Envision
Science Academy

Stimulate the whole mind.

Educate the whole child.

Employee Handbook
2026 – 2027

Envision Science Academy
Email: info@envisionscienceacademy.com
Website: www.envisionscienceacademy.com

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

VISION STATEMENT
Our vision is by engaging in project-based learning, students will be prepared to pursue STEAM related careers and become lifelong learners.

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

Employee Handbook Updates
It is understood that changes in policy may occur anytime in the school year. Any such changes would supersede existing policies in the Handbook. Each employee is responsible for all procedures and policies of the school outlined in the policies manual and employee handbook, including updates made throughout the school year. Non compliance with these policies may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. It is the responsibility of Envision Science Academy administration to inform all employees of any changes to the Employee Handbook made throughout the school year.

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

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

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

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

- Offer Letter – approved candidates will receive an offer of employment letter outlining the terms and conditions for employment.
- Recommendation to Board – candidates recommended for hiring will be selected and presented to the Board of Directors for approval along with the proposed salary.
- Pre-Employment Screening – employment offers are contingent on completing a criminal background check, and reference checks including at least one supervisory reference. Envision Science Academy reserves the right to perform a pre-employment drug screening.

Employee Referral Program Policy

The objective of this policy is to incentivize and reward current full-time Envision Science Academy (ESA) employees for referring qualified candidates who align with our Project-Based Learning (PBL) and STEAM educational framework. Eligible employees may refer any candidate who meets the job requirements and has not applied to ESA in the last six months. This program applies only to full-time positions. A bonus, with the amount set by the ESA Board of Directors annually, will be awarded for each successful referral, paid in two installments: the first upon the referred employee's successful onboarding and the second after they complete three months of employment. To submit a referral, please provide the candidate's resume, contact information, and your recommendation via email to the appropriate dean and/or Executive Director. There is no cap on the number of referrals an employee can make, and in cases of multiple referrals for a single candidate, only the first referrer is eligible for the bonus.

Substitute Teachers

Each substitute teacher candidate must complete an Envision Science Academy Employment Packet, inclusive of the confidentiality agreement document, and be interviewed by a school administrator/designee. Once approved by school administration, substitute teachers will be listed in the human resources report to the Board of Directors.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

All ESA staff member background checks are subject to constant monitoring and will be fully readministered every three years.

I-9 Immigration Reform

Envision Science Academy complies with the Immigration Reform and Control Act, employing

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

Salary

It is important to note that ESA employees are employees of the nonprofit organization that holds the charter. They are not employees of the State of North Carolina. The ESA Board of Directors will strive to compete with the state's salary structure per years of experience. Salaries will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the employee's contract. Increases in salary may occur when (a.) the state scale is amended (b.) teacher credentials and experience levels change (c.) performance stipends are awarded. If an employee is hired during the academic school year, the new employee's salary will be based on the salary scale utilized by ESA in the beginning of that academic year.

Payroll Classification

The terms "exempt" and "non-exempt" are classifications established by federal guidelines and are based on the scope and responsibilities of each job. Exempt employees may be required to work longer than an 8-hour day and are not eligible for overtime pay. Non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime if approved by his/her direct supervisor. Non-exempt employees are required to fully complete and submit a timesheet each month to their direct supervisor. Each full time, non-exempt employee shall be entitled to thirty (30) minutes of unpaid time for lunch. Non-exempt employees may only make up missed hours on the same work day, with prior approval from his/her assigned supervisor, unless the building has a forced closure. Employees will be made aware of this distinction at the time of hiring, promotion, or transfer.

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

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

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

Temporary employees may be secured through an outside agency or paid directly through ESA's payroll. In either case, the individual's status as a temporary employee remains.

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

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

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

Equal Employment Opportunity
It is the policy of ESA to provide an equal employment opportunity to all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation. Our equal employment opportunity practice applies to all recruiting, hiring, training, transfers, promotions, job benefits, pay and dismissal practices as well as educational assistance and social and recreational activities. Envision Science Academy's policies governing the conduct of employees prohibit discrimination based on an individual's protected classification under federal law, including antisemitism as defined in G.S. 12-3.2.

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

The term also includes domestic partners (a person with whom the employee's life is interdependent and who shares a common residence) and, a daughter or son of an employee's domestic partner. It is the goal of the organization to avoid creating or maintaining circumstances in which the appearance or possibility of favoritism, conflicts or management disruptions exist.

The organization may allow existing personal relationships to be maintained or employ individuals with personal relationships to current employees under the following circumstances:

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

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

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

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

consultation with the organization's Board of Directors shall determine which employee must resign in order to resolve the situation.

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

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

Disability Accommodation

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

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

Service Animal Policy

Purpose

The School will make reasonable accommodations in its services, programs, or activities for qualified individuals with a disability in accordance with requirements set forth under federal law Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (ADA), American with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (amended 2010) and North Carolina state law.

This policy addresses the use of Service Animals on School Property by qualified individuals with disabilities.

Pets and therapy animals are not considered Service Animals and, therefore, are not covered by this regulation.

Definitions
Service Animal - A "service animal" for purposes of this policy, is any dog or miniature horse that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, conditions from a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

Service animals do not include any other species of animal, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, except that a miniature horse will be permitted for use as a service animal if reasonable modifications can be made after assessing the specific factors listed in 28 C.F.R. 35.136(i).

Animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, companionship, or therapeutic benefits, or to act as a crime deterrent, are not considered service animals for the purposes of this policy.

Work or Task - The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability or necessary to mitigate a disability. Federal regulation 28 C.F.R. 35.104 provides examples of types of work or tasks that would qualify.

Examples include assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks; alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds; assisting an individual during a seizure; retrieving items such as medicine; helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by resenting or interrupting impulse or destructive behaviors.

Disability – In accordance with federal and state laws, an individual with a disability may (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or (2) have a record of such an impairment; or (3) be regarded as having such an impairment.

Handler – A “handler” is an individual with a disability who uses a service animal, or, if the individual is unable to care for and supervise the animal, the handler is the person who cares for and supervises the animal on behalf of the individual who needs the service animal. School personnel are not responsible for the care, supervision, and/or handling responsibilities of a service animal.

Inquiries Related to Service Animals
When it is not obvious what work/task an animal provides, a School representative may only make two inquiries to the Student/Employee/Visitor or service animal's handler to determine whether an animal qualifies as a service animal (definition above):

1. If the animal is required because of a disability, and
2. What work or task the animal has been trained to perform.

No School representative shall ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability in relation to the Service Animal unless provisions are needed for safety.

No School representative shall require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal.

Use of a Service Animal on School Property by Students and Employees
Introduction of a Service Animal - School administrators shall facilitate the introduction of an eligible service animal into the school environment.

To promote a successful integration of the service animal at school and to minimize unnecessary disruption, an employee or student with a disability who intends to bring a service animal to school during the school day is encouraged to follow these guidelines:

1. The employee, student, or student's parent/guardian should notify the principal/administrator of the School in writing at least 10 work days prior to the date proposed to bring the service animal onto school property and complete a Request for Service Animal form. This will allow School staff to review the request and, if approved, develop a plan to introduce the service animal to the school environment. This plan will also provide any necessary guidance to staff and students regarding interactions with the service animal, as well as other activities or conditions deemed necessary by the School.
2. The employee, student, or student's parent/guardian should work with School personnel to create a plan addressing the presence of the service animal during the school day. A plan to integrate the service animal into the school environment should include the following: 1) appropriate training for school personnel and students regarding interaction with the service animal; 2) arrangements for meeting the service animal's basic needs during the school day; and 3) any necessary modifications to the educational program so that the service animal may accompany the employee or student with a disability.
3. Service animals should wear identification to provide adequate notice to students, staff, and others that the dog is a service animal. Any questions regarding the type of identification should be directed to the Head of School. If the service animal does not wear identification, it may confuse students and result in behavioral and safety challenges, potentially leading to the permanent removal of the service animal from campus.
4. The service animal should be free of parasites and otherwise in good health.

Presence of a Service Animal on School Property - An employee or student with a disability accompanied by a service animal must meet the following requirements for a service animal to be present on school property:

1. A student or employee who elects to be accompanied by a service animal will be expected to be the handler for the animal and care for and supervise the animal. If a student is unable to provide adequate care and supervision, a handler will be responsible for providing such care and supervision.

2. If a student requires assistance from a handler to control and care for the service animal while on school property, that individual must submit to a background screening, which may include a criminal history check in accordance with state law and any procedures established by the School.
3. The service animal must be on a leash or other mechanical restraint at all times. If mechanical restraint is not feasible due to a student's disability, the animal must be under other sufficient means of control.
4. The service animal must be housebroken, under the control of its handler, healthy, and have received all necessary vaccinations as required by state law.

Responsibilities of the Handler - The care and supervision of a Service Animal is the responsibility of the Handler.

School staff are not responsible for the care or supervision of a Service Animal, including walking the animal or responding to the animal's need to relieve itself. However, staff may provide support to a student using a service animal in limited and particular instances, such as helping a young student who has a service animal take the animal outside to urinate.

Vaccinations and Health
The animal must be in good health and have been vaccinated against diseases common to that type of animal as recommended by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

The school retains the right to request proof of vaccinations required by law. Dogs should undergo routine maintenance, including flea and tick prevention, deworming, and annual examinations. In addition, the animal should be spayed or neutered.

The school reserves the right to have the service dog removed if the dog appears unwell or presents a health or safety hazard, such as worms, uncontrolled and untreated fleas, or ticks.

Tags
In accordance with North Carolina law, all dogs must wear a rabies tag.

Control
The handler must be in complete control of the animal at all times.

The handler must keep the Service Animal on a leash/lead when the animal is in a public area (i.e. classroom, library, common area, outdoors on campus, etc.), unless the Service Animal is required to perform a task that it could not accomplish while on a leash/lead or the handler is otherwise unable to maintain the animal on a leash/lead due to a disability; in such cases, the handler still must be able to maintain control over the animal.

The handler must maintain complete control of the animal at all times while on the school bus or any other form of school transportation. The handler is responsible for ensuring the animal does not interfere with the operation of the school bus. The handler must keep the animal immediately next to them and away from the bus driver at all times. The handler must ensure that students do

not engage with the animal on the school bus. The handler shall work with the school and bus driver to determine the best location for the handler and animal to sit while on the school bus.

Use of a Service Animal on School Property by School Visitors
A service animal may accompany a school visitor who is an individual with a disability in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws. A service animal that is accompanying a school visitor may be properly excluded from school property for a reason(s) set forth in other sections of this policy.

Liability
The School shall hold the owner and/or the handler of a service animal or both liable for any property damage caused by the animal to the same extent required by other board policy or administrative rules that impose liability for property damage. In addition, either the owner or the handler, or both, shall be liable for personal injury caused by the animal or related to the presence of the animal on school property. The school requires the handler and owner to expressly accept liability in such circumstances.

Removal, Restriction, or Exclusion of a Service Animal
While access to restricted areas may be granted on a case-by-case basis by contacting the principal, the School retains the discretion to exclude or remove a Service Animal from School Property if:

1. The animal is out of control, and/or the animal's handler does not effectively control the animal's behavior;
2. The animal is not housebroken, or the animal's presence or behavior fundamentally interferes with the functions of the School;
3. The animal's presence would "fundamentally alter" the nature of the service, program, or activity; or
4. The animal poses a threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by reasonable modifications, including those set forth above related to health.

If a principal or their designee excludes a dog or service animal from school property, they must document the reasons for the exclusion and notify the Head of School, who will decide on whether a service animal will be allowed to return to the school and, if reasonably possible, notify the individual with the disability in writing of the decision within five school days of the initial exclusion.

If the Head of School or their designee determines that an animal does not meet the definition of a service animal or that a service animal should be excluded for one or more of the reasons described in this section, the student's Section 504 or IEP Team shall meet to consider and document whether the animal's presence is necessary for the child to receive an appropriate education or to have equal access to the educational program and, if not, whether the child needs other aids and services or accommodations.

If a service animal is excluded, an individual with a disability will be provided the opportunity to participate in educational services, programs, or activities as required by law without having the service animal on the premises.

Conflicting Disabilities
If another person on School Property has a covered disability under the ADA and that person is in proximity of a Service Animal appropriate for presence on School Property, a request for assistance will be made to the principal or designee, who will consider all facts surrounding the contact and try to resolve this issue.

Staff Evaluation
A staff evaluation is an official document used to keep record of employee performance. It plays a key role in improving employee performance. All instructional staff members will be evaluated by the Executive Director/designee according to state recommendations in the North Carolina Educator Effectiveness System (NCEES). All non-instructional staff will be evaluated at a minimum of once per year. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide objective feedback to employees and help them focus on their areas for personal and professional growth. A copy of the report of the evaluation shall be made available to the person being evaluated, and a copy will be filed in the employee's personnel file and/or archived in NCEES. Results from evaluations do not create an expectation with respect to continued employment.

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

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

Pay Schedule
Salaries are paid monthly in 12 equal payments, regardless of length of contract. Employees hired after the start date for his/her respective position will receive a salary that is prorated based upon the start date. Non-exempt employees must turn in their time sheets to their supervisor by the designated date. The preferred method for payment is direct deposit into the financial institution accounts of your choice. The pay schedule is determined by the ESA finance committee annually.

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

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

Paid Time Off (PTO)
All full-time staff will be allotted 1 leave day (8 hours) of PTO per month of employment, with one half of the total annual PTO allocated at the beginning of the annual contract, and the other half allocated at the start of the second semester. PTO will be prorated based on the start date for the position relative to the start date of the employee. Similarly, if an employee separates from employment prior to the contracted end date, the balance of PTO days will be deducted to match the number of months employed. If an employee has used more PTO days than they have accrued, the employee must reimburse the school by the number of unaccrued PTO days taken. PTO will be cumulative up to 30 days (240 hours). Employees with accumulated PTO may contribute time to another employee at their discretion, in four-hour increments, once the intended recipient has exhausted all of their available PTO. If all PTO is exhausted, then an employee may use their allocated Personal Leave Days (unpaid time off). Additional PTO will be allotted to employees at the beginning of the annual contract, following the chart below:

Years of Employment at ESA	Number of Days Annually
0 to 5	0
6 to 15	3
16+	6

Separation from employment - Upon separation of employment for any reason except for termination, accumulated PTO will be paid out at a rate of $100.00 per day up to a maximum of 30 days.

Cashing out PTO - Staff may request to be paid for unused leave days at a rate of $100.00 per day. A maximum of 6 days can be redeemed at the end of December and June for a possible total of 12 days redeemed. The request must be submitted by the 1st of the month and approved by the Executive Director. These funds will be included in the December and June pay checks respectively. Note: In order to redeem these days in December, the employee must have a minimum of 8 leave days at the time of the request. In order to redeem days in June, the employee must have a minimum of 6 full leave days at the time of the request. Employees who would on June 30 carry over greater than 30 days of PTO will have a forced cash out for any days exceeding 30.

Vacation Days
Vacation days will be indicated in the school's annual calendar and are not cumulative. Vacation days will not be paid out upon separation of employment for any reason.

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

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

Special Circumstances Regarding PTO, Vacation, and Personal Days
Any deviations from the PTO, Vacation, and Personal Days policies will be at the discretion of the Executive Director/designee and will require a face-to-face meeting with the employee. If the employee exceeds his/her entire PTO and personal leave, it may result in an attendance action plan and/or termination. The Board of Directors will review the policies annually with the goal of enhancing the policies for the benefit of employees as the finances of the school allows.

Additional Restrictions on use of PTO, Vacation and Personal Days
PTO, vacation, and personal day requests must be submitted for approval. Approval is at the discretion of the Executive Director/designee. **A request is not an approval.** Staff are strongly discouraged from making plans prior to receiving approval for requested leave or Paid Time Off. PTO may not be used for any of the following instances unless the request is approved by the Executive Director or his/her designee:

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

Transfer of Leave
Any leave from another organization shall not transfer to ESA.

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

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

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

Employees are eligible for FMLA leave if they:

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

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

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

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

During leave, an employee will not accrue benefits. Employment benefits accrued by an

employee prior to the time a FMLA leave begins will not be forfeited.

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

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

Maternity/Paternity Leave Policy

In accordance with NC General Statute, the following paid parental leave policy has been adopted by the Envision Science Academy Board of Directors for full time and part time employees.

The leave entitlement extends to a full-time employee who becomes a parent to a child. The period of minimum service before an employee becomes eligible for parental leave is 30 days. The maximum number of uses of paid parental leave within a 12-month period is one time. Paid parental leave may be taken on either a continuous or intermittent basis as requested by the employee.

Amount of leave:

1. For a parent who gives birth to a child, up to eight weeks of paid parental leave consisting of:
    a. Four weeks for physical and mental recuperation; and
    b. Four weeks for bonding with the child.
2. For any other qualifying event, up to four weeks of paid parental leave for bonding with the child.

Leave will be provided in the event of miscarriage after the first trimester or the death of a child during birth at 50% of the above guidelines. If a child dies after a completed birth, an otherwise eligible employee shall be entitled to the same amount of leave to which the employee would otherwise be entitled. If an eligible employee gives birth to a child and places the child up for adoption or into foster care, or otherwise places the child with another person to serve as the child's parent, the employee shall be entitled to up to four weeks of leave for physical and mental recuperation from the time of the child's birth. In such cases, neither a birthing parent nor a non-birthing parent shall be entitled to additional leave for bonding with the child.

The parental leave is available to "public school employees" without exhaustion of the employee's sick and vacation leave and is in addition to other leave authorized by State or federal law. The State Human Resources Commission has interpreted this to mean that the use of

paid parental leave will run concurrently with use of leave provided under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act, provided the PSU (Public Service Unit) gives the required notice.

In addition to the new paid parental leave entitlement, school employees may use up to 30 days of annual leave, personal leave, or leave without pay to care for a newborn child or for a child placed for adoption or foster care. The use of sick leave for childcare must be consecutive workdays during the first 12 months after the birth or placement of the child unless the school employee and the local board of education agree otherwise.

Unused paid parental leave is forfeited 12 months from the date of the qualifying event.

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

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

For this purpose, immediate family is defined as:

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

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

Military Leave
Employees who are members of the Armed Forces Reserve or National Guard will be granted fifteen (15) days of paid military leave per year to fulfill a military obligation. When an employee is required to meet for military training, the employee may be allowed to use paid military leave or other eligible paid leave. An employee has an obligation to make a concerted effort to arrange training that does not conflict with an assigned work schedule. Periods ineligible for paid military leave include (1) duties resulting from disciplinary actions imposed by military authorities and (2) inactive duty training performed for the convenience of the member. Employees should notify their supervisor and provide documentation of their obligation to report for military training as soon as they are aware of the obligation.

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

To that end, we are taking a layered approach to communicable diseases which may arise, including but not limited to:

1. Promoting vaccinations for all eligible individuals
2. Screening/testing where applicable
3. Continuing robust cleaning and hygiene practices
4. Managing through isolation and quarantine suspected or confirmed cases or exposure if necessary or recommended by public health officials.

For the safety of others, when a mask is worn, the school requires a medical mask. Mesh masks are never permitted and will be confiscated. Masks must cover the nose, mouth and chin.

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

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

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

In the event that a staff member travels to an international location with a CDC level 2 or 3 travel warning for any communicable disease or to an area in the United States where a state of

emergency has been declared related to any communicable disease the staff member must complete a Travel Disclosure Form at least 48 hours prior to their expected return/arrival to campus.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Termination

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

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

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

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

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

Title IX Discrimination and Harassment Policies For Students and Staff Members
Title IX provides that "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Please use the link found on the school website at:
https://www.esaeagles.com/resources/handbooks to access the full Title IX policy.

Title IX Notice
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX") prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any federally funded education program or activity. Sexual harassment, which includes sexual assault and other sexual misconduct, is a form of sex discrimination. Under the School's Policy, the School prohibits sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking and retaliation. The School complies with Title IX and has appointed **Mr. DeVon Wall** as the Title IX Coordinator with overall responsibility for Title IX compliance. He can be reached at:

Mr. DeVon Wall
dwall@envisionscienceacademy.com
titleninecoordinator@envisionscienceacademy.com
590 Traditions Grande Blvd, Wake Forest, NC 27587 | 919.435.4002

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

Non-Title IX Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Process
No student or school employee shall be subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by school employees or students. Bullying or harassing behavior is a pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, that places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to their person or damage to their property or creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits.

Bullying or harassing behavior includes, but is not limited to, acts reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability.

The School takes seriously all complaints of discrimination, harassment, and bullying. The process provided in this policy is designed for those individuals who believe that they may have been discriminated against unlawfully, bullied, or harassed in violation of the School's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy. Individuals who have witnessed or have reliable information that another person has been subject to unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying also should report such violations in the manner provided in this policy. Reports may be made anonymously. This policy does not apply where an

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

A. Reporting by Employees or Other Third Parties

1. Mandatory Reporting by ESA Employees
   Any employee who witnessed or who has reliable information or reason to believe that an individual may have been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of ESA Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy must report the offense immediately to an appropriate individual designated in subsection B.1., below. An employee who does not promptly report possible discrimination, harassment, or bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.
2. Reporting by Other Third Parties
   All members of the ESA community including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors are also strongly encouraged to report any act that may constitute an incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying.
3. Anonymous Reporting
   Reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
4. Investigation of Reports
   Reports of discrimination, harassment, or bullying under this policy will be investigated sufficiently to determine whether further action under this policy or otherwise is necessary, and ESA officials shall take such action as appropriate under the circumstances. At the option of the alleged victim, the report may be treated as a complaint by the alleged victim under this policy.

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

1. Filing a Complaint
   Any individual who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of the ESA's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy is strongly encouraged to file a complaint orally or in writing to the following individuals as applicable:
   a. the ESA counselor, teacher, dean of students, principal or assistant principal of the ESA for any claim of discrimination, harassment or bullying, including Title VI complaints;
   b. the Title IX coordinator for claims of sex discrimination or sexual harassment;
   c. the Section 504 coordinator or the ADA coordinator for claims of discrimination on the basis of a disability; or
   d. any member of the Board if the alleged perpetrator is the Executive Director.
2. Time Period for Filing a Complaint
   A complaint should be filed as soon as possible but no later than 30 days after disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the complaint. Complaints submitted after the 30-day period may be investigated at the discretion of ESA officials and outside the formal process described in Section C of this policy; however, individuals should recognize that

delays in reporting may significantly impair the ability of ESA officials to investigate and respond to such complaints.

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

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

1. Initiating the Investigation
   a. Whoever receives a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or bullying pursuant to subsection B.1. shall immediately notify the Executive Director who shall designate an individual to conduct an investigation and respond to the complaint, such individual may be an ESA employee or outside consultant.
   b. As applicable, the investigator shall immediately notify the Title IX, or other relevant coordinator of the complaint, and, as appropriate, may designate the coordinator to conduct the investigation.
   c. The investigator shall explain the process of the investigation to the complainant and the alleged perpetrator.
   d. Written documentation of all formal reports and complaints, as well as the ESA system's response, must be maintained in accordance with the ESA's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy.
   e. Failure to report, investigate, and/or address claims of discrimination, harassment, or bullying may result in disciplinary action.
2. Conducting the Investigation
   a. The investigator is responsible for determining whether the alleged act(s) constitutes a violation of the Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy. In so doing, the investigator shall impartially, promptly, and thoroughly investigate the complaint. The investigator shall interview (1) the complainant; (2) the alleged perpetrator(s); (3) individuals identified as witnesses by the complainant or alleged perpetrator(s); and (4) any other individuals, including other possible victims, deemed likely to have relevant information. The alleged perpetrator shall be notified of the general nature of the allegations. The investigation will include a review of all evidence presented by the complainant and/or alleged perpetrator.

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

for addressing the complaint will be provided to the complainant.

b. The complaint and investigation will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Information may be shared only with individuals who need the information in order to investigate and address the complaint appropriately and those with a legal right to access the information. Any requests by the complainant for further confidentiality will be evaluated within the context of the legal responsibilities of the ESA system.

c. The investigator shall review the factual information gathered through the investigation to determine whether, based on a preponderance of the evidence, the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying, giving consideration to all factual information, the context in which the alleged incidents occurred, the age, and maturity of the complainant and alleged perpetrator(s), and any other relevant circumstances.

3. Notice to Complainant and Alleged Perpetrator
   a. The investigator shall provide written notification to the complainant of the results of the investigation within 15 days of receiving the complaint, unless additional time is necessary to conduct an impartial, thorough investigation. The investigator shall specify whether the complaint was substantiated and, if so, shall also specify:
      i. reasonable, timely, age-appropriate, corrective action intended to end the discrimination, harassment, or bullying, and prevent it from recurring;
      ii. as needed, reasonable steps to address the effects of the discrimination, harassment, or bullying on the complainant; and
      iii. as needed, reasonable steps to protect the complainant from retaliation as a result of communicating the complaint.
   b. Information regarding specific disciplinary action imposed on the alleged perpetrator(s) will not be given to the complainant unless the information relates directly to the complainant (e.g., an order requiring the perpetrator not to have contact with the complainant).
   c. If the investigator determines that the complaint was substantiated, the perpetrator(s) shall be subject to discipline or other corrective steps, as set forth in ESA policy. If the corrective steps involve actions outside the scope of the investigator's authority, the Executive Director or designee will be notified so that responsibility for taking the corrective steps may be delegated to the appropriate individual.
   d. The alleged perpetrator will be provided with a written summary of the results of the investigation in regard to whether the complaint was substantiated, whether the alleged perpetrator violated relevant law or ESA policies by his or her actions, and what, if any, disciplinary actions or consequences may be imposed upon the perpetrator in accordance with ESA policy. The perpetrator may appeal any disciplinary action or consequence in accordance with any ESA’s policy governing disciplinary action. However, an appeal by the perpetrator of disciplinary action does not preclude ESA officials from taking appropriate action to address the discrimination, harassment, or bullying.

4. Appeal

a. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, he or she may appeal the decision to the Executive Director. The appeal must be submitted in writing within ten days of receiving the notice of the results of the investigation. The appeal must state with particularity whether the complainant is appealing (1) the investigator's determination of whether the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of the ESA's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, or (2) the ESA's response to any violation, including the appropriateness of any remedial measures taken by the ESA. If the complainant is appealing pursuant to option (2), he or she must state what additional measures the complainant believes should have been taken by the ESA. The Executive Director or designee may review the documents, conduct any further investigation necessary, or take any other steps the Executive Director or designee determines to be appropriate in order to respond to the complaint. The Executive Director or designee shall provide a written response within 10 days after receiving the appeal, unless further investigation is needed. The Executive Director's decision is final and there is no appeal to the Board of Directors.
b. If the alleged perpetrator is the Executive Director or the Executive Director declines to hear the appeal and refers it to the Board of Directors, the complainant may appeal the decision in writing within ten days of receipt directly to the Board of Directors. The appeal must state with particularity whether the complainant is appealing the Executive Director's decision with regard to (1) the investigator's determination of whether the alleged conduct constitutes discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of ESA's Non-Title IX Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy, or (2) the ESA's response to any violation, including the appropriateness of any remedial measures taken by ESA. If the complainant is appealing pursuant to option (2), he or she must state what additional measures the complainant believes the ESA should have taken. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Board Chair shall appoint a panel of not less than two members of the Board to hear and decide the appeal. The panel shall make reasonable efforts to meet and consider the appeal within twenty days after the chairperson refers the grievance to the panel. The panel shall review the complaint on the record unless it determines that additional information may be presented. No new evidence, written or verbal, may be presented without the prior knowledge and consent of both parties. At the Board Panel's discretion, they may hold a hearing and ask each party may make a brief oral presentation of no more than twenty minutes to summarize his or her position. The panel has the authority to ask questions, extend time limits, exclude extraneous or duplicative information, and otherwise maintain an efficient and fair appeal hearing. If a hearing is held, it will be recorded and shall be held in closed session. The Board panel may affirm, reverse or modify the decision. The Board panel shall use the preponderance of the evidence standard in reaching its decision. The Board panel will provide a final written decision within twenty days after the Board hearing unless the panel determines that additional time is needed for further review. The decision of the Board panel shall be final.

D. Timeliness of Process

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

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

E. General Requirements

1. No person shall engage in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness, or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior. Any student who engages in such conduct will be disciplined in accordance with the School's Code of Conduct. Any employee who engages in such conduct will be disciplined u to and including termination. Any parent/guardian who engages in such conduct may be permanently banned from the School's campus and events.
2. Disciplinary or other action may be taken against the complainant or other individual if the person knew or had reason to believe that the complaint or report was false or knowingly provided false information.
3. All meetings and hearings conducted pursuant to this policy will be private.
4. The complainant may be represented by an advocate, such as an attorney, at any meeting with the ESA under this policy. Should the complainant choose to be represented by an attorney, an attorney for the ESA may also be present.
5. Nothing in this policy shall prevent the Executive Director or Board from suspending the alleged perpetrator without pay during the course of the investigation or taking any other action deemed appropriate.
6. Nothing in this policy prevents the Executive Director from taking steps to protect students and/or the school community, as well as providing supportive measures to the complainant or other students.

F. Records

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

Standards for Professionalism

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

appearance. This includes the expectation that employees represent themselves professionally through their communication, organization, planning, follow-through, and dedication to creating a positive experience for students, parents, and the community.

Dress Guidelines for Staff

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

- Clothing should be neat, clean, wrinkle-free, modest and appropriately-sized (not baggy or too tight). Note: thin knit dresses and skirts are not appropriate for professional dress.
- Clothing should be free from holes, tears, and excessive fading.
- All dresses, skirts, and the tops of slits in skirts, should be at an appropriate, professional length.
- Women's tops, necklines, and waistlines should match professional dress standards.
- Dress or Casual shoes are appropriate. Unsafe shoes such as Crocs, flip flops, or excessively high heels should be avoided.
- Makeup and jewelry should be conventional.
- Body piercings and tattoos should not be distracting. Jewelry of any type that is considered to be distracting by the administration must be removed. Tattoos that the administration consider to be inappropriate must be covered.
- Hats, caps, bandanas, or other headwear should not be worn inside unless for documented reasons.
- Hairstyles, including facial hair, should be professional, clean, neat, and, in general, not pose a distraction.
- T-shirts, jeans, and shorts are prohibited, unless appropriate in relation to context (e.g. spirit day, outdoor field trip, PE, etc.). School or educational related clothing may be permitted at the discretion of school administration.

Guidelines for Conduct

ESA expects all employees to behave ethically and responsibly.

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

1. Falsifying school records.
2. Inappropriate or indecent conduct on school property, while at school functions, or while representing the school. This includes harassment or intimidation.
3. Stealing school property, government property, or the property of any employee.
4. Willful damage to school property or the property of other employees or students, or willful acts that may endanger or result in injury to others.
5. Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs; possession, sale or use of illegal drugs on school property.

6. Gross negligence in the performance of duties resulting in damage to school property or products, employee property, or student property, or injury to student, staff or other persons.
7. Possessing weapons or explosives on school property.
8. Use of abusive, intimidating, or disrespectful language, including mean spirited jokes and comments (see harassment section).
9. Excessive absences or tardiness. Absences that exceed the employee's accrued number of leave days, not approved by the Executive Director/designee, are considered excessive and will require a face-to-face meeting with the employee. If the employee exceeds his/her entire PTO and personal leave, it may result in an attendance action plan and/or termination.
10. Failure to report personal injury resulting from an on-the-job accident immediately after it occurs.
11. Conviction of a criminal offense that interferes with the individual's or the school's ability to work effectively.

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

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

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

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

- Meet in a public place where you are in full view of others.

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

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

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

Attendance
Each employee contributes on a daily basis to the success of our school. Therefore, employees are expected to be on the job unless there are reasonable circumstances that prohibit attendance. The school believes its staff is mature and professional enough to exercise good judgment to keep time to address personal matters during normal working hours within reason. Requests for occasional absences for such purposes must be made in advance to the employee's supervisor. If you will be late, or are unable to report to work, notify your supervisor a minimum of one hour prior to the start of your scheduled workday, unless circumstances prevent. Similarly, if you need to leave early, notify your supervisor as far in advance as possible, but no later than one hour prior to your departure, unless circumstances prevent.

Because attendance is imperative to meet the school's needs and objectives as well as the successful operation of our school, chronic absenteeism or failure to comply with this policy will

result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Failure to report to work or notify your supervisor for 3 consecutive school days will be considered voluntary resignation.

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

In situations in which an employee decides to bring their child/children to campus on professional development, remote learning days, and/or teacher workdays, the child/children must be adequately supervised by their parent and not interfere with the professional working environment. This applies to before and after school and early release days as well. All staff should be aware that professional development days are often very intensive and require meetings and/or face-to-face training that would make it difficult for staff to supervise young children. Children of employees who are high school aged or above may choose to take advantage of ESA's community service hour program. Staff should communicate with his/her respective dean to have his/her child(ren) participate in this program. In addition, if they meet all qualifications, children of staff may become approved volunteers. Staff children will be expected to abide by all applicable school safety measures. Envision Science Academy will assume no liability in the event of accident or injury for any child/children brought to school by employees on workdays regardless of the child/children's enrollment status.

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

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

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

Conflict of Interest
ESA believes honesty and integrity are fundamental core values in all its areas of activity. As part of the school's commitment to ensure the integrity of its work, the alignment of that work with its mission and objectives, and compliance with external expectations and obligations, it is important that there is a clear policy establishing how we identify and address conflicts of interest that might otherwise jeopardize these important criteria. Employees are permitted to work for a charity or community service organization without expressed or written permission.

The school recognizes a formal obligation to identify when a significant conflict of interest may exist between a vendor, partner, or collaborator and any member of the Board of Directors (and their immediate family members) or school administration. Therefore, the school will routinely confirm whether such interests exist prior to undertaking such external relationships, and if so,

document that interest and the procedures to be adopted for managing or eliminating the conflict. In the event that such an interest has failed to be disclosed, the school will reserve the right to review and revise the agreement(s) governing the relationship, including the right to terminate the agreement(s).

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

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

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

Personal Tutoring Policy

To uphold ethical standards and prevent conflicts of interest, the school establishes the following policy regarding tutoring services provided by ESA staff members.

- Tutoring For Compensation - Staff may only provide private tutoring with compensation to a student that is not actively enrolled in their class. This may take place on or off campus, and only outside of school hours (7:30am-3:30pm).
- Non-ESA Student Tutoring - Private tutoring of any student not currently enrolled at ESA is not permitted on ESA campus, regardless of whether compensation is involved.
- Tutoring For No Compensation - Any ESA staff may provide private tutoring to any ESA student for no compensation, on or off campus.

Other Employment Outside of ESA

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

Facilities Care and Safety

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

- Fire and safety codes and regulations must be strictly adhered to at all times.

- Proper care and safety should be exercised to protect the facility and all furniture, fixtures and equipment from loss and misuse, and the life of the aforementioned should be extended through proper maintenance programs.
- Alterations to existing facilities, or installation of equipment, signs, posters, or decorations on or about the school premises is prohibited without prior written approval.
- The facility will be opened, attended and closed by an authorized school employee.
- Keys, entry cards, and access codes must remain in the possession of authorized school employees at all times.
- Sticky Tack, Command strips, tape, and other damage-free temporary hanging adhesives may be used on the walls for hanging items. Staples, nails, tacks, screws, and other items that may create holes may not be used. If temporary adhesives are not sufficient, permission must first be obtained from the appropriate Dean and a custodian must be contacted to complete the requested work.
- Bulletin boards may be used in the hallways to hang student work.
- Painting the walls, windows, doors, floors or ceilings is not permitted without permission from administration.
- The only acceptable appliance in the classroom is a micro-fridge. Other appliances, such as a microwave, coffee maker, etc., are not allowed in the classroom without permission from administration.
- Hallways are to be free of backpacks, lunch boxes, clothing, and other items that may be unsightly and present a tripping hazard.
- No items are to be stored under the stairwells, unless the area is designated as storage.
- The windows on the classroom doors are not to be covered.

Smoking, Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace

As part of our commitment to provide a safe workplace for our employees and students and to promote a smoke, vape, alcohol and drug-free community. ESA has established this policy on the use or abuse by employees of alcohol, drugs or other psychoactive substances. Envision Science Academy is a tobacco/vape/smoke free and other related substances and activities are prohibited on school grounds. Being under the influence and/or the possession of, the use, transfer, sale, manufacture or distribution of illegal substances or alcoholic beverages on school property during working hours, or while representing the school, are violations of school policy. In addition, any employee convicted under a drug statute for a violation occurring in or outside the workplace must notify his/her supervisor no later than five (5) days after such violation. Disciplinary action will be taken for drug-related activities, regardless of whether they happen during working hours or on an employee's own time. ESA reserves the right to randomly test for drugs and alcohol at any time.

We recognize that employees suffering from alcohol or drug dependence can be treated. We encourage any employee to seek professional care and counseling prior to any violation of this policy. Violation of this workplace policy will result in corrective action up to and including termination from the school.

Weapons in the Workplace

Except where permitted by law, ESA strictly prohibits weapons of any type on school property or at any school sponsored event. This includes visible and concealed weapons even if the

owner has obtained the necessary permits. Violation of this policy will subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination from the school.

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

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

School Issued Computers and the Safeguard of School Information
School issued computers/devices, an internet connection, and electronic mail access are provided as tools to enhance effectiveness on the job. Electronic mail may include email, voice mail, text messaging, instant messaging, and other forms of electronic communication.

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

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

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

The electronic mail system is not to be used to create any offensive or disruptive messages. Among those which are considered offensive are any messages which contain sexual implication, racial slurs, gender-specific offensive comments, or any other comment that

offensively addresses someone's age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, race or disability. Likewise, software or applications loaded by the employee should not lead to offensive or inappropriate behavior.

The electronic mail system is not to be used to send (upload) or receive (download) copyrighted materials, proprietary information, or similar materials without prior and appropriate authorization. The electronic mail system is not to be used to solicit non-ESA business from students, parents/guardians, or any other community stakeholders. Stakeholder email addresses and other contact information may never be provided to anyone (beyond ESA Board or staff) without the permission of school administrators or Directors.

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

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

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

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

ESA will generally provide a response to media inquiries within 24 hours. Should the response require a detailed technical explanation, a spokesperson will be designated to address the issue. The spokesperson will be chosen carefully, based on their area(s) of expertise.
Media inquiries include, but are not limited to, the following:

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

- Wages

Confidentiality
Employees are not permitted to communicate confidential school, employee or student related information with any third-party person, including attorneys, medical professionals, or law enforcement, without a duly executed subpoena or the express written permission of the Executive Director. This includes sharing any confidential information from the school, board, employee, or student with other employees or persons who are not authorized or entitled to receive such information. Any employee that receives a request for information or receives a subpoena for such, should not reply and should immediately notify the Executive Director so that the school can contact legal representation if necessary. Exception - In the event of a medical or law enforcement-related emergency, information vital to the safety and security of an individual or the school may be communicated as needed.

Additionally, employees are not permitted to assist with, become involved in or take sides in any custody matter involving students or staff. This means that employees are prohibited from speaking with, communicating with or providing any information to any parent, attorney or representative in a custody matter without express written permission from the Executive Director. The only time an employee may participate in a custody matter is pursuant to a duly served subpoena specifically directed towards the individual employee and only where the Executive Director has expressly authorized the employee to participate. If an employee is asked to provide information, whether by phone, electronically or otherwise, to a parent or their representative/legal counsel, the employee shall not respond to such requests and shall immediately notify the Executive Director. If an employee receives a subpoena related to a custody matter, the employee shall immediately notify the Executive Director. Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Social Media and Digital Communication Guidelines
Social media can play a powerful role in communicating and engaging with parents, staff, and members of the community. Appropriate behavior on social media by ESA employees will help guide our students to become good digital citizens as well as preventing any mishaps or misunderstandings that could affect ESA and its employees personally and/or professionally.

In these guidelines, the term "social media" describes online technologies and platforms that allow individuals to share information, experiences, opinions, and perspectives with others. Examples include, but are not limited to, TikTok, Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube.

All communications with ESA families and students should be conducted through ESA-provided accounts, such as your ESA e-mail account or on Google Classroom. For example, you should never text a student or parent on your personal telephone or computer. ESA has a separate policy that addresses use of ESA-provided devices and technology (such as your ESA e-mail address), but note that these guidelines also apply to the use of ESA-provided technology and devices.

The values, confidentiality, and professionalism that ESA employees are expected to embrace each day at school also apply to online behavior. You should bring your "best Page 98 of 144

Policies Manual Envision Science Academy self" to social media just as you do in your classroom or office at ESA.

ESA's expectations for staff use of social media are based on three simple principles that should help you to make smart choices and to feel confident about your online interactions:

- **Protect Our Students** - ESA has the same legal obligation to protect student privacy online as it does offline. Staff should not share any information about ESA students (including pictures) in personal social media posts.

  When communicating through ESA e-mail (or other ESA platforms such as Google Classroom), staff still must be careful not to disclose specific student information to anyone other than the student's parents or legal guardian. Federal law permits the disclosure of certain "directory information" about a student without parental consent, and ESA follows the legal process to allow parents the opportunity to "opt out" of such disclosure. Accordingly, even when using your ESA account, you should check on which of your students' families have opted out of directory information disclosure. And, you should always check with the student and his/her family first before featuring the student on an ESA social media account. If either object, then don't post. Finally, please avoid inadvertently disclosing personal information that would identify him/her as being enrolled in special education or any other program that a parent might wish to keep private.

  A good rule of thumb for the use of ESA accounts: Never share information about students online that would not be appropriate to share in a classroom or other setting at ESA.

  Do not "friend," "follow," or interact in any way with students using your personal social media accounts. Staff should not text with ESA students or parents. Staff should never provide students or parents their personal telephone numbers, especially cell phone numbers.

- **Be Professional** - Maintaining a professional relationship with students and parents is another reason to limit communication with them to ESA-sponsored methods.

  In addition to your actions remaining professional, it is best to keep your tone professional in your social media activity as well. Remaining positive and refusing to get caught up in negative or critical conversations are two ways to maintain a professional presence. If a parent or student tries to engage with you on social media, and the inquiry merits a response, then re-direct the conversation by moving it to an ESA platform.

  ESA business is to be conducted on ESA platforms, not on personal social media. That includes matters related to a staff member's employment situation. If you have a concern relating to your employment, you should raise that with your direct supervisor rather than airing your complaints on social media. Page 99 of 144 Policies Manual Envision Science Academy Identifying yourself on social media as an ESA employee associates you with

the school, your colleagues, and your school community. Even if you do not identify yourself as an ESA staff member, it is easy for someone else to make that connection. Accordingly, you should be use caution when posting any comment and/or images that may reflect negatively on your professional image. Your on-line behavior must reflect the same standards of professionalism, respect, and integrity as your face-to-face communications - even if others on the internet do not do the same.

- **Use Common Sense** - What you say or show on social platforms becomes part of your digital footprint. Once you hit "send" or "post," there is no way to take it back. Although your posts may intend no harm, the wrong one can put you in the center of controversy. As an ESA employee, your posts reflect not only upon you, but also upon the school and your colleagues. The content of your posts should not impair your capacity to maintain the respect of, or working relationships with, students, parents, or ESA staff, or impair your ability to effectively perform your job.

Failure to follow these guidelines may be cause for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from your position at ESA.

Using common sense, such as reading something out loud before posting, is mandatory. As examples of areas to avoid, you should not post content that is obscene, defamatory, discriminatory, harassing, vulgar, or that advocates the commission of a criminal act, that violates ESA policy, or that reasonably may lead to material interference with the school's operations.

Before posting, ask yourself if you would want your significant other, grandparent, or the Executive Director to see it. If not, don't post it. Commenting on matters of public concern is well within your rights as a citizen. Discussion of issues relating to your job at ESA should take place with your direct supervisor or the Executive Director as appropriate -- not on social media.

These guidelines provide only general guidance and do not cover every potential social media situation. ESA employees will be held responsible for the disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent, of confidential or private information, information that violates the privacy or other rights of a third-party, or the content of anything they post on any social media platform. This guidance is intended to supplement, not supersede, existing law, and ESA policies. All existing laws, and ESA policies that cover employee conduct may be applicable in the social media environment.

Supervisors should consult with the Executive Director and/or ESA's legal counsel before taking employment action based on an employee’s personal speech.

Change in Status
Should you change your address, phone number, email address, dependent status, etc., it is important that you notify the school’s data manager as soon as possible.

Security and Visitors
Envision Science Academy holds security as a high priority for the protection of students, staff, parents/guardians, and the school campus. For security purposes, all doors will remain locked

from the outside at all times. Security cameras with audio are used on the campus and inside the school building. They will provide an extra layer of protection for all persons on campus. Entrances will be posted with signs reminding visitors to sign in/out and that no weapons are allowed on campus. All visitors (including volunteers) to the campus will report to the main office through the front door, sign in, and obtain and wear an identification badge. Visitors without an identification badge will be escorted back to the main office to retrieve one or potentially asked to leave campus. A log of visitors will be maintained in the main office. Visitors must sign out and return the identification badge before leaving campus. Students are not allowed to leave campus unless they have been signed out by an authorized person. All volunteers and staff will be required to submit to a criminal background check. At times, building access for visitors and volunteers may be suspended due to health and safety protocol.

Fire/Tornado/Crisis Drills

For fire drills, please make sure students line up and leave the room quickly and quietly. There should be no talking. Students will exit their classroom and follow the route shown on the emergency exit plan posted by the door of the classroom which guides them to the closest exit. Teachers should make certain to turn off the lights, close their doors, and take their emergency bag which must contain a copy of the class rosters. When students are lined up outside, teachers should take roll, complete the "Emergency Event/Drill Teacher Report Form", and submit it to the administration/designees. Teachers must wait for the "all clear" before returning their students to the classroom. Based on code regulations, there will be a minimum of one fire drill per month.

There will be a minimum of one tornado drill during the school year. All students and staff should move into the hallways or other designated areas to avoid the windows in the classroom. Teachers should refer to the school's tornado and severe weather plan for specific information. Once all students are in place, teachers should take roll, complete the "Emergency Event/Drill Teacher Report Form", and submit it to the administration/designees.

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

Weather Policy – Inclement Conditions

In the case of inclement weather, official notification for delays or closings will be posted on WRAL and its affiliated radio and television stations under "Public Schools." Emails will be sent to all staff members, and information may be posted on the school's website and official social media sites. Please note: Envision Science Academy does not follow Wake County Public School System for school delays and closings. In the event that school remains in session, employees are expected to use their best judgment in deciding whether to come to work. Staff may use Paid Time Off, use unpaid Personal Leave, or non-exempt employees may make up the day at a time agreeable with their supervisor.

Up to five (5) school days per year may be designated as remote learning days if the campus must be closed due to inclement weather or other causes. In the event of a full closure of school, beyond these five (5) days the school day will be rescheduled and all employees will be required to report to work. Non-exempt employees must make up time for remote learning days to avoid losing pay. Non-exempt employees may only make up missed hours on the same work day, with prior approval from his/her assigned supervisor, unless the building has a forced closure. Non-exempt employees may make up time for forced closures in the following ways, based upon administrative decision:

- Use leave days, if the employee has accrued leave
- Take the time without pay
- Make up time, hour for hour, during a week that the employee works less than 40 hours. For example, if school is closed on Monday, the employee can make up time by working extra on Tuesday through Saturday.

Make up time, at the overtime rate, during a week that the employee is already working 40 hours. To make up a full day, the employee would work 6 hours (at overtime rate) to make up a regular 8-hour work day.

Any student days missed beyond the five (5) remote learning days will be made up. On days that the school has delayed opening or early dismissal due to inclement weather or other unforeseen events, these days are not required to be made up. The school will designate make up days in each semester.

Year-End Check Out
At the end of each school year, all staff will adhere to the check out procedures listed on the end of year check out sheet before leaving for the summer. Check out responsibilities include inventory of curriculum and other materials, completion of student grades, ordering supplies for the next year, and room preparation for the summer. Contact information for the summer should be left with the main office.

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

RECEIPT OF 2025-2026 ESA EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

I have received a copy of the 2025-2026 Employee Handbook. I understand that this handbook is intended as a general guide to the policies and procedures of Envision Science Academy; and I agree to abide by these policies. It is understood that changes in policy may occur anytime in the school year. Any such changes would supersede existing policies in the Handbook.

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

_____

Employee Signature Date

_____

Employee Printed Name