relationship. Management should be notified when this occurs so that the reporting lines of authority may be changed when possible.

A married employee involved in a romantic or sexual relationship with another employee is considered to be inappropriate behavior and are grounds for termination if not stopped immediately upon notice.

Employment of Relatives and Fraternization

Orenda Charter School is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to its employees. Intimate relationships have the potential to interfere with Orenda Charter School's ability to provide equal employment opportunities for its employees, and in some instances, may constitute sexual harassment or other unlawful discrimination. To minimize potential conflicts of interest, Orenda Charter School strongly discourages its employees from entering into intimate relationships with other employees for which they have professional supervisory responsibility.

While relatives of employees or the Board of Directors may be employed by Orenda Charter School in accordance with applicable law, a familial relationship among employees can also create an actual, or at least a potential conflict of interest in the employment setting, especially where one relative has professional supervisory responsibility over another relative. Additionally, Orenda Charter School may not employ relatives of the Superintendent if the Superintendent has final hiring authority over the position sought, unless the relative of the Superintendent was hired prior to September 1, 2013.

Orenda Charter School may refuse to hire or assign a relative in a position where the appearance of or potential for favoritism or conflict exists or where otherwise prohibited by law. Employees shall also refrain from making hiring, firing or other decisions impacting the terms or conditions of employment of relatives. Where hardship exists, employees may appeal to the Superintendent in accordance with Orenda Charter School's formal complaint procedures set forth in this Handbook.

Unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent, if two employees marry, become relatives of each other or enter into an intimate relationship, they should not remain in a professional supervisory

relationship. Orenda Charter School will, at its discretion, attempt to identify other available positions, and allow one or both of such employees to apply for reassignment, or Orenda Charter School may reassign the employees at its discretion. If no alternate position is available, Orenda Charter School may terminate either of the employees at its discretion.

In other cases where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises between an employee and another employee, even if there is no professional supervisory responsibility involved, the parties may be separated by reassignment to another position or terminated from employment, at the discretion of Orenda Charter School.

For the purposes of this section, a "relative" is any person who is related by blood or marriage within the third degree, as described below, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

First Degree	Parent, Child
Second Degree	Grandparent, Grandchild, Sibling
Third Degree	Great-Grandparent, Great-Grandchild, Aunt/Uncle, Niece/Nephew

Non-Disclosure

The protection of confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to the interests and the success of Orenda Charter School. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Curriculum systems;
- Instructional programs;
- Curriculum solutions;
- Student course work;
- Compensation data;
- Computer processes;
- Computer programs and codes;
- New materials research;
- Pending projects and proposals;
- Proprietary production processes;
- Research and development strategies;
- Technological data; and
- Technological prototypes.

An employee who improperly uses or discloses trade secrets or confidential business information belonging to Orenda Charter School will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and legal action, even if the employee does not actually benefit from the disclosed information. This does not include any disclosure of otherwise confidential business information or trade secrets in accordance with the TPIA, Chapter 552 of the Texas Government Code, or other applicable federal or state law.



Smoke Free Workplace

In accordance with school law's zero tolerance, and because Orenda feels a responsibility to provide and maintain a healthful, clean and safe working environment, smoking is not permitted at the Orenda corporate and school locations.

You are encouraged to accept the responsibility of informing our visitors of the Company's smoke free workplace policy.

Solicitation

It is recognized that there are many worthy causes in which Orenda employees have an interest. However, some limitations must be imposed on solicitation activities to avoid disruption of company operations.

You may not solicit others or distribute literature for any cause during working time. Working time does not include break periods and meal times, or other periods during the workday when the employees are not properly engaged in performing their work tasks.

Only approved Orenda charitable solicitation campaigns may be conducted on Company property during work times. Only the CEO & Director of Community Relations & Development may approve those campaigns/programs for which solicitation will be made.

Your Work Environment

Your safety and security, as well as that of our students and other customers, is of the utmost importance to Orenda. This section of the handbook provides you with information on school and facility-based safety programs, your personal safety while working for Orenda and the security requirements for all Orenda data information systems and media.

Workplace Safety

Orenda has a safety program that provides for the protection of property and personal safety of employees, visitors and students.

Accidents - Orenda safety and loss prevention programs will provide specific procedures to handle incidents involving injuries to employees, visitors and students. In the event of an accident, you are to report this immediately to your supervisor and complete the necessary incident report form.

Damage to Property – Orenda expects all staff, students and visitors to respect and take care of school property and buildings. If damage to the building or property is found or seen, an incident report should be completed. It is also important for staff to communicate a no tolerance policy (disciplinary action to follow) with the students they work with regarding the behavior of damaging property. It should not be tolerated and is not part of our school culture.

Fire Safety - To provide for the protection of life and property, all Orenda owned or leased facilities and schools prepare and execute fire emergency plans as part of the safety and loss prevention program and in compliance with local rules and regulations.

Student Transportation - Transporting **students in personal vehicles is strictly prohibited.**

Pets - Pets (except for approved service animals) should not be brought on campus. Live animals for instructional purposes need to be approved in advance by the Principal and Superintendent.

Caffeine – Staff are prohibited from providing students with drinks containing caffeine.

Orenda is committed to providing a safe workplace that is free from violence or threats of violence. Any and all acts of violence in the workplace are prohibited and subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Additionally, any and all threats of violence, direct or indirect, serious or said in jest, are prohibited. All threats will be taken seriously and are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Employees concerned about family violence being brought into the workplace or onto the work parking lot are encouraged to notify their supervisor or the Human Resources Director.

Any employee who receives a protective or restraining order that lists Orenda as a protected area is

required to provide the HR Director with a copy of the order and information requested by Orenda to identify the individual subject to the order.

Personal Safety and Security

It is the Company's intention to safeguard our employees while on the job, as well as protect Company property. Given that, no person may possess, conceal or use any firearm or other weapon (including knives or any device that is primarily used to inflict injury) in or on Orenda property. You are required to report to your supervisor or assigned security officer any concern you may have regarding personal or property security.

Employees, visitors, and students, including those with a license to carry a handgun, are prohibited from bringing firearms, knives, clubs, or other prohibited weapons onto school premises (i.e., building or portion of a building) or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. A person, including an employee, who holds a license to carry a handgun may transport or store a handgun or other firearm or ammunition in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, garage, or other district provided parking area, provided the handgun or firearm or ammunition is properly stored, and not in plain view. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisor or the Superintendent immediately.

Searches and Inspections - All Company property, including but not limited to lockers (whether secured by a lock or otherwise), desks, file cabinets, and contents held by facility personnel and company vehicles, is subject to a search at any time. You are discouraged from bringing personal items to work. The Company may, from time-to-time, search and/or require you to allow searches of briefcases, tool boxes, packages, purses and other belongings, including personal vehicles, brought onto Company property when deemed necessary and at management's sole discretion. Any failure on your part to cooperate fully with any search or inspection may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

Former Employees

Unless granted permission by a central office or campus administrator, former employees may not enter areas that are not open to the public after they are no longer employed by Orenda Charter School.

Information Security

Orenda continues to adopt and make use of new means of communication and information exchange. This means that you may have access to one or more forms of electronic media and services, including computers, e-mail, telephones, voice mail, fax machines, external electronic bulletin boards, on-line services, and the Internet.

Employee Access and Use - Orenda encourages the use of these media and associated services because they can make communication more efficient and effective and because they are valuable tools for use in accomplishing the Company's business objectives. However, you should remember that electronic media and services provided by Orenda and created for Orenda are Company property and their



purpose is to facilitate and support Company business. Electronic media and services provided by Orenda are not for personal use.

You will have access only to those information resources necessary for the performance of your duties. You may not disclose or enable access of information resources to unauthorized persons and you should never compromise, disable, or destroy any information resources.

Electronic media cannot be used for knowingly transmitting, retrieving, or storing any communication that is:

- Discriminatory or harassing;
- Derogatory to any individual or group;
- Obscene;
- Defamatory or threatening; or
- Engaged in for any purpose that is illegal or contrary to Orenda's policy or business interests.

Non-compliance with the information security policies, standards, or procedures is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and civil and/or criminal prosecution. The appendix of this handbook contains an Acceptable Use Agreement that must be read and signed by all employees.

Company Access to Employee Files - While the Company does not routinely monitor electronic information created and/or communicated through electronic media, individual use patterns may be monitored including web filters. Such monitoring may be used to determine cost analysis, resource allocation, optimum use of information resources, or other patterns of use that indicate an employee may be violating Orenda's policies or engaging in illegal activity.

Orenda reserves the right, at its discretion, to review your electronic files and messages to the extent necessary to ensure electronic media and services are being used in compliance with the law, this policy, and other Orenda policies.

Confidentiality

You must respect the confidentiality of other individuals' electronic communications. Except in cases in which explicit authorization has been granted by company management, you are prohibited from engaging in, or attempting to engage in:

- Monitoring or intercepting the files or electronic communications of other employees or third parties;
- Hacking or obtaining access to systems or accounts they are not authorized to use;
- Using other people's log-ins or passwords; and
- Breaching, testing, or monitoring computer or network security measures.

Anyone obtaining electronic access to other companies' or individuals' materials must respect all copyrights and cannot copy, retrieve, modify, or forward copyrighted materials except as permitted by the copyright owner.

Attendance

Standards

It is the policy of Orenda to encourage habits of good attendance and punctuality on the part of every employee. Student success should be a primary goal of all Orenda employees, and work attendance by employees is crucial to the accomplishment of this goal. All employees must be on the job, on time, in order for students to receive the support necessary to be successful. These are components of successful job performance and the provision of high-quality education to those we serve.

Since excessive absences negatively impact student performance, employees should be aware that the district may employ a range of measures to manage such absences. Continued tenure in a given position may not be assured if attendance is unreliable. While occasional circumstances may cause an employee to be absent for all or part of the day, frequent absences or tardiness detracts from quality education and places an undue burden on those employees who must fill in for the absent employee.

Tardiness is defined as absence, which includes late arrival and early departure; reporting after the scheduled starting time or returning late from breaks or meal periods.

Work Day Calendars

It is very important that staff are aware of which work day calendar they are on (such as 187 days or 220 days). All work calendars are posted on the district website under the Employee Tools section and list all the roles associated with each calendar (check out the Calendar Key for a one-page summary). Salaries are determined by the number of days worked based on your calendar.

Notification Requirements for Illness and Emergencies

If an employee is going to be unable to report for work as assigned due to illness and/or emergency, the employee should personally notify the supervisor by phone within 4 hours of their scheduled start time. Such notice must be given as far in advance of the time assigned for reporting to work as possible. An employee absent because of illness should advise the immediate supervisor of his or her status and estimated date of return on a daily basis unless advised otherwise by the supervisor.

Employees who take 3 consecutive sick day absences will need to submit a doctor's note upon returning to work. Frequent absences or absences of a suspicious nature may require a medical verification.

Excessive Absenteeism/Tardiness

Except as provided by law, employees who have excessive absences equal to 10 business days or more during one school year may be subject to separation from employment due to unavailability for work. An absence which is not covered by any available leave and is not otherwise excused is also considered an excessive absence. A workday, for purposes of this policy, is a day on which the employee is

required to perform services for the district as determined by the employee's work schedule set by the district. After 10 days, employees must submit a written request for any personal day taken to the Superintendent for approval.

For the purpose of this policy excessive tardiness and/or absences is defined as follows. Employees who arrive at work later than the scheduled starting time are considered tardy. Those who arrive late more than three (3) times in any month or twelve (12) times in any twelve-month period are considered to be tardy an excessive number of times and may result in dismissal.

If an employee is going to be late, the School Principal or Immediate Supervisor must be notified directly, no later than the time the employee's scheduled work period begins. At no time should the employee give their message to anyone other than the designated supervisor.

The Supervisor should monitor their employees' absences and tardies and should be discussed with the employee if there appears to be an issue. This should also be reflected on a Performance Evaluation and/or on an Employee Performance Improvement Plan form. These should be forwarded to the HR Director to be placed in the employee's Personnel File.

Job Abandonment

An employee who walks off the job and leaves their work station without notifying their supervisor will be considered to have abandoned their job.

An employee absent from work for (3) three consecutive days without notifying the immediate supervisor or his/her designee will be considered to have quit without notice.

Unexcused absences are cause for dismissal. One (1) unexcused absence will result in a verbal counseling; two (2) unexcused absences within a 12-month period will result in a written counseling; and a third (3) unexcused absence within a 12-month period will result in dismissal.

Absence from Duty

Orenda offers a number of leave time off benefits to school employees in order to attract and retain talented people and enhance their employment with the Company. These programs include State Personal Time, Local Sick Time, Bereavement, Jury Duty pay and voting time. The specific provisions for each program are explained in this policy.

Leave Policy

For exempt staff, leave may be taken in full day or half day increments, per FLSA guidelines, since staff are paid by a daily rate.

For non-exempt staff, leave may be taken in any increments because staff are paid by the hour.

State Personal Leave

All eligible employees earn 5 State Personal Leave days based on their scheduled hours over the course of a calendar year. There is no limit on the accumulation of state personal leave and it can be transferred to other Texas School districts and is generally transferable to education service centers.

Scheduling Time Off

Personal leave that is taken at an employee's discretion must be scheduled at least 10 business days in advance. Employees requesting personal leave will request in writing to his/her supervisor and then must be entered in Frontline absence reporting. Personal leave will be granted subject to the following limitations so that it does not cause an undue hardship on the Campus or District:

- No more than 5% of campus employees can be out due to personal leave, for our small and rural campuses this will be subject to the discretion of the Campus Principal
- May not last more than three consecutive work days, with a maximum of five in a semester and ten in a school year
- Personal leave may not be taken on the following key days*:

    - The day before a school holiday
    - The day after a school holiday
    - Days scheduled for end-of-semester or end-of-year exams **
    - Days scheduled for STAAR/EOC tests**
    - Professional or staff development days**
    - The first day of school**
    - The last day of school**

    *For extenuating circumstances, leave requested on a key day will require Principal/Supervisor and Superintendent approval at least two weeks (10 business days) in advance. Use the form: Key Workday Extenuating Circumstances Leave Request in Frontline.

    **Campus staff development days, testing days, the first day of school, and the last day of school are not considered key work days for district staff as long as:

    - Key job responsibilities are covered and communicated in advance to needed campus staff.
    - The scheduled campus staff development is not needed for their district role.

Normally, leave requests should be considered on a first come, first serve basis, however, if two requests are presented simultaneously, the employee with longer continuous service and in good standing should be given first consideration.

The Principal/supervisor will approve/deny all requests for personal leave until they reach the max of (10 days) total regardless of the leave being used. In which case, requests will be submitted to the

Principal/Supervisor and Superintendent for approval and copied to the HR Director. Employees will automatically be docked his/her daily rate of each absence taken on a day that has not received final approval from the Superintendent or designee and a negative write up may be placed in their personnel file.

Local Sick Leave

All eligible employees earn 5 Local Sick Leave days based on their scheduled hours over the course of a calendar year. There is no limit on the accumulation of local sick leave. However, local sick leave does not transfer to other Texas school districts.

If an employee uses more sick leave than he or she has earned, and no personal state leave is available, the employee will be docked their daily rate for the days missed and will be deducted from the employee's next paycheck. Local sick leave can be used for the following reasons only:

- Illness of the employee
- Illness of a member of the employee's immediate family (see ***Bereavement*** for the definition of immediate family)
- Doctor appointment for yourself
- Doctor appointment for your family
- Family medical emergency

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a federal law that provides eligible employees of covered employers with unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons.

Employer Responsibilities

Once an employer becomes aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the employer must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility.

Employers must notify its employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

Enforcement

Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

For additional information or to file a complaint:
1-866-4-USWAGE
(1-866-497-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627
www.dol.gov/whd



Covered Employer. Orenda is a private employer covered under the FMLA because it is a public elementary or secondary school. Eligible Employees. An employee is eligible for FMLA leave if the employee (a) has worked for the charter school for at least 12 months, (b) has worked for the charter school for at least 1,250 hours in the 12 months before leave is taken, and (c) works at a location where the charter school has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of their worksite.

Authorized FMLA Leave. An eligible employee may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid job-protected FMLA leave in any 12-month period for the following reasons:

- Birth of a child or to care for the newborn child
- Placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care
- Employee is needed to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition
- The employee's own serious health condition makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's job
- Any qualifying exigency arising from the foreign deployment of the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with the Armed Forces
- To care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the service member's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin

Twelve-Month Period. For purposes of an employee's entitlement to FMLA leave, Orenda establishes the 12-month period as August 1 through July 31 which corresponds with our work day calendars.

Use of Paid Leave. FMLA leave runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave, temporary disability leave, and absences due to a work-related illness or injury. Orenda Charter School will designate the leave as FMLA, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently.

Authorized FMLA Leave for Spouses. Spouses who are employed by the charter school may be limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of FMLA leave during any 12-month period if leave is taken for the birth of a son or daughter, the placement of a child for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition. Military caregiver leave for spouses is limited to a combined total of 26 weeks.

Requesting FMLA Leave. To take FMLA leave, employees must provide Orenda with appropriate notice. If employees know in advance that they will need FMLA leave, they must give at least 30 days advance notice. If employees learn of the need for FMLA leave less than 30 days in advance, they must give notice as soon as possible.

Medical Certification. Upon receipt of the employee's request for FMLA leave, Orenda may request medical certification from the health care provider of the employee or of the employee's health provider, as applicable. If medical certification is requested, the employee has 15 calendar days to provide it. The employee is responsible for the cost of securing the certification from a health care provider and for timely returning the signed certification to the employee's direct supervisor or HR. Similarly, charter school also may require, in order for the employee to return to work, medical certification that the employee is fit for duty.



Qualifying Exigency. An eligible employee may take FMLA leave for one or more of the following qualifying exigencies arising from the foreign deployment of the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent:

1. Short-notice deployment.
2. Military events and related activities.
3. Childcare and school activities.
4. Financial and legal arrangements.
5. Counseling.
6. Rest and recuperation.
7. Post-deployment activities.
8. Parental care.
9. Additional activities, provided that the district and employee agree that the leave shall qualify as an exigency and agree to both the timing and duration.

The charter school may require that leave for a qualifying exigency be supported by a certification.

Intermittent Leave. Employees are entitled to take FMLA leave on an intermittent or reduced scheduled basis.

- If an employee needs intermittent or reduced schedule leave that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, the employee may be temporarily transferred to an alternative position that better accommodates recurring periods of leave.
- When leave is taken after the birth of a healthy child or placement of a healthy child for adoption or foster care, an employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule only if the charter school agrees.

FMLA Leave Through the End of the Academic Semester. The charter school may require an employee to take FMLA leave until the end of an academic semester. If the charter school requires an employee to extend the employee's leave in accordance with this provision, then only the period of leave until the employee is ready and able to return to work shall be charged against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. Any additional leave required by the charter school to the end of the academic semester is not counted as FMLA leave.

Maintenance of Health Benefits. During an employee's FMLA leave, Orenda will maintain the employee's coverage under any group health plan on the same basis as coverage would have been provided if the employee had been continuously employed during the entire leave period.

Fitness for Duty. An employee that takes FMLA leave due to the employee's own serious health condition shall provide, before resuming work, a fitness-for-duty certification from the health care provider. If certification of the employee's ability to perform essential job function is required, Orenda Charter School



shall provide a list of essential job functions (e.g., job description) to the employee with the FMLA designation notice to share with the health care provider.

Returning to Work. On return from FMLA leave, an employee is entitled to be returned to the same position the employee held when leave began, or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

- An employee is entitled to reinstatement even if the employee has been replaced or the employee's position has been restructured to accommodate the employee's absence. However, an employee has no greater right to reinstatement or to other benefits and conditions of employment than if the employee had been continuously employed during the FMLA leave period.
- An employee is entitled to any unconditional pay increases that may have occurred during the FMLA leave period, such as cost-of-living increases.
- The charter school may deny job restoration to a key employee if such denial is necessary to prevent substantial and grievous economic injury to the operations of the district.
- When reinstating an employee to the same or equivalent position, Orenda shall consider the title, job description, duties, supervisory responsibilities, required degrees, required certifications, experience, salary, typical hours, professional capacity, and other factors related to the terms and conditions of employment for that role.

Failure to Return to Work. If, at the expiration of FMLA leave, the employee is able to return to work but chooses not to do so, the district shall require reimbursement of the premiums paid by the district during the leave.

Retaliation. Orenda is prohibited from retaliating against an employee requesting or taking FMLA leave.

Applicable Forms. For the purpose of providing notice and certifications required by this policy, the employee and the charter school shall use the charter school's "Employee Request for Leave Form" and the FMLA forms promulgated by or substantially similar to the forms promulgated by the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Local Personal Leave

Staff who work on an extended work day calendar (215 calendar days or higher) will have two (2) additional personal days for a total of 7 personal days. We recognize the need for additional days for staff who work longer calendars to promote positive physical and mental health and prevent burnout.

Bereavement

In the event of a death of a member of a regular, full-time employee's immediate family, he or she will be allowed up to three (3) regular scheduled days off without loss of regular pay, beginning with the day of death up to and including the day following the funeral.

The immediate family is defined as the employee's:

- Spouse
- Child or step-child
- Parent (or someone who filled the parental role)
- Grandparent (great grandparent)
- Grandchild
- Sister or Brother
- Aunt or Uncle
- Niece or Nephew
- Parents-in-law, Brother or Sister-in-law
- Any relatives living with the employee

Military Leave of Absence

Orenda Charter School is committed to protecting the rights of employees absent on military leave, and complying with all employment and reemployment rights granted under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 ("USERRA") and corresponding state military leave rights. Specifically, Orenda Charter School will not deny employment, reemployment, retention, promotion, or any benefit of employment based on an individual's membership, or application for membership, in the uniformed services. Furthermore, no person will be subjected to retaliation or adverse employment action because such person has exercised his or her rights under USERRA and corresponding state law. If any employee believes that he or she has been subjected to discrimination in violation of this provision, the employee should immediately contact Human Resources.

Service members of the Texas military forces who are ordered to state active duty or to state training and other duty by the Governor, the Adjutant General, or another proper authority under Texas law are entitled to the same benefits and protections provided to persons performing service in the United States uniformed services.

Eligibility

Employees taking part in a variety of military duties are covered under this policy. This includes leaves of absence taken by members of the United States uniformed services, including active duty, reserve, or National Guard, for training, periods of active military service, funeral honors duty, and time spent being examined to determine fitness to perform such service. Subject to certain exceptions under the law, these benefits are generally limited to five years of leave of absence.
Procedures for Military Leaves of Absence.

Employees must contact Human Resources to obtain a military leave of absence form. Notice of the need for leave should be provided as far in advance as is reasonable under the circumstances, unless providing advance notice is prevented by military necessity or is otherwise impossible or unreasonable. Written notice is preferred, but not required under law.

Human Resources will review the request for military leave of absence and issue written notice as to whether the request is approved.

Benefits



An employee on military leave is entitled to continuation of health insurance coverage as follows:

- Absences of 31 or more days: The employee may elect to continue coverage for up to 24 months or for the period of military service (including the time period allowed to reapply for reemployment), whichever is shorter. The employee may be required to contribute up to 102% of the overall (both employer and employee) premium. Upon reinstatement, the employee must be reinstated immediately into the health plan without any waiting periods or pre-existing condition exclusions.
- Absences of fewer than 31 days: The employee is entitled to coverage under the health benefits plan as if he or she were employed continuously. The employee must continue to pay his or her portion of the regular premium.
- If the employee is participating in TRS-ActiveCare, the employee must elect to continue participation in the plan. If the employee does not elect continuation, coverage will end on the last calendar day of the month in which the employee enters active, full-time military service.

Group term life insurance provided by Orenda Charter School will terminate the day the employee becomes active military. Group long-term disability insurance provided by Orenda Charter School will terminate the day the employee becomes active military. Voluntary supplemental insurance will terminate the day the employee becomes active military. Converting to an individual policy may continue voluntary dependent life insurance coverage.

With respect to any retirement plan sponsored by Orenda Charter School, employees who have taken military leave will be credited upon reemployment for purposes of vesting with the time spent in military service and will be treated as not having incurred a break in service. Upon reemployment, the employee may, at his or her election, make any or all employee contributions that the employee would have been eligible to make had employment not been interrupted by military service. Such contributions must be made within a period that begins with the individual's reemployment and that is not greater than three times the length of the employee's military service. Employees will also receive all Orenda Charter School matches for such contributions.

Please contact Human Resources for additional information on benefit continuation during a military leave of absence.

Employees on a military leave of absence may elect, at his or her option, to use paid leave available; the remainder of military leave will be unpaid. Employees will not accrue paid leave during periods of military leave.

Reemployment

To be entitled to reinstatement following military service, the following conditions must be satisfied:

- The employee provided Orenda Charter School notice of the need for military leave.
- The period of military service did not exceed five years. (Note: Some types of duty do not count against this five-year limit. Employees with disabilities have two years after their return dates—for purposes of recuperation and convalescence—to seek reemployment.)
- The employee was released under honorable conditions.
- The employee returned and reapplied for re-employment within the following time restrictions:

- Leaves of fewer than 31 days: The employee must report to work on the first regularly scheduled work period following the completion of military service; no application is required.
- Leaves of more than 31 but fewer than 180 days: The employee must apply for reinstatement within 14 days after completion of military service.
- Leaves of more than 180 days: The employee must apply for reinstatement no more than 90 days after completion of military service.

When the employee returns from military service, he or she is entitled to return to the position the employee would have attained if he or she had not been called to uniformed service. In limited circumstances based on business necessities, reinstatement may not be possible.
A reemployment position includes the seniority, status, and rate of pay that an employee would ordinarily have attained in the position, given the employee's job history, if the employee had been continuously employed.

Protection from Discharge
Under USERRA, a reemployed employee may not be discharged without cause: (1) for one year after the date of reemployment if the person's period of military service was for 181 days or more; or (2) for 180 days after the date of reemployment if the person's period of military service was for 31 to 180 days. Persons who serve for 30 or fewer days of military service are not protected from discharge without cause. Cause can be based on conduct or on job elimination. However, they are protected from discrimination because of military service or obligation.

General Benefits Upon Reemployment
Employees reemployed following military leave will receive seniority and other benefits determined by seniority that the employee had at the beginning of the military leave, plus any additional seniority and benefits the employee would have attained, with reasonable certainty, had the individual remained continuously employed. An employee's time spent on active military duty will be counted toward eligibility for FMLA leave.

Workers' Compensation

Orenda Charter School provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. Orenda Charter School's workers' compensation coverage is administered by Texas Mutual.

Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Specific benefits depend on coverage eligibility and requirements, and the circumstances of each case.

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury or illness will be notified of their rights and responsibilities with respect to workers' compensation benefits.

An employee absent from duty because of a job-related illness or injury may be eligible for workers' compensation weekly income benefits if the absence exceeds seven calendar days.



An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related illness or injury may choose to use accumulated sick leave or any other paid leave benefits. An employee choosing to use paid leave will not receive workers' compensation weekly income benefits until all paid leave is exhausted or to the extent that paid leave does not equal the pre-illness or pre-injury wage. If the use of paid leave is not elected, then the employee will only receive workers' compensation wage benefits for any absence resulting from a work-related illness or injury, which may not equal the employee's pre-illness or pre-injury wage.

An employee who believes that his or her condition is a qualifying disability and that he or she is a qualified individual with a disability under the ADA may request and pursue accommodations under the ADA.

Additional information about Orenda Charter School's workers' compensation benefit offerings may be obtained from Human Resources.

Leave Compensation & Over Time

Compensation for leave will be based on the employee's regular base rate of pay, exclusive of any other premium compensation. Hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week do not count toward the accrual of leave time and leave hours are not counted as time worked when calculating overtime pay.

Managing Leave Accounts

All employees are responsible for managing their leave accounts and can view from the Frontline Employee Service Center (ESC) found on the district website under Employee Tools. If there is leave available, then an employee may use what has been earned/accrued with supervisor approval. However, if leave time is not available, then the employee will be docked for hours/days missed and be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Any Orenda Charter Schools employees needing to be absent from work must notify their supervisor in order to be paid for the absence. Please adhere to the following guidelines:

Planned absence: When an employee wishes to request planned time off, it should be entered in the Frontline ESC to submit to their supervisor for approval at least 10 business days prior to the absence. For those positions that require a substitute, the substitute request or arrangements should promptly so that job has better chance to be filled. Absences will be considered for approval depending on several factors including number of staff out that day, school activities occurring, your absence history and other campus hardships that may be involved.

Unplanned absence: If you must take unplanned time off, contact your supervisor immediately to report your absence so that the supervisor has maximum time to adjust schedules and personnel. You MUST notify your supervisor as soon as possible & enter the absence in Frontline as soon as possible. If your unplanned absence becomes prolonged, you must check in with your supervisor regularly or as agreed to by your supervisor.

Leave for Certification Exam: An absence associated with taking a certification exam required by Orenda

is considered "School Business" ONLY for the time taking the test plus associated travel beyond the employee's normal commute. Any time taken beyond the testing time and associated travel along with study time will be considered personal time. Leave for certification exams must be submitted in advance (through Frontline ESC) along with the testing ticket for the exam showing the test, start time, and location for approval (attach the information to the absence).

Administrative Leave During Investigation: An employee may be placed on administrative leave by the Superintendent during an investigation of alleged misconduct by an employee. Administrative leave will be paid while the investigation is being conducted, up to a maximum of 15 days. During administrative leave, the employee must adhere to the following:

- **Stay Off-Site:** Employees on administrative leave are not permitted to be on-site on any Orenda property or attend any school-sponsored events, unless written permission is granted by the Superintendent. If written permission is granted, the employee will only be on-site during the approved time and will be escorted by the Principal or Superintendent at-all times.
- **Availability:** Employees are required to remain reachable by email and phone during their scheduled work hours. Employees are permitted to complete work that does not interfere with the investigation, such as writing lesson plans and grading papers.
- **Communication:** Employees should only communicate with their immediate supervisor, Principal, Superintendent, and Human Resources while on administrative leave. There should be no communication with other staff, students, or parents while on leave. Employees will not participate in on-campus professional development, staff meeting, student meetings, or any other meeting involving staff, students, and parents.
- **Confidentiality:** Discussing the investigation with staff or other parties is strictly prohibited.

NOTE TO SUPERVISORS: If you must take time off, planned or unplanned, unless you are incapacitated to the point where you are unable to make a phone call, you must call your staff to notify them of your absence and regularly address pending concerns.

Securing Substitute for Absences

Substitutes should be secured as soon as the absence is known- at least one week in advance for personal and for uncharged absences such as staff development, school business, and jury duty. Upon arrival to work, all substitutes must report to the Office to sign in and receive a set of keys (classroom, bathroom, etc.), badge or other material distributed by the campus. At the end of the day, return the items to the Office and sign out. See the school front office staff for further substitute instructions specific to each campus location.

Jury Duty/Court Appearance

Orenda Charter School will grant employees time off for mandatory jury duty or for court appearances as a witness when the employee must serve or is required to appear as a result of a jury summons, court order, or subpoena. A leave of absence for jury or grand jury duty will be granted to any employee and will be compensated at his or her regular daily or hourly rate for each day of absence due to jury or grand jury duty. A copy of the jury summons, court order or subpoena must be supplied to the employee's supervisor when requesting time off.

Other Court Appearances. Employees will be granted leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding. Employees must submit documentation of their need for leave for court appearances to their supervisor and Human Resources. Orenda Charter School will not discharge, discipline, or otherwise penalize an employee because he or she complies with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding.

Employment Standards

Audio and Video Recording

An employee is prohibited from making any audio or video recording while acting in the course and scope of their employment or while on school property without the written consent of all parties subject to the recording. School functions such as virtual learning and athletic activities or performances are exempt from this prohibition.

Special Rules for Social Studies Courses

For any social studies course offered by Orenda Charter School, a teacher may not be compelled to discuss a particular current event or widely debated and currently controversial issue of public policy or social affairs. A teacher who chooses to discuss such a topic shall to the best of the teacher's ability, strive to explore the topic from diverse and contending perspectives without giving deference to any one perspective.

Child Abuse Reporting and Programs

Orenda Charter School provides child abuse anti-victimization programs and cooperates with official child abuse investigators as required by law. The school also provides training to its teachers and students in preventing and addressing incidents of sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, including knowledge of likely warning signs indicating that a child may be a victim of sexual abuse or maltreatment. Assistance, interventions and counseling options are also available.

The school's administration shall cooperate with law enforcement investigations of child abuse, including investigations by the Texas Department of Protective and Family Services. School officials may not refuse to permit an investigator to interview a student who is alleged to be a victim of abuse or neglect at school. School officials may not require the investigator to permit School personnel to be present during an interview conducted at school.

Investigations at school may be conducted by authorized law enforcement or state agencies without prior notification or consent of the student's parent, if necessary.

What is Sexual Abuse of a Child?
The Texas Family Code defines "sexual abuse" as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare, including conduct that constitutes an improper relationship between an educator and a student under Texas Penal Code 21.12 and encouraging the child to engage in sexual

conduct. Under certain circumstances, failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct harmful to a child also meets the definition of sexual abuse.

What is Other Maltreatment of a Child?
Under State law, "other maltreatment" of a child includes "abuse" or "neglect," as defined by Texas Family Code sections 261.001 and 261.401.

Reporting Obligation
Any Orenda Charter School officer, director, employee, agent, volunteer or contractor who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility, under state law, for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services ("DFPS"). Reports must be made by **immediately** contacting one of the following **no later than 24 hours** after the professional has reasonable cause to believe that the child has been abused or neglected:

- Texas Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 or, in non-emergency situations only;
- http://www.txabusehotline.org;
- Your local law enforcement agency, including the Texas Department of Public Safety; the police department of a municipality; the sheriff's office of a county; or a constable's office of a county, and does not include a police department of an educational entity.;
- Call 911 for emergency situations.

Company Communication

Orenda Charter Schools offers Internet and Email access for its employees. It is essential that all employees check their Orenda email on a regular basis.

As the Administration office operates off-site from each campus, essential information may be communicated through email. Other means of communication include mailboxes and a fax machine. On some campuses in-classroom telephones or walkie-talkies provide communication among staff to ensure student safety.

It is expected that employees reply to emails and phone calls from parents and other staff members within 2 business days.

Staff should not use their personal email to communicate with students and parents. All staff are expected to use professionalism in all communications.

Copy Machines

Please do not violate copyright laws. Students are allowed to use the copy machine with staff supervision. Only school-related items should be copied on the machine. For toner replacement and maintenance issues, please see the front office staff for assistance.

Copyrighted Material

Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of federal copyright law relating to the unauthorized use, reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data and programs, etc.). Only district-approved electronic media, including motion pictures and other audiovisual works, are to be used in the classroom for instructional purposes only. Personal streaming services and subscriptions are not authorized or approved for use at Orenda Charter School. Duplications are to be used in the classroom for educational purposes only. Duplication or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

Employees acknowledge and understand that the entire right, title and interest of any and all writings, works and other creations that they may prepare, create, write, initiate or otherwise develop as part of their efforts while employed by Orenda Charter School shall be considered the property of Orenda Charter School. This includes, but is not limited to, the development of a curriculum. These works will be "works for hire" and shall be the sole and exclusive property of Orenda Charter School, including any copyright, patent or trademark or application thereof. Employees hereby assign and transfer to Orenda Charter School all right, title and interest in such works and creations, including without limitation, all patent, trademark and copyright rights that now exist or may exist in the future. Employees further agree that at any reasonable time upon request, and without further compensation or limitation, they will execute and deliver any and all papers, applications or instruments that in Orenda Charter School's opinion may be necessary or desirable to secure the Orenda Charter School's full enjoyment of all right, title interest and properties herein assigned. Employees agree not to charge the school for use of their copyrighted, trademarked and patented material.

Custodial/Maintenance Services

Requests for maintenance, additional cleaning of your area or other maintenance services should be made in writing to the Principal or the designated contact at your campus.

Students and staff are expected to practice cleanliness in the building at all times. Our goal is to keep the school as clean and well maintained as possible.

Dress Code for Staff

Orenda Charter Schools maintain high expectations of our students as well as our staff. In order to expect the best from our students, we must also expect the best from our staff members. Our professional dress code is intended to assist staff in presenting themselves professionally both on campus and at the district office.

Orenda has adopted what is sometimes referred to as a "business casual, professional casual" attire policy.

- Women may wear blouses that follow the four-finger rule; the straps of the blouse must be at least four fingers wide.

- Dresses must also follow the four-finger rule and must be approximately knee length.

- Men's shirts must have sleeves.

- Coaches, and employees substituting for coaches during an athletic period, may wear appropriate athletic attire while performing coaching or athletic duties. Athletic shorts must be school-appropriate in length and appearance. Business casual or professional casual attire is required during teaching assignments, and staff must change from athletic attire when transitioning from coaching duties to classroom instruction.

Jewelry and makeup must be in good taste. Please be aware that coworkers and students may be sensitive or allergic to chemicals in perfumes, cologne, lotions, and/or body spray, so wear with restraint.

Jeans may be worn on Fridays by all staff throughout the district, but should still be professional business casual. *(Auxiliary staff members in the facility, transportation, food service, after school supervision and IT Departments may wear jeans as appropriate for their duties.)* Jeans may also be worn by all campus staff on Wednesdays (and district staff who are campuses on Wednesdays) if they are worn with a college/university (and military for Kingsland and Gateway Tech) shirt. Dress should still be professional business casual and follow the dress code expectations.

The following items are prohibited, as they do not project a professional image:

- Shorts
- Flip flops or slippers
- Foam shoes
- Hats and caps may not be worn inside the building
- Any item with potentially offensive words, terms, logos, or slogans or with any slogans advertising tobacco, alcohol products, or any controlled substances
- Spaghetti strap tops, tops with bare shoulders or bare backs, midriff tops and/or halter tops
- Blouses with revealing necklines or any clothing that reveals undergarments or any tight or body revealing clothes
- Leggings shall only be allowed if professional and paired with a top/dress/skirt that reaches mid-thigh
- Visible tattoos and similar body painting(s) that promote violence or are considered offensive, inflammatory or disruptive to the learning environment. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate advertising or statements that are offensive or inflammatory, alcoholic beverages, profanity, sex, tobacco, drugs, gangs, guns and other weapons, excessively violent or gory imagery, and the promotion of violence.

Any staff member in violation of this policy will receive a verbal warning. If the violation is egregious, the staff member may be sent home for the day and required to use personal leave for the absence. Continued violation of this policy will result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

Facility Modifications

Staff are not permitted to paint or otherwise make any facility modifications without written approval from the campus principal and superintendent.

Staff are expected to maintain lighting in their classroom that is conducive to the learning for all students during instruction and assessments. Christmas lights are only able to be hung and used during the month of December in classrooms and offices.

Staff are not permitted to hang their own window coverings on interior or exterior windows. Orenda provides window covering for external windows. Lock-down shades for interior classroom windows are being purchased to be used during emergencies and are expected to be left up during instruction and all other non-emergency times. Window coverings for offices are being purchased to be used during confidential meetings.

Freedom from Bullying and Cyber-bullying

Orenda Charter School prohibits bullying as defined by this section, as well as retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process. Bullying occurs when a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more individuals directed at another individual that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by Orenda Charter School that:

- Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging an individual's property, or placing an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or of damage to the student's property; or
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for an individual.

Conduct described above is considered bullying if that conduct:

- Exploits an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and
- Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of Orenda Charter School.

Orenda Charter School also prohibits cyber-bullying, which is defined as the use of any electronic communication device to engage in bullying or intimidation.

Freedom from Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Statement of Nondiscrimination
Orenda Charter School prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender or sex, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law. Orenda Charter School also prohibits dating violence, as defined by this Handbook. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of School policy.

Discrimination
For purposes of this Handbook, discrimination against a student is defined as conduct directed at a student on the basis of race, color, religion, gender or sex, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law and that adversely affects the student.

Prohibited Harassment
Prohibited harassment of a student is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student's race, color, religion, gender or sex, national origin, disability, age, or any other basis prohibited by law that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Examples of prohibited harassment may include offensive or derogatory language directed at another person's religious beliefs or practices, accent, skin color, or need for accommodation; threatening or intimidating conduct; offensive jokes; name calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; display of graffiti or printed material promoting racial, ethnic, or other negative stereotypes; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

Sexual Harassment and Gender-Based Harassment
In compliance with the requirements of Title IX, Orenda Charter School does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. Sexual harassment of a student, including harassment committed by another student, includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:

- Affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Examples of sexual harassment of a student may include sexual advances; touching intimate body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Orenda Charter School also does not tolerate sexual harassment of a student by school employees. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and School employees are prohibited. Any sexual relationship between a student and a school employee is always prohibited, even if consensual.

Sexual harassment of a student by a school employee includes both welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- A School employee causes the student to believe that the student must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct; or
- The conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:
    - Affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities; or
    - Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.

Gender-based harassment includes harassment based on a student's gender, expression by the student of stereotypical characteristics associated with the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical behavior related to gender.

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include, but not be limited to, offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

Dating Violence

Dating violence occurs when a person in a current or past dating relationship uses physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control the other partner. Examples of dating violence against a student may include physical or sexual assaults, name-calling, put-downs, threats to hurt the student or the student's family members or members of the student's household, destroying property belonging to the student, threats to commit suicide or homicide if the student ends the relationship, attempts to isolate the student from friends and family, stalking, or encouraging others to engaged in these behaviors.

For purposes of this Handbook, dating violence is considered prohibited harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct:

- Affects the student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Retaliation

Orenda Charter School prohibits retaliation against a student alleged to have experienced discrimination or harassment, including dating violence, or another student who, in good faith, makes a report, serves as a witness, or otherwise participates in an investigation. Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a school investigation regarding discrimination or harassment is subject to appropriate discipline.

Reporting Procedures

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited harassment or believes that another student has experienced prohibited harassment should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, the Head of School or designee, or other school employee. Alternatively, a student may report prohibited harassment directly to the appropriate Compliance Coordinator designated on pages 13-14 of this Handbook.

A student shall not be required to report prohibited harassment to the person alleged to have committed the conduct. Reports concerning prohibited conduct, including reports against the Title IX Coordinator, the ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, and/or the Age Discrimination Coordinator may be directed to Carla Silber, Superintendent, 2951 Williams Drive, Building 1, Georgetown, Texas 78628, 512-869-3020. If a report is made directly to the Superintendent, Orenda Charter School shall appoint an appropriate person to conduct an investigation.

Incident Report

All accidents occurring at school, which result in injuries to students or staff, must be reported to the principal immediately. In addition, completed Incident Reports must be signed by the principal, and forwarded to the Administration Office. A copy or fax of every Incident Report should be scanned or faxed to the Administration Office within 24 hours of the incident. In the event of an employee injury, Orenda Charter Schools has 24 hours to turn in an injury claim to the Occupational Accident Insurance Provider. It is CRITICAL that employee injuries be reported immediately so that the Administration office may follow proper reporting procedures with the insurance company. See the district website under Employee Tools to obtain the appropriate forms to be completed. For questions, please contact HR which handles risk management.

Insurance

At the time of hire, all employees will receive information to enroll in a health insurance plan as well as an opportunity to participate in a supplemental benefits cafeteria plan. Those employees who wish to enroll in a health insurance plan must submit their enrollment form to the Administration Office within the first 30 days of employment. All employees who choose not to enroll, must submit the same form indicating they are declining health insurance.

After the annual enrollment period or new hire period, only qualifying events will be eligible for benefit changes. This includes marriage, divorce, birth of a child, adoption, change in employment status for employee or spouse. Please contact HR for further information or questions.

Inventory

Staff members are responsible for all items in their classroom, such as desks, chairs, projectors, document cameras, TV and other technology equipment, textbooks, calculators, computers, printers, maps, globes, etc. Items should not be removed without approval from the Principal and/or district depending on the items. An inventory will be conducted periodically to account for all items. You will be

financially responsible for missing items issued/signed out to you. Lack of responsibility for properly accounting for items issued to you may lead to disciplinary action.

Orenda Property Use

Orenda property can only be used for school-sponsored events that have been reserved in advance following the campus procedures. Orenda property may not be used for personal events or private commercial purposes. **Orenda does not allow the use of district facilities for employee personal financial gain.**

Outside Employment

Each employee should consider his/her position with the school as top priority and should accept no other employment if such employment detracts from performance with the school. All employees are required to disclose in writing to their immediate supervisor any outside employment that may create a potential conflict of interest with their assigned duties and responsibilities or the best interest of the district. Supervisors will consider outside employment on a case-by-case basis and determine whether it should be prohibited because of a conflict of interest. Any outside employment must be conducted outside of scheduled work hours with Orenda Charter School.

Payroll Dates

Pay day falls on the 15th of each month or the business day prior to it if the 15th falls on a holiday or weekend. Time cards, extra duty, absences and deductions are reflected for the previous month for current payroll. In addition, employee pay is based on your required hours and work calendar days so employees may be docked if no leave is available and required hours are not met. Pay details can be checked online by logging into the Employee Service Center (ESC). Direct deposit is encouraged for all employees. For specific details regarding payroll please see the Business Office Reference Guide.

Personal Property

Orenda advises staff not to bring personal property to campus. The school is not responsible for the personal property lost or stolen at school. Personal technology such as printers should not be brought or used at school. Orenda administration limits personal microwaves and refrigerators to two per building and is not responsible for maintaining these items and/or damage or theft of those items.

Prohibited Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Duties and Instructional Requirements

Board Policy 4.212 incorporates the essential elements of TEC 11.005 including: the statutory definition of DEI duties, a prohibition against the assignment DEI duties, the circumstances under which disciplinary action may be taken against an employee or contractor who intentionally or knowingly engages in or assigns DEI duties, and the limitations of the DEI prohibitions as set forth in the statute.

Board Policy 4.213 incorporates the essential elements of the TEC 28.0022 including: the prohibited classroom discussions and activities, the applicable exceptions to the prohibited classroom discussions and activities, the prohibition of penalties against students, the circumstances under which disciplinary action may be taken against an employee or contractor who intentionally or knowingly engages in conduct prohibited by the policy, and a requirement for the school to distribute the policy to each employee and contractor.

Staff Duty

Staff daily work schedules vary according to campus. Check with your Principal to determine your daily work schedule and regular duty schedule. It is essential for student safety that you are present and on-time for your assigned duty. You are responsible for arranging for coverage if you are not able to fulfil your assigned duty. Students must be supervised by a staff member at all times.

Staff Meetings

All staff is required to attend staff meetings which may take place outside of your regularly scheduled work hours or perform assigned duties as requested. The purpose of the staff meetings is to debrief from the day, solve problems, and plan for student success.

Traffic Violations

If an employee, during the course of Orenda business, receives a traffic violation, the employee will be personally liable for any expenses incurred from that violation. Employees are required to report any traffic violations received during the course of Orenda business immediately to their supervisor and HR director. If during the course of transporting a student(s), an employee receives a traffic violation that employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Volunteers and Contractors

Volunteers **MUST** go through a background check conducted by our district office and must complete volunteer application annually at the beginning of each school year. There is a link on the campus website to complete both forms. Volunteers who will be alone with any students at any time must also **be fingerprinted**. Once the check is cleared, volunteers are notified and may begin helping on campus. Until this clearance is obtained, they are not to be involved in any educational or extra-curricular activities, including attending field trips.

Contractor and Subcontractor Fingerprinting Requirements

Contractors and subcontractors are required to complete fingerprinting if they:

- Provide continuing services; **and/or**
- Have direct, unsupervised contact with students.

Definitions

- **Continuing Services:** Work performed on a regular or recurring basis.
- **Direct Contact:** Any opportunity for in-person or verbal interaction with students without constant supervision. Examples include, but are not limited to, coaches, tutors, consultants, and other recurring service providers.

Campus Procedures

Under no circumstances should a contractor or subcontractor be permitted to work on or access campus without first coordinating with the Human Resources Department to verify that all required background check and fingerprinting requirements have been completed and the individual has been approved to provide services. It is the responsibility of campus administrators and employees to ensure this verification has occurred before allowing a contractor or subcontractor to begin work or have access to students.

Classroom Procedures

Daily Tasks

- Monitor students for safety
- Provide academic instruction
- Meet the emotional needs of the students
- Take attendance
- Keep notes on students to write weekly narrative progress notes
- Administer assessments to drive instruction (pre-, post-, formative, summative, screenings, benchmarks)
- Photocopy assignments for students
- Prepare for ARD meetings and/or referrals
- Never allow students to be without staff

Field Trips

- All academic field trips need to be aligned with the TEKS for the course and have an educational purpose. A field trip form needs to be completed by the teacher and submitted to the campus principal for approval. Semester 1 field trips need to be submitted by September 15th. Semester 2 field trips need to be submitted by January 15th.

Below are the district guidelines for field trips:

- 3 Field trips per year, K- Grade 4
- 2 Field trips per year, Grades 5-12

Grade Policy

Teachers are required to keep and maintain accurate records of student performance and attendance. This information may be kept in a written record book but, must be kept on a pre-approved grade book software computer program. When setting up grade categories and weights, the following criteria need to be followed:

- At least 60% of the grade needs to be minor grades
- No more than 40% of the grade can be major grades
- One single grade can't be weighted more than 15% of the student's report card grade
- At least one grade taken and entered in the gradebook each week
- 5 minor and 1 major grades must be given by progress report time
- 10 minor and 2 major grades must be given each report card (six or nine week) grading period
- Advanced Placement courses may weight grades 60% major and 40% minor provided at least 4 major grades are given during the report card (six or nine week) grading period

Grade categories weights must be the same for all teachers of the same course. All grading categories and weights must be approved by the campus administrator.



If a numerical grade below 50 will be recorded on the report card, the teacher must submit documentation to the principal supporting a report card grade below 50. The teacher's documentation will be available to the parent for review to support that action. The district encourages teachers to record a grade of 50 in all classes to allow students the opportunity to achieve future success in the class, especially in cases wherein students attend class consistently with five or fewer absences and have attempted all tests and in-class assignments for the grading period.

When students receive failing grades, the teachers may be required to develop targeted intervention plans to assist the failing students during the next grading period.

For excused absences at the end of a grading period, students will have up to 10 school days after the grading period ends to make-up any missing work and exams. At the end of the school year, all work needs to be made-up within the first 10-business days after the last day of school.

For the first and third nine-week grading period, students will be given an "Incomplete" for their report card grade. The "Incomplete" grade will be changed to the actual grade after the 10-school day make-up period based on the actual work submitted. Any work not submitted during the 10-school day make-up period will be recorded as a zero.

For the second and fourth nine-week grading periods and the first and second semesters, zeros will be entered for any missing work, and the actual grade with zeros entered for missing work will be recorded as the report card grade. The initial grade will be officially be changed after the 10-school day make-up period based on the actual work submitted. Any work not submitted during the 10-school day make-up period will remain as a zero.

An official grade change form will be submitted by the Teacher of Record no later than the end of the 11th school day after the end of the grading period.

Lesson Plans

Teachers are required to maintain written evidence of weekly lesson planning. Teachers are expected to complete their lesson plans in the established district format with all required components. Lesson plans are due by Friday before the Monday of implementation. Lesson plans should always align to the TEKS.

Liability

Teachers or other staff members in charge of the supervision of a classroom should never leave that classroom unattended. Staff is subject to incur personal liability if an accident occurs and students assigned to them are unattended. If an emergency situation arises, contact the Principal so that coverage can be arranged. Always use your phone or intercom to communicate emergency situations to the front office.

Progress Reports and Report Cards

Interim Progress Reports are sent to parents by the teacher in the middle of each grading period (six or nine week) period for students who have below a 70 in any class. Report cards will be issued at the end of each nine-week grading period and mailed to parents. All progress reports and report card grades must be submitted by the campus established date and time. Any report card grade corrections need to be completed on the campus form and submitted to the Principal for approval before the change can be made with the registrar.



Promotion and Retention

A student may be promoted on the basis of academic achievement and/or demonstrated proficiency in the subject matter of the course or grade level. To earn credit in a course, a student must demonstrate mastery on grade level standards and meet requirements for attendance.

Students in grades K–8 will be advanced based on a number of factors, including state test results; reading and math ability; maturity (in lower grades); and class grades. Decisions are made by a committee comprised of teachers, administrators, and, where applicable, counseling and special education staff. Parents are notified at least four weeks before the end of the school year if retention is a possibility.

A student in grades 9–12 will be advanced a grade level based on the number of course credits earned as outlined in the Student –Parent Handbook.

Student Attendance

All public schools in Texas shall maintain records to reflect the average daily attendance (ADA) for the allocation of Foundation School Program (FSP) funds and other funds allocated by the Texas Education Agency. The official ADA times for each campus are as follows:

Nolan Creek 10:15am
Gateway College Prep 10:15am
Kingsland 10:15 am
Tech 10:15am

Teachers are required to take attendance every period of the day for the purposes of determining class credit and grade promotion. The official attendance for the day will be taken at the ADA time established for each campus regardless of the instructional setting. Teachers have a 20-minute window, 10 minutes before and 10 minutes after the official ADA time, to submit attendance. Any student arriving after the official attendance time will be marked absent for average daily attendance purposes. Students who arrive less than 10 minutes late to any class during the school day, with the exception of the official attendance class, will be marked tardy. Students who arrive late 10 or more minutes late to any class during the school day, with the exception of the official attendance class, will be mark absent for that class.

The teacher is responsible for keeping attendance throughout the year and for the proper reporting to the office for a general accounting. Teachers will verify official attendance reports after every 6-week period.

A student must be present for at least 90% of the number of days a class is offered in order to receive credit for the class.

Textbooks and Instructional Materials

District-adopted and purchased textbooks are required to be used for the assigned course and must be provided to students. Teachers can use additional instructional materials and resources to supplement the district-adopted textbook. Teachers who check out a class set of textbooks or other instructional materials such as calculators are responsible for maintaining inventory of these textbooks and

materials. Any textbooks and/or materials that are damaged, lost, or stolen must be reported to the Principal and District Textbook Coordinator immediately. Staff may be responsible for replacement costs of any lost textbooks or materials checked out to them including class set of textbooks. Textbooks and materials checked out to the student become the responsibility of the student if lost or damaged.

No Expectation of Privacy

Orenda Charter School email accounts should be used primarily for school-related purposes. Personal use of Orenda Charter School email accounts is only permitted on a limited basis so long as such personal use does not impede school functions, does not result in any direct cost paid with state funds, is not for private commercial purposes, and does not involve more than incidental amounts of employee time (time periods comparable to reasonable coffee breaks during the day).

Orenda Charter School owns the rights to all data and files stored on any computer, network, or other information system used at school and to all data and files sent or received using any Orenda Charter School system, including email, to the extent that such rights are not superseded by applicable laws relating to intellectual property.

Orenda Charter School owns any communication sent via email or that is stored on Orenda Charter School equipment or its cloud accounts. Employees shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they store, send, or receive on Orenda Charter School's email system or computer equipment or cloud accounts. All communications sent via email or stored on school equipment may also be subject to the TPIA. Orenda Charter School reserves the right to access and/or monitor any material in an employee's email account at any time, without prior notice, as well as any computer equipment used to create, view, or access email. Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and could also lead to referrals to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

No employee may access another employee's computer, computer files, or email messages without prior authorization from the

Technology Equipment

Technology will only be issued to staff who have officially started their employment with Orenda Education. All technology that has been issued regardless of checkout method must be returned in person at the end of their employment with Orenda Education or when requested to be turned in by the Information Technology administration. Technology that has been issued through the library checkout system must be returned at the end of the school year as part of the end of school year clearance or when requested by campus administration.

Employees are responsible for technology checked out to them regardless of the checkout method. Check out methods include: library checkout and/or equipment checked out through the Information Technology department.

Staff is expected to use district- purchased technology **ONLY** to perform their job responsibilities. **NO** personal devices are allowed unless it is by a student in a BYOD environment.

Staff will sign a custody of receipt provided by the Information Technology department.
The Custody of Receipt form will specify the piece of equipment assigned. Each piece of equipment that is being received by the staff member will be acknowledged by both the staff member and the IT department staff member or campus administrator.

Custody of receipt key points are as follows:

- **<u>This device may be taken home only if deployed and acknowledged by the Director of Technology</u>.** THE CONFIGURATIONS TO THIS DEVICE MUST NOT BE CHANGED!
- No decals, stickers, or any other adhesives are to be placed on equipment other than district asset information.
- Only Orenda Education employees, long-term substitute teachers, and selected students shall be granted permission to possess Orenda Education property. Any of the devices listed above are to be used for school-related purposes ONLY! These devices are NOT to be used for personal leisure.
- The IT Department is responsible for devices except when signed out to another individual or campus.
- Equipment will be signed out for no more than a school year at a time unless permission to hold equipment for extended work-related circumstances is granted.
- The borrower receiving the equipment listed above assumes TOTAL responsibility for the devices while they are signed out to him/her. If a device is damaged through neglect or carelessness, the person to whom the device is checked out is responsible for the cost of repairs; if the device is lost; the person to whom the device is checked out is responsible for the cost of replacement. The device cost varies and are subject to change; pricing will be determined by quoting the original manufacturer's part pricing unless the equipment is at end of life.
- Damage will be assessed by the IT department on a case-by-case basis. Regardless of accidental, negligence, or gross negligence, disciplinary actions will be held at the campus level by the corresponding campus administrator in accordance with the staff handbook.
- Damage to any piece of equipment must be reported immediately to the IT department and campus administrator. An incident report must be submitted to the campus administrator and the IT department when damage is reported. The borrower must fill out an incident report with as much detail as possible.
- The borrower must sign and date this document acknowledging that they agree to the above listed terms.
- All equipment listed must be returned if requested by the IT department at any given time.

An acceptance field/checkbox will be present and must be checked off in order to receive the equipment described in the custody of receipt form. The text is as follows:

- ✓ I understand that I am personally accountable for the following above listed terms, and that should I fail to exercise reasonable care in its safekeeping, I shall be held financially liable for loss, or damage.

<u>Equipment Incident Report</u>

The holder of assigned equipment will fill out the **Equipment Incident Report** form if their assigned equipment is damaged, lost, or stolen. After the form is completed, it will be turned in to the campus administration.

Equipment that is damaged, lost, or stolen must be reported immediately to the Principal and IT Director. If equipment is damaged, lost, or stolen, the holder must fill out the **Equipment Incident Report** document. The **Equipment Incident Report** will need to be filled out to perform any repairs, temporary replacement of equipment, or any other distributed equipment. Issuing temporary and/or any other distributed equipment will be carried out using the same custody of receipt method.

Student Welfare: Computer Technician Reports of Child Pornography

Any computer technician employed by Orenda Charter School. who, in the course and scope of employment or business with Orenda Charter School views of an image on a computer that is or appears to be child pornography must immediately report the discovery to a local or state law enforcement agency or the Cyber Tipline at the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. The report must include the name and address of the owner or person claiming a right to possession of the computer, if known, and as permitted by federal law.

Use of Electronic Media and Electronic Communications

Employees given approval by Orenda Charter School may communicate through electronic media with students who are currently enrolled in the school for educational purposes only. All other employees are prohibited from communicating with students who are enrolled in Orenda Charter School through electronic media.

The following definitions apply for the use of electronic media and electronic communications with students:

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), Web logs (blogs), wikis, electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram). Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

Communicate means to convey information and includes a one-way communication as well as a dialogue between two or more people. A public communication by an employee that is not targeted at students (e.g., a posting on the employee's personal social network page or a blog) is not a communication: however, the employee may be subject to regulations on personal electronic communications. Unsolicited contact from a student through electronic means is not communication.

An employee uses electronic media to communicate with students must comply with the following provisions:

- Designated employees may use electronic communication with enrolled students only about matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities. All other employees are prohibited from using electronic communication directly with students.
- All communication via electronic media by staff with parents and students will be professional and of the appropriate nature, purpose, timing, and amount.
- An employee shall have no expectation of privacy in electronic communications with students.
- An employee shall not use a personal electronic communication platform, application, or account to communicate with enrolled students.
- Employees are prohibited from using electronic communications in a manner that constitutes prohibited harassment or abuse of a student; adversely affects the student's learning, mental health, or safety; includes threats of violence against the student; reveals confidential information about the student; or constitutes an inappropriate communication with a student.
- Personal online social media may not be associated with professional online social media.

- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative guidelines, and the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators, including compliance with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, copyright laws, open records requests, etc.
- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communication with students and parents.
- Employees should avoid sending text messages to students. Exceptions may apply for a teacher or other employee who has an extracurricular duty, and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. Text messaging should be through a technology application and not as direct communication through the employee's personal cell phone number. An employee who communicates with a student using text messaging should attempt to include at least one of the student's parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message. Additionally, for each text message addressed to one or more students, the employee must send a copy of the text message to the employee's Orenda Charter School Email address.
- Employees shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 10:00 pm and 6:00am, except when necessary to notify students about urgent scheduling or transportation issues. Employees may, however, make public posts to a school-related social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.

- Employees shall refrain from inappropriate communications with students. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:
    - The nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
    - The subject matter of the communication;
    - Whether the communication was made openly or the employee attempted to conceal the communication;
    - Whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
    - Whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
    - Whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the employee or the student.

An employee is not subject to these provisions to the extent the employee has a social or family relationship with a student. For instance, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee's child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization.

Upon written request from a parent or student, an employee shall discontinue communicating with a student by email, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one electronic communication.

Upon request from Orenda Charter School's administration, an employee will provide the phone

number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with any one or more current-enrolled student.

Employees are not required to disclose their personal email address or personal phone number to students or parents.

Consequences
The guidelines for appropriate use are applicable to all use of school computers and refer to all information resources, whether individually controlled, shared, stand alone, or networked. Disciplinary action for students, staff, and other users shall be consistent with Orenda Charter School policy and administrative regulation. Violations may result in:

- Suspension of access to school computers and network resources;
- Revocation of access privileges or user accounts; or
- Other school disciplinary or legal action, up to and including termination, in accordance with school policies and applicable laws.

Specific disciplinary measures will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Employees shall be held to the same professional standards in their public use of social media and/or electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of social media and/or electronic media violates state or federal law or district policy, or interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

Orenda Charter School employees may not use an AI tool to take notes, generate a transcript or summary, or otherwise create a written account of a School-Related Meeting where Confidential Information is discussed and/or Confidential Information would be reflected in any resulting notes, transcripts, summaries, or written accounts unless the AI tool has been expressly approved for that purpose by Orenda Charter School.

This Policy does not prohibit the use of live closed captioning during meetings for accessibility purposes.
If an Orenda Charter School employee discovers that they inadvertently used an AI tool in violation of this Policy, the employee shall immediately notify the Director of Human Resources at 512.869.3020.
Orenda Charter School employees may not input Confidential Information obtained in the course of their employment with Orenda Charter School into any AI tool unless the AI tool has been expressly approved for that purpose by Orenda Charter School.

IT Repair Acknowledgement Form

Damaged equipment will be evaluated by the Information Technology department only. An IT Repair Acknowledgement Form document will be filled out and submitted to the campus administration for further completion. Once completed and signed off on, the document will be submitted to the Orenda main office for processing.



This form contains the assessed damage and component breakdown cost if the warranty has been exhausted or if it is not covered. The type of damage will be determined by the condition of the equipment that has been signed off on by the staff member. The following terms and descriptions will be used to describe the circumstance that led to the damaged piece of equipment:

* Accidental: Happening by chance, unintentionally, or unexpected
* Negligence: Failure to take proper care in doing something
* Gross Negligence: Extreme carelessness that shows reckless disregard for the consequences to the safety or property of another

Accidental

A first-time grace will be granted to accidental damage as long as the damage is from a single incident and it is within the school year. The staff member will not be charged for the first single incident but will be issued a **warning** by the campus administration. An **Equipment Incident Report** document must be submitted to the campus administration and signed by the administrator acknowledging the submission. The original copy will be sent in to the Human Resources Director, and a scanned copy will be sent to the Director of Technology, employee's supervisor, and Head of School/Principal.

If additional accidental incidents are reported by the same employee, an **Equipment Incident Report** document must be submitted to the campus administration and signed by the administrator acknowledging the submission. Depending on the level of distress, this may lead to further disciplinary actions that may include an employee write up. The original copy will be sent in to the Human Resources Director, and a scanned copy will be sent to the Director of Technology, employee's supervisor, and Head of School/Principal. Once submitted, the IT department will assess the damage and fill out an **IT Repair/Replacement Acknowledgement** form and submit it to the campus administration. The campus administration will then present the staff member with the form which will include the employee information and the description of the item that has been damaged with the cost to repair or replace the unit. The staff member will be held liable for the system repairs/parts not to exceed $300.00 followed by a write up through the campus administration. The method of payment can be selected in the "**Method of Payment**" portion of the **IT Repair/Replacement Acknowledgment** form. Options include payroll deduction, a check made payable to Orenda Education, or cash. Payments of the system repairs/parts that are over $50.00 may be split into three installments.

Negligence

Mishandling of equipment resulting in damages will not be tolerated. Furthermore, placing equipment in a setting that has the potential of causing damages to it, oneself, or others will be subject to categorizing such situation as neglectful due to negligence. Repeated incidents by staff will also be categorized as negligence. This includes placing equipment out in the open and not locked away or not knowing what happened. An **Equipment Incident Report** document must be submitted to the campus administration and signed by the administrator acknowledging the submission. The original copy will be sent in to the Human Resources Director, and a scanned copy will be sent to the Director of Technology, employee's supervisor, and Head of School/Principal. Once submitted, the IT department will assess the damage and fill out an **IT Repair/Replacement Acknowledgement** form and submit it to the campus administration. The campus administration will then present the staff member with the form which will

include the employee information and the description of the item that has been damaged with the cost to repair or replace the unit. The staff member will be held liable for the system repairs/parts not to exceed $300.00 followed by a write up through the campus administration. The method of payment can be selected in the "**Method of Payment**" portion of the **IT Repair/Replacement Acknowledgment** form. Options include payroll deduction, a check made payable to Orenda Education, or cash. Payments of the system repairs/parts that are over $50.00 may be split into three installments.

Gross Negligence

If extreme disregard showing carelessness, ignorance, recklessness, theft, or loss of equipment belonging to Orenda Education, and/or showing the same disregard to others property or safety, an automatic write up will be issued to the employee. If the equipment is missing or stolen, then a police report must be submitted along with an **Equipment Incident Report**. Both documents must be submitted to the campus administration and signed by the administrator acknowledging the submission. The original copy will be sent in to the Human Resources Director, and a scanned copy will be sent to the Director of Technology, employee's supervisor, and Head of School/Principal. Once submitted, the IT department will assess the damage and fill out an **IT Repair/Replacement Acknowledgement** form and submit it to the campus administration. The campus administration will then present the staff member with the form which will include the employee information and the description of the item that has been damaged with the cost to repair or replace the unit. Damaged property due to gross negligence by the staff member who signed the equipment off will be repaired or replaced by the employee in **FULL**. The method of payment can be selected in the "**Method of Payment**" portion of the **IT Repair/Replacement Acknowledgment** form. Options include payroll deduction, a check made payable to Orenda Education, or cash. Payments of the system repairs/parts that are over $50.00 may be split into three installments.

Keys and Security Badges

All staff will be required to sign a key log when they receive keys and will be responsible for turning in all keys at the time of separation and changing job assignments. Staff must notify the campus principal immediately if they have lost a key. Staff will be responsible for a key replacement cost.

Subs will be issued keys and access badges when they sign in at the end of the day and will turn in keys and security badges at the end of each day.

No key will be duplicated. The unauthorized duplication of GCPS keys will adversely affect the security of staff, students and property. Violation is considered serious and grounds for termination.

For locations with door access card readers, security badges will be issued to staff. An inventory of badges will be maintained and access will be restricted during certain times. Staff must notify the campus principal and IT immediately if they have lost their security badge. Access will be removed at the time of separation, and staff must turn in their badge.

A $20.00 fee will be administered and a collection process will be conducted through the school administration office for lost or stolen badges. A badge replacement work order request must be filled out by the employee through the Eduphoria Help Desk system. Once the request gets processed, a **Badge Replacement Receipt** form will be filled out by the IT department and turned into the campus



administration office with the replacement badge. The campus administration office will fill in the method of payment selected by the employee and send it to the Orenda administration for processing. Options include payroll deduction, a check made payable to Orenda Education, or cash.

Exterior Doors

Exterior doors must be locked at all times during the instructional day. If exterior doors are unlocked before school during arrival, a staff member will monitor the door to restrict access to just staff and students. Parents and visitors still need to report to the main office, which is the primary point of entry. Doors should not be propped open or left unattended while unlocked. Students will be trained on securely closing exterior doors and not opening the doors for individuals.

Each campus will assign an individual to complete an exterior door sweep after the start of the instructional day to make sure exterior doors are securely closed and during any other peak times when students exit through exterior doors such as during lunch times and athletic/off periods. The exterior doors will also be checked and recorded for a weekly sweep to ensure they are functioning properly.

Emergency Procedures

Detailed emergency procedures for each campus will be provided by the campus Principal. Emergency procedures will be reviewed with staff and students at the beginning of each school year.

Required Drills

The following drills are required at each campus and district locations:

- Secure Drill – One per school year
- Lockdown Drill – Two per school year (once per semester)
- Evacuation Drill – One per school year
- Shelter-In-Place for Hazmat – One per school year
- Shelter for Severe Weather – One per school year
- Fire Evacuation Drill – Four per school year

Alternate Evacuation Site

An alternate evacuation site has been established for each campus in the event that students and staff are not able to return to the campus due to an emergency situation. Campus principals will provide those sites and procedures to staff.

School Closures

Orenda Charter School may be closed because of bad weather or emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the Superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of school facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late or to release students early, every effort will be made to contact all staff and students through Orenda Charter School's emergency broadcast system.



Ethics Non-Compliance Reporting

Orenda encourages employees to report unethical and illegal acts such as fraud, theft, severe personal misconduct, and employee acts or omissions that may threaten the reputation and/or safety of the school and school district. Reports of ethical non-compliance may be reported anonymously through the company **STOPit** online and app-based system. All reports of alleged unethical activity or omissions will be held confidential.

This procedure is not to be used to report unfounded rumors, false accusations, concerns related (but not limited) to petty disagreements with colleagues, complaints like equipment malfunctions or anything and everything unrelated to the organization's code of ethical practices.

Fraud, Dishonesty, and False Statements

No employee or applicant may ever falsify any application, medical history record, student paperwork, employee paperwork, time sheet, timecard, investigative questionnaires or any other document. Any employee found to have engaged in résumé fraud, or who made material misrepresentations or omissions on their employment application, will be subject to immediate termination of employment. Violations of this policy should be immediately reported to the appropriate supervisor.

Required Staff Development

Title	Timeline	Required Roles	CPE Hours	Provider
Child Maltreatment Responsibilities	Within 30 calendar days of hire and annually thereafter	All staff, including subs	1.0	http://www.eduhero.net
Suicide Awareness and Prevention	Within 30 calendar days of hire and every odd year (i.e. 2024-25, 2026-27, etc.) thereafter	All campus staff, including subs, and district staff who regularly interact with students	1.0	http://www.eduhero.net
Cybersecurity Training Program	Within 30 calendar days of hire and every odd year (i.e. 2024-25, 2026-27, etc.) thereafter	All staff, including subs	1.0	http://www.eduhero.net
Bullying Prevention and Intervention for Teachers and School Staff	Within 30 calendar days of hire and every even year (i.e. 2025-26, 2027-28, etc.) thereafter	All campus staff, including subs, and district staff who regularly interact with students	1.5	http://www.eduhero.net
CPR, AED, and First Aid	Within 10 school days and every 2 years thereafter	All PE teachers and coaches including cheer and dance, registrars, and nurses including LVN and nursing assistants	3.0	National CPR Foundation
Concussion Awareness	Within 30 calendar days of hire and annually thereafter	All non-UIL athletic coaches including cheer and dance plus school nurses; UIL athletic coaches take this training through UIL Portal	1.0	http://www.eduhero.net or UIL Portal (UIL Coaches)
Restraint Training (CPI)	Every year for core team or 30 school days after emergency restraint	Special Education Teachers and Campus Core Team (at least 5 staff)	3.0 – 6.0	District CPI Trainer
Diabetes Care Training	Every year for core team	Nursing staff and at least 3 staff at each campus	2.0	Gateway College Prep Nurse

Confronting Sexual Harassment in Schools	Within 30 calendar days of hire and every even year (i.e. 2025-26, 2027-28, etc.) thereafter	All staff, including subs	1.0	http://www.eduhero.net
Trauma-Informed Care	Within 30 calendar days of hire	All campus staff, including subs, and district staff who regularly interact with students	2.0	https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/training/trauma_informed_care/ **OR** TEA Project Restore Series (6 videos)
Trauma-Informed Care in Schools Refresher	Every odd year (i.e. 2024-25, 2026-27, etc.) thereafter	All campus staff, including subs, and district staff who regularly interact with students	1.0	http://www.eduhero.net
Seizure Awareness	Within 30 days of hire	Campus staff who interact with students and nurses	1.25	https://learn.epilepsy.com/courses/schools-and-seizure-preparedness-on-demand
Stop the Bleed	Within 30 days of hire and hands-on skills refresher annually thereafter	Campus staff who interact with students	1.0	Online Course https://www.stopthebleed.org/training/online-course/ Hands-On Skills –Stop-the-Bleed Instructor at Orenda campuses
Incident Command Training ICS 100	Within 30 days of hire	All staff, including subs	2.0	https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=is-100.c&lang=en
Incident Command Training IC 700	Within 30 days of hire	All staff, including subs	3.5	https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=is-700.b&lang=en
Incident Command Training ICS 200	Within 30 days of hire	All campus and district administrators (i.e. principals, assistant principals, district directors, superintendent)	4.0	https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-200.c&lang=en
Incident Command Training ICS 800	Within 30 days of hire	All campus and district administrators (i.e. principals, assistant principals, district directors, superintendent)	3.0	https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-800.d&lang=en

mClass K-2 Reading Assessment	Before administering mClass	All K-2 Teachers of Record	3.0	https://learning.amplify.com/
FERPA 101 Training	Within 30 days of hire and every even year (i.e. 2025-26, 2027-28, etc.) thereafter	All campus registrars	1.0	https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/training/ferpa-101-local-education-agencies
Psychological First Aid	Within 6 months of hire	All staff, including subs	5.0	https://learn.nctsn.org/course/index.php?categoryid=11
Youth Mental Health Training	By September 1, 2025 then by end of the first school year of hire	All campus staff, including subs, and district staff who regularly interact with students	5.0	Bluebonnet Trails **OR** http://www.eduhero.net (3 Modules) 1: Recognizing and Responding to Youth Mental Health Challenges 2: Crisis Response and Suicide Prevention 3: Building a Mentally Healthy School and Supporting Educator Well-Being
Behavior Threat Assessment Training	Within 30 days of hire and prior to serving on the committee	Campus Administrators, Counselors, and other members of the Behavior Threat Assessment Committee	7.0	https://txssc.txstate.edu/events/sbta-trainings/
Standard-Based IEP Process Training	Within 30 days of hire	All special education teachers and related service staff	12.0	https://spedsupport.tea.texas.gov/learning-library/standards-based-individualized-education-program-iep-process-training
Texas Dyslexia Academy Modules 1-6	Prior to first instructional day as dyslexia teacher	Dyslexia Teacher	30.0	https://register.tealearn.com/?query=dyslexia
Guidance for the Comprehensive Evaluation of Specific Learning Disabilities	Prior to first instructional day as dyslexia teacher	Dyslexia Teacher	12.0	https://register.tealearn.com/?query=dyslexia

Reading by Design	Prior to first instructional day as dyslexia teacher	Dyslexia Teacher	36.0	Region 12 or 13

Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to ensure school-level compliance with all procedures and regulations regarding the local area network and Internet usage. All students, parents, teachers, administrators, and school staff who obtain their Internet access through the school are expected to use these services appropriately.

User Responsibilities
The use of the Internet is a privilege. Abusive conduct will lead to the privilege being revoked. Student/staff use of Internet resources must be related to an expressed educational and/or administrative goal or objective.

1. The use of the School's Internet and computer network must be in support of educational goals, research, and class assignments, and be consistent with the educational objectives of Orenda.
2. Users must have a valid, authorized account to access the network, and use only those computer resources that are authorized. Accounts may be used only in accordance with authorized purposes.
3. Individual accounts may be used only by the owner of the account, except where specifically authorized by administrators. In the case of class accounts, all use must be under the supervision of the sponsoring teacher/supervisor.
4. The user is responsible for safeguarding the computer account. Users are expected to protect access to accounts by periodically changing their password and keeping it confidential. They must respect the privacy of others by not tampering with their files, passwords, or accounts.

Acceptable Use
Users are to properly use Orenda network resources for educational and/or administrative purposes. Respectful and responsible network etiquette and behavior should be in keeping with the school's mission statement. Students and staff are expressly prohibited from accessing obscene, profane, vulgar, or pornographic sites or materials.

Monitored Use
Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications system by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for educational or administrative purposes. Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic mail messages is prohibited. Only the School's authorized IT Manager may read, delete, copy or modify the electronic mail of other system users.

Vandalism
Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, disrupt or destroy data of another user of Orenda Charter School's network or any other agencies or networks that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses. Any of these actions may be viewed as violations of School policy, administrative regulations and, possibly, as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. Users must respect the privacy of other users, and will

not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify any file, data, or password belonging to another user, or represent themselves as another user unless explicitly authorized. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance and/or degrade, disrupt or bypass system security, such as VPN, are violations of School policy and administrative regulations, and may constitute criminal activity under applicable laws.

Any prohibited behavior under this policy will result in the cancellation of technology privileges. Orenda will, in accordance with School policy, cooperate with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the school's network.

Network Etiquette

Each network user is expected to:

- Be polite (i.e., an all-caps message implies shouting);
- Use appropriate language;
- Refrain from any activity that may be considered "cyber-bullying," including but not limited to threats of violence, extortion, obscene or harassing messages, harassment, stalking, child pornography, and sexual exploitation;
- Maintain confidentiality of the user, colleagues, and students;
- Respect copyright laws; and
- Be respectful in all aspects of network use.

Acceptable Use Agreement Acknowledgment Form

I have read and agree to abide by the Orenda Staff Acceptable Use Policy. I further understand that any violation of this policy may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my Internet and computer access privileges may be revoked, and disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

_____

Staff Printed Name

_____ _____

Staff Signature Date

Drug and/or Alcohol Testing Consent Form and Policy Acknowledgment Form

I hereby agree, upon a request made under the drug/alcohol testing policy of Orenda Charter School, to submit to a drug or alcohol test and to furnish a sample of my urine, breath, and/or blood for analysis. I understand and agree that if I at any time refuse to submit to a drug or alcohol test under any Orenda Charter School policy, or if I otherwise fail to cooperate with the testing procedures, I will be subject to immediate termination. I further authorize and give full permission to have Orenda Charter School and/or its physician send the specimen or specimens so collected to a laboratory for a screening test for the presence of any prohibited substances under the policy, and for the laboratory or other testing facility to release any and all documentation relating to such test to Orenda Charter School and/or to any governmental entity involved in a legal proceeding or investigation connected with the test. Finally, I authorize Orenda Charter School to disclose any documentation relating to such a test to any governmental entity involved in a legal proceeding or investigation connected with the test.

I understand that only duly-authorized Orenda Charter School officers, employees, and agents will have access to information furnished or obtained in connection with the test; that they will maintain and protect the confidentiality of such information to the greatest extent possible; and that they will share such information only to the extent necessary to make employment decisions and to respond to inquiries or notices from government entities.

I will hold harmless Orenda Charter School, its physician, and any testing laboratory that it might use, meaning that I will not sue or hold responsible such parties for any alleged harm to me that might result from such testing, including loss of employment or any other kind of adverse job action that might arise as a result of the drug or alcohol test, even if a Orenda Charter School or laboratory representative makes an error in the administration or analysis of the test or the reporting of the results. I will further hold harmless Orenda Charter School, its company physician, and any testing laboratory that it might use for any alleged harm to me that might result from the release or use of information or documentation relating to the drug or alcohol test, as long as the release or use of the information is within the scope of this policy and the procedures as explained in the paragraph above.

I have had an opportunity to read the Drug-Free Workplace Policy included in the Employee Handbook, and I understand that I may ask my supervisor or Human Resource Department any questions I might have concerning the policy. I accept the terms of the Drug-Free Workplace Policy. I also understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the Drug-Free Workplace Policy, and any revisions made to it. I further agree that if I remain with Orenda Charter School following any modifications to the Drug-Free Workplace Policy, I thereby accept and agree to such changes.



The Drug-Free Workplace Policy and this consent have been explained to me in a language I understand, and I have been told that if I have any questions about the drug/alcohol test or the Drug-Free Workplace Policy, they will be answered.

I UNDERSTAND THAT Orenda Charter School WILL REQUIRE A DRUG SCREEN TEST UNDER THIS POLICY WHENEVER I AM INVOLVED IN AN ON-THE-JOB ACCIDENT OR INJURY UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES THAT SUGGEST POSSIBLE INVOLVEMENT OR INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL.

_____ _____

Signature of Employee Date

Orenda Charter School

Employee Handbook Receipt

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that Orenda Charter Schools Staff Handbook, which provides guidelines on the policies, procedures, and programs affecting my employment with this organization, is available on our website, www.orendaeducation.org and available on Google Docs through Orenda email access. I accept responsibility for familiarizing myself with the information in this handbook and will seek verification or clarification of its terms or guidance where necessary.

I understand that this handbook represents only the current Human Resources policies, practices and benefits. Regardless of what the handbook states or provides, Orenda retains the right to rescind, modify, or deviate from these or other guidelines, policies, practices or procedures relating to employment matters from time to time as it considers necessary and at its sole discretion.

I further understand that my employment is for no definite terms and that I have the right to terminate my employment at any time, with or without cause or notice, and that the Company retains a similar right. My status as an "at-will" employee may not be changed except in writing as signed and approved by the Superintendent.

I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document and nothing in the handbook creates an express or implied contract of employment. I understand that I should consult my supervisor or a representative of the Human Resource Department if I have any questions that are not answered in this handbook.

Signature .

Print Full Name .

Date .

TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE, HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT