The Schools of McKeel Academy
Employee Handbook

Adopted by the Board of Trustees: 7/21/15
(Amended 7/28/2016)
The Schools of McKeel Academy
Employee Handbook

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Section 1
Handbook Introduction

1:1 Welcome To Our Organization!

The Schools of McKeel Academy is a highly successful charter school system, sponsored by the Polk County School Board to provide public educational services for students in Polk County. Our school system employs 260 employees to serve over 3,000 students in three high-performing charter schools on three campuses: McKeel Academy of Technology (7-12), McKeel Academy Central (PreK-6) and South McKeel Academy (PreK-7).

Whether you have just joined our staff or have been with The Schools of McKeel Academy for a while, we are confident that you will find that our schools are dynamic and rewarding places to work. We value every member of our Organization and believe that each employee contributes directly to McKeel’s success. We know that you will take pride in being a member of our team. This Handbook has been written to serve as the guide for the employer/employee relationship.

1:2 At-Will Policy

Florida conforms to what is known as At-Will Employment and your employment with our Organization is “At-Will”. This means you are free to quit at any time for any reason, just as we are free to terminate your employment at any time for any reason, with or without notice, with or without cause. Nothing in this Handbook constitutes a contract or promise of continued employment.

1:3 History of the Organization

McKeel Academy of Technology (MAT) was the first conversion charter school for secondary grades in the state of Florida in 1998, opening their doors in 1995 as a middle/high school of choice. Often referred to as the ‘big school’, this campus has a broad academic and sports program and has recently undergone renovations to their science classrooms, auditorium and cafeteria for their 7th-12th grade students. Several staff members are considered ‘founders’ and have been with MAT since it opened including Mr. Alan Black who was named Director of Schools in 2014. McKeel Academy of Technology’s founding Board of Trustees included Mr. Seth McKeel, the grandson of the school’s namesake, and he still serves on the governing board today.

In 2003, McKeel Elementary School (MEA) was established as a start-up charter school in a former church multipurpose building in downtown Lakeland. Originally a K-5 feeder program for MAT, the school changed their name in 2013 to McKeel Academy Central (MAC), added 6th grade, built a new 2-story academic building on their campus, and then added a PreK program. In 2006, South McKeel Elementary Academy opened in a former skating rink, as a replication of the successful program at MEA. The campus was expanded in 2009 to include middle grades when the bowling alley next door was converted into classrooms and became known as South McKeel Academy (SMA). A preschool program was added in 2010 and now this campus serves PreK-7th grades.
The Schools of McKeel Academy became a high-performing charter school system in 2011, when all three schools were designated by the Florida Department of Education as high-performing schools. The school programs have been very successful, receiving many academic awards and recognition including national ranking. The schools have achieved “A” state grades more often than not, with MAC receiving an “A” every year since it opened, SMA receiving an “A” every year except one and MAT being the only “A” high school in the district for several years. The schools focus on teaching through technology and have the latest technology in the hands of all the teachers and students, including 1:1 iPads in all grade levels in the McKeel system.

1:4 Board of Trustees
The ability of The Schools of McKeel Academy to carry out its mission successfully depends upon the strength of its governing board. Our Board of Trustees is committed to the school system’s mission, possesses substantial leadership skills and expertise, sets policy that guides the schools’ work, and evaluates both the school system and itself with an eye toward continuous improvement.

Board of Trustees meetings date and times are posted on the website. Board of Trustees meetings are held at McKeel Academy of Technology at 1810 W. Parker St. Lakeland, FL 33815.

Board of Trustees for The Schools of McKeel Academy

Mr. Taylor Caffey  
Landmark Mortgage and Assoc.

Ms. Stephanie L. Campbell  
Polk State College

Mr. Seth McKeel  
Southern Strategy Group Tampa Bay

Mr. Michael Peeples  
Southern Homes

Jackie Yon, RN  
Lakeland Regional Medical Center

Honorable John Stargel  
Judicial District 10, Florida Courts

Mr. Phillip Walker  
Commissioner-City of Lakeland

Mr. Michael Clanton  
Center State Bank of Florida

Mr. Andy Snyder  
Dixie Signs, Inc.

*The “Teacher of the Year” for each school holds a non-voting position on the board.
1:5  Bulletin Boards

You can find important information about this Organization and your employment posted on the bulletin board. Please ask your supervisor for the location as they differ by site. This is also the place where we post important information regarding your legal rights, including information about equal employment opportunity laws and wage and hour laws. You may also find job postings and other school activities on these boards. We expect all employees to read the information on the bulletin board periodically.

Because this bulletin board is our way of communicating with employees, we do not allow anyone except supervisors and Organization officials to post information there.

1:6  Departments and Other Resources

Departments within The Schools of McKeel Academy
All employee email addresses are: firstnamelastname@mckeelschools.com

Director of Schools Office - 863.499.2818
Director: Ext. 232
Administrative Assistant: Ext. 221
Assistant Director - Operations:

Business Office: 863.680.4047
Administration
Assistant Director – Instruction: Ext 224

Finance Department
Accounting Clerk: Ext. 234

Information Technology
IT Systems Applications Manager: Ext. 230
IT Systems Applications Developer: Ext 221
IT Help Desk: ineedhelp@mckeelschools.com

Human Resources Department
Human Resource Specialist: Ext. 233
Payroll and Benefits Specialist: Ext. 223
Campuses:
   McKeel Academy of Technology 863.499.2818
   1810 W. Parker St., Lakeland, FL 33815
   Principal: Ext. 241
   AP Administration: Ext 254
   AP Curriculum: Ext. 282
   Dean of Students: Ext. 224

   McKeel Academy Central 863.499.1287
   411 N. Florida Ave., Lakeland, FL 33801
   Principal: Ext. 224
   Asst. Principal: Ext. 228

   South McKeel Academy 863.510.0044
   2222 Edgewood Dr. South, Lakeland, FL 33803
   Senior Director of Schools: Ext. 224
   Middle School Director: Ext. 247
   Asst. Principal: Ext. 223
   PreK Director: Ext. 285

Other Resources
In addition to this Employee Handbook, other Resources are referenced that can be found online including:

   The Schools of McKeel Academy Policies and Forms
   Campus/Department Handbooks
   McKeel Schools Website and Websites for each campus
   ADP Website
   Code of Student Conduct

1:7 School Calendar

In the spring of each school year, The Schools of McKeel Academy Board of Trustees adopts a calendar for the coming year. Please refer to the adopted calendar posted on the McKeel Schools website for further information.
Section 2
Hiring

2:1 Commitment to Equal Opportunity

The Schools of McKeel Academy is an equal opportunity employer. In accordance with federal anti-discrimination law we do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation or military status, in any of our activities or operations. These activities include but are not limited to our hiring practices. Anti-discrimination practice plays a role in selection of vendors, volunteers and providing of services for TSMA. We are dedicated and committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, vendors, volunteers and subcontractors.

2:2 Recruitment and Referrals

We know that we are only as good as our employees, so we do a comprehensive search for talented and motivated individuals to fill vacant positions in our Organization. We know that the marketplace is ever changing and that finding high quality people is an evolving process. We encourage our employees to share with us their ideas about what more we can do to find and recruit talented and motivated individuals. We conduct all recruiting in a fair and nondiscriminatory manner.

The Schools of McKeel Academy also encourages employees to identify friends or acquaintances that are interested in employment opportunities with our Organization and refer qualified outside applicants for posted jobs. Employees should obtain permission from the individual they wish to refer, share their knowledge of the Organization, and not make commitments or oral promises of employment.

2:3 Internal Application Process

The Schools of McKeel Academy provides employees an opportunity to indicate their interest in open positions and advance within the Organization according to their skills and experience. In general, notices of job openings are posted on our website, although the Organization reserves its discretionary right to not post a particular opening.

Job posting is a way to inform employees of openings and to identify qualified and interested applicants who might not otherwise be known to the hiring supervisor. Other recruiting sources may also be used to fill open positions in the best interest of the Organization.

To be eligible to apply for a posted job, employees must have successfully completed their Introductory period (section 3:2); however, exceptions for nonexempt employees may be made.
To apply for a position, notify your current supervisor of your interest; submit a cover letter and current resume to the designated contact for the open position. In your cover letter, include job-related skills and accomplishments and how your prior work experience and/or education relates to the open position.

The Organization recognizes the benefit of developmental experiences and encourages employees to talk with their principal or supervisor about their career plans. Principals/Supervisors are encouraged to support employees' efforts to gain experience and advance within the organization.

An applicant's supervisor may be contacted to verify performance, skills, and attendance. Any staffing limitations or other circumstances that might affect a prospective transfer may also be discussed.

2:4 Employment of Relatives

If you have a relative who might be perfect to fill an open position in our Organization, please don't hesitate to refer this person to us. Members of an employee's immediate family will be considered for employment on the basis of their qualifications. Immediate family may not be hired if employment would:

- Create a supervisor/subordinate relationship with a family member;
- Have the potential for creating an adverse impact on work performance; or
- Create either an actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest.

This policy must also be considered when assigning, transferring, or promoting an employee. In accordance with Florida Statute 1002.33 (24), immediate family includes: father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, or half-sister. This policy also applies to romantic relationships.

If a romantic or sexual relationship between a supervisor and an employee should develop, it shall be the responsibility and mandatory obligation of the supervisor to promptly disclose the existence of the relationship to Human Resources. The employee may make the disclosure as well, but the burden of doing so shall be upon the supervisor. The Organization recognizes the ambiguity of and the variety of meanings that can be given to the term "romantic". It is assumed, or at least hoped, however, that either or both of the parties to such a relationship will appreciate the meaning of the term as it applies to either or both of them and will act in a manner consistent with this policy.

Employees who become immediate family members must inform their supervisors or Human Resources as soon as possible. Employment under these conditions may continue as long as it does not involve any of the above. If one of the conditions outlined should occur, attempts will...
be made to find a suitable position within the Organization to which one of the employees will transfer. If employees become immediate family members or establish a romantic relationship, administration will make reasonable efforts to assign job duties so as to minimize problems of supervision, safety, security or morale. If accommodations of this nature are not feasible, administration will decide in its sole discretion who will remain employed.

2:5  Employment Applications

The Schools of McKeel Academy relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as 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 the Organization’s exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment. All new hire paperwork is completed in the Human Resources office.

2:6  Screening

All staff are screened and cleared in accordance with the Jessica Lunsford Act prior to beginning employment. (Reference: Child Protection Policy Section 11:5)

2:7  Proof of Work Eligibility

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. **This form must be completed before your first day of work.** Former employees who are rehired must also complete the I-9 form if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid. With your new hire paperwork you should have received a blank I-9 Form and instructions on completing the form and presenting the necessary documentation. If you did not, contact Human Resources immediately. Refer to Section 13:3 in this Handbook for information on Work Eligibility Records.
Section 3
New Employee Information

3:1 New Employee Orientation

Prior to starting work, you will be scheduled for a new employee orientation (NEO) meeting. During this meeting, you will receive important information about our Organization’s policies and procedures. You will also be asked to complete paperwork and online forms relating to your employment, such as tax withholding forms, emergency contacts and benefits information. Please feel free to ask any questions you might have about the Organization during the orientation meeting. If additional questions come up after the meeting, you can ask your supervisor or contact the Human Resources Department.

3:2 Introductory Period

The first 90 days of your employment with the Organization are an introductory period. During this time, your supervisor will work with you to help you learn how to do your job successfully and what the Organization expects of you. This period also provides both you and the Organization with an opportunity to decide whether you are suited for the position for which you were hired.

Benefit and payroll procedures should have been explained to you when you completed the new hire paperwork with Human Resources. If you did not receive a benefit package at that time please contact the Human Resources office (section 1:6) to attain the information. (For our Organization’s benefits policies, see Section 6 of this Handbook.) You will also meet with your supervisor to go over your job goals and performance requirements. During the Introductory period, your supervisor will give you feedback on your performance and will be available to answer any questions you might have.

Full-time employees are eligible for benefits on the first of the month following a 60 day waiting period. Please refer to section 6 for all benefits available to employees. Although we hope that you will be successful here, the Organization may terminate your employment at any time, either during the Introductory period or afterwards, with or without cause and with or without notice. You are also free to quit at any time and for any reason, either during the Introductory period or afterwards, with or without notice. Successful completion of your Introductory period does not guarantee you a job for any period of time or in any way change the at-will employment relationship.

Your Introductory period may be extended if the Organization decides that such an extension is appropriate.
3:3  Certification

In order to teach at The Schools of McKeel Academy you must have a valid teaching certificate, temporary or professional, or a statement of eligibility from FLDOE. Please note that a statement of eligibility will result in provisional sub pay until the Human Resource department receives a temporary or professional certificate. Teachers will be notified of an expiring certificate in the fall of the school year in which their certificate will expire. Teachers are responsible for obtaining an application packet from the school designee and completing it. Once teachers receive their new certificate, he/she should supply the school designee with a copy.

If a teacher holds a temporary certificate that is going to expire, he/she has until May 1st of the year of expiration to complete the requirements.

The McKeel Board must approve teachers who teach out of field. The school administrator will notify the out of field teacher and provide him/her with the requirements he/she must fulfill, within two years, for the out of field assignment. If a teacher needs to take the General Knowledge exam, it must be completed by May 1st in order to be considered for reappointment.

To satisfy the highly qualified status, teachers must be certified in the appropriate subject area according to grade level or subject assigned; and either a passing score on the Florida subject area examination for the grade level or subject assigned; or verification of an out-of-state subject area content test or verification of an out-of-state HOUSSE Plan for level/subject assigned.

Should a teacher not complete requirements for renewing a certificate or fulfilling his/her out of field requirements, he/she will not be considered for reappointment.

All paraprofessionals must be classified as highly qualified as defined by “No Child Left Behind” legislation.

3:4  Child Support Reporting Requirements

Federal and state laws require us to report basic information about new employees, including your name, address, and Social Security number, to the State Directory of New Hires, created by the Florida Department of Revenue. The state collects this information to enforce child support orders. If the state determines that you owe child support, it will send us an order requiring us to withhold money from your paycheck to pay your child support obligations.
Section 4
Employee Classifications

It is the intent of The Schools of McKeel Academy to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment classification, status and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. Accordingly, the right to terminate the relationship, employment-at-will is retained by both the employee and the Organization.

4:1 Exempt and Nonexempt

Each employee is designated as either NONEXEMPT or EXEMPT from federal and state wage and hour laws. NONEXEMPT employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. EXEMPT employees are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws.

In addition to the above classifications, each employee will belong to one other employment status:

4:2 Full-Time and Part-Time

FULL-TIME employees are those who are not in a temporary or Introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work a full-time (30 hours or more per week) schedule. Full-time employees are generally eligible for the Organization’s benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

PART-TIME employees are those who are not in a Temporary or Introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work a part-time (less than 30 hours per week) schedule. Part-time employees are generally not eligible for the Organization’s benefit package.

4:3 Introductory

Introductory employees are those whose performance, as new employee or after a promotion, is being evaluated to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with the Organization is appropriate.

4:4 Other Personal Services (OPS)

OPS are temporary employees who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the workforce, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Substitute teachers and substitute bus drivers are in this classification. 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 OPS employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as
workers’ compensation insurance and social security), they are ineligible for all of the Organization's other benefit programs.
Section 5
Pay Policies

5:1 Payday

Employees are paid on the 15th and the last day of each month. If a payday falls on a holiday or a weekend, our Organization will directly deposit your pay into your direct deposit account on the last workday immediately before that payday.

Supervisors log-on to the ADP site and approve electronic time sheets for hourly employees on the 15th and last day of each month.

5:2 Direct Deposit

Electronic direct deposit assures that an employee’s pay is in their checking or savings account on payday even if they are sick or on vacation. Electronic direct deposit is strongly recommended for all employees with The Schools of McKeel Academy.

Direct Deposit Authorization forms must be completed at the time of hire to have semi-monthly pay directed to a checking or savings account of their choice. Direct Deposit Authorization Forms are available at The Schools of McKeel Academy website. It is the employee’s responsibility to notify the business office if the individual’s bank account changes. This is accomplished through the ADP Portal System under the Payroll & Taxes tab.

Please note that to ensure accuracy of the employee’s depositary account information, the first pay after submission of a Direct Deposit Authorization Form may be a physical payroll check. After the pre-note cycle all future pay will be electronically deposited with employees viewing/printing a pay advice from the ADP website that details pay information.

The Schools of McKeel Academy is not responsible for service fees assessed by a bank when employees make transactions on their account prior to direct deposit funds being credited to their account. A replacement payroll check for any reason may be subject to a processing fee.

5:3 Hours of Work and Overtime

Your supervisor will let you know your work schedule, including what time you will be expected to start and finish work each day.

On occasion, we may ask employees to work beyond their regular scheduled hours -- this is a job requirement.

We will try to give employees advance notice when overtime work is necessary; however, it will not always be possible to notify workers in advance.

Exempt employees will not be paid for working beyond their regular scheduled hours.

Nonexempt employees are entitled to payment for overtime, according to the rules set forth

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below. (For information on which employees are exempt and which are nonexempt, see Section 4 of this Handbook.)

- All overtime work must be approved in writing, in advance, by the employee's supervisor. Working overtime without permission violates Organization policy and may result in disciplinary action. Overtime pay will be received on the following payroll cycle from when incurred.
- For purposes of calculating how many hours an employee has worked in a day or week, our workweek begins at 12:01a.m. on Sunday and ends at midnight on Saturday. Our workday begins at 12:01 a.m. and ends at midnight each day.
- Nonexempt employees will be paid 1½ times their regular hourly rate of pay for every hour worked in excess of 40 hours a work week. (FLSA)
- Only time actually spent working counts as hours worked. PTO (Vacation time, sick or personal days), holidays, or any other paid time during which an employee did not actually work will not count as hours worked.

5:4 Pay Corrections

The Schools of McKeel Academy takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday. We ask that those employees paid on steps verify that the pay is in accordance with the appropriate step and accurate to their years of experience.

In the unlikely event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of the Payroll and Benefits Specialist via email, so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible.

Additionally, if you have been over-paid, you will be notified as soon as the error is detected and you will be responsible for repayment of all overpayments. In cases of hardship, a repayment schedule may be arranged.

5:5 Pay Docking

Our Organization is legally required to pay exempt employees -- those who are not entitled to earn overtime -- on a salary basis. This means, among other things, that exempt employees must receive the same pay for each week in which they perform work, regardless of the quantity or quality of work performed, and regardless of how many hours they actually work, unless an exception applies. (For information on which employees are exempt, see Section 4 of this Handbook.)

Organization policy prohibits docking the pay of an exempt employee -- that is, paying the employee less than his or her full regular salary -- except in the following circumstances:

- The employee takes at least one full day off for PTO, in excess of accrued days, in accordance with our PTO policy.
- The employee serves an unpaid disciplinary suspension of at least one full week, imposed in good faith for violating a workplace conduct rule.

If you are an exempt employee and you believe that pay has been improperly deducted from your salary in violation of these rules, please report it immediately using the Organization’s
complaint policy. (See Section 17 of this Handbook.) Your complaint will be investigated and, if we find that your pay was improperly docked, you will be reimbursed for any amounts that should not have been withheld.

5:6 Payroll Deductions

Your electronic pay statement on the ADP website reflects your total earnings for the pay period, as well as any mandatory or voluntary deductions from your paycheck. Mandatory deductions are deductions that we are legally required to take. Such deductions may include federal income tax, social security tax (FICA), FRS and any applicable state taxes. Voluntary deductions are deductions that you have authorized. Such deductions might include insurance premiums, retirement contributions or charitable contributions.

If you have any questions about your deductions, you may view and change them through the ADP portal.

5:7 Wage Garnishments

A wage garnishment is an order from a court or a government agency directing us to withhold a certain amount of money from an employee's paycheck and send it to a person or agency. Wages can be garnished to pay child support, spousal support or alimony, tax debts, outstanding student loans, or money owed as a result of a judgment in a civil lawsuit.

If we are instructed by a court or agency to garnish an employee's wages, the employee will be notified of the garnishment at once. Please note that we are legally required to comply with these orders. If you dispute or have concerns about the amount of a garnishment, you must contact the court or agency that issued the order.

5:8 Travel and Expense Reimbursements

There may be times when employees may incur expenses on behalf of our Organization. Although this should be rare, we will reimburse you for the actual work-related expenses you incur, as long as those expenses are approved in advance and considered reasonable. Business-related expenses should normally follow the procurement procedures set up by the Finance Department to meet audit, approved vendor and tax-exempt requirements. If your supervisor approves you personally incurring an expense on behalf of the organization, you must follow these procedures to get reimbursed:

- Get permission from your supervisor before incurring an expense.
- Spend the Organization's money wisely - make an effort to save money and use approved vendors if possible.
- Because we are a tax-exempt organization, sales tax will not be reimbursed.
- Keep a receipt or some other proof of payment for every expense.
- Submit your receipts, along with the expense report, to your supervisor for approval within 30 days of incurring an expense.
● Your supervisor is responsible for submitting your expense report to the Finance Department. If your report is approved, you will receive your reimbursement as a separate check.

Procedures for Travel Expenses
Employees will be reimbursed for expenses associated with organization-related travel. Request for leave to travel to attend organization-related meetings or events should be approved in advance through the ADP Time and Attendance system.

When employees are required to travel overnight for work, the travel expenses will be paid in advance by the Finance Department. These expenses could include hotel, airline tickets and/or rental car, and conference or training expenses.

When you personally incur travel expenses, such as parking, tolls, and taxis, complete a Travel Reimbursement Request form. All expenses must be supported by receipts.

Employees are eligible for Per Diem if their business trip includes at least one overnight stay. Per Diem for meals is reimbursed only if the travel reimbursement is approved in advance. Per Diem reimbursement shall not exceed the rate established by Florida Statute 112.061.

Actual Expenses, excluding meals shall be paid according to Florida Statute112.061. A receipt and statement justifying the actual expense must be included in the reimbursement request showing that the expense was reasonable and necessary under the circumstances.

Breakfast is paid only if travel begins before 7 a.m.; lunch is paid if travel begins after 11 a.m. and before 1 p.m.; dinner is paid if travel continues after 7 p.m. Meals that are complimentary (included with a training session, conference or provided through other sources) are not reimbursable. Copies of workshop/conference agendas or other publication from the event must be attached to the reimbursement request. If rates change during the year, the Travel Reimbursement form online will reflect the new rate.

Mileage Reimbursement
Employees who use their own vehicle for organization business will be reimbursed at the current IRS rate per mile. Mileage shall be submitted by employees in compliance with Florida Statute 112.061(7) (c) (3).

Before using a personal vehicle for work-related purposes, employees must demonstrate that they have a valid driver’s license and adequate insurance coverage. The Organization does not reimburse employees for their commute to and from the workplace.

To claim mileage reimbursement, you must follow these procedures:

● Keep a written record of your business-related travel, including the total mileage of each business-related trip, the date of travel, the location to which you traveled (examples: MEA, Polk School Board, Sam’s Club, Orlando Convention Center), and the purpose of
your trip (examples: to meet with Assistant Director about technology plan, for SACS committee meeting, to deliver revised contracts, to attend McKeel Board meeting). Submit this information on the Travel Reimbursement Request form. If any part of the form is incomplete, it will be returned to you to complete.

- If you anticipate having reimbursable travel for business-related purposes, get your supervisor's approval before making the trip.
- Submit the Travel Reimbursement Request to your supervisor for approval as soon as possible after your trip or on the last day of the month. Travel Reimbursements must be requested within 30 days from when occurred.
- Your supervisor is responsible for submitting your record to the Finance Department. If your request is approved, you will receive your reimbursement payment in a separate check.
Section 6
Employee Benefits

6:1 Employee Benefit Plans

As part of our commitment to our employees and their well-being, our Organization provides employees with a variety of benefits. A number of programs (such as social security, workers’ compensation, and unemployment insurance) are mandated and cover all employees of the Organization. Benefit eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification. Your supervisor or Human Resources can identify the programs for which you are eligible. Details of many of these programs can be found elsewhere in this Handbook.

Some of the following benefit programs are fully paid by the Organization, and some require contributions from employees and include the following:

- Florida Retirement Services (FRS)
- Major Medical Insurance
- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Disability
- EAP
- Life Insurance
- Dental
- Vision Care
- Supplemental Insurance
- 403B/457 Availability

Although we introduce you to the plans in this section, we cannot provide the details of each plan here. You should receive official plan documents for each of the benefit plans that we offer. Those documents (along with any updates) should be your primary resource for information about your benefit plans. If you see any conflict between those documents and the information in this Handbook, you should rely on the official plan documents.

The benefits we provide are meant to help employees maintain a high quality of life -- both professionally and personally. We sincerely hope that each employee will take full advantage of these benefits. If you don't understand information in the plan documents or if you have any questions about the benefits we offer, please talk to the Payroll and Benefits Specialist.

6:2 Health Care Benefits

The Organization has a health insurance plan which provides employees and their dependents access to medical insurance benefits. Employees who are classified as full-time are eligible to participate in the group health insurance plan. Eligible employees may participate in the plan subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between the Organization and the insurance carrier. Those employees that choose to decline the health insurance provided by the Organization will receive $200/month in lieu of coverage.
A change in employment status that would result in loss of eligibility to participate in the health insurance plan may qualify the employee for benefits continuation under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). (Refer to COBRA in Section 6:6 below.)

Details of the health insurance plan are described in the Summary Plan Description and information on cost of coverage will be provided in advance of enrollment to eligible employees. Refer to the ADP portal Benefits Tab for more information on our health insurance plan.

6:3 Long-Term Disability Insurance

Sometimes an employee suffers an injury or an illness outside of the workplace that prevents the employee from working for a long period of time. For full-time employees, this Organization provides long-term disability coverage to protect them in these circumstances. This means eligible employees will receive a certain percentage of their salary while they are unable to work. To learn about the details of this coverage, including eligibility, contact the Payroll and Benefits Specialist in our Business office.

6:4 Workers’ Compensation

If you suffer from an illness or injury that is related to your work, you may be eligible for workers’ compensation benefits. The Organization provides a comprehensive workers’ compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, workers’ compensation insurance provides benefits after a short waiting period or, if the employee is hospitalized, immediately. It may also cover earnings if you are unable to work or your earnings are lower because of a work related injury or illness, and you have been disabled for more than seven calendar days, you may be eligible for some wage replacement benefits.

Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses must inform their principal or supervisor immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job accident may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately to ensure medical bills can be paid. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible. You will also be provided with the name of an approved physician.

Neither The Schools of McKeel Academy nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of workers’ compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee’s voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social or athletic activity sponsored the Organization.

To find out more about workers’ compensation coverage, contact your Supervisor.
6:5  **Life Insurance and other Benefits**

Life insurance offers you and your family important financial protection. As an employee of The Schools of McKeel Academy with full time status, TSMA offers you one times your annual salary Life insurance. Additional life insurance can also be purchased through one of our ancillary vendors. Vision, Dental, Cancer and Accident policies and others optional plans are also offered to employees during annual enrollment with premiums paid in full by the employee through payroll deduction. The current year’s Summary Plan Description is available from the Payroll and Benefits Specialist.

6:6  **Benefits Continuation (COBRA)**

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

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at the Organization's group rates plus an administration fee. The Organization provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under the Organization's health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.
Section 7
Leave and Time Off

7:1 Paid Time Off

Instead of offering separate sick leave and personal days or floating holidays, The Schools of McKeel Academy (TSMA) offers a paid time off (PTO) program that combines all of these benefits. We believe this program gives employees the flexibility to manage their time off as they see fit. Employees may use PTO for sickness, to attend a child’s school activities, to care for elderly or ill family members or to take care of personal errands or business. All full-time employees are eligible to participate in the PTO program.

PTO accrues according to the following schedule per year:

- 10 Month Employees receive four (4) PTO days on September 1st and one day a month thereafter until a total of 10 days are reached.
- 11/12 Month Employees earn one (1) day PTO a month, for each month worked. All new hires must complete 15 days in the first month of service to be eligible to accrue a day of PTO otherwise the first day of PTO accrued is at the end of the next month.
- Accrued time off is earned at the completion of the month and may not be used before it is earned and credited to the employee (FS1012.61). Employees who are on leave still accrue PTO time.

Employees should schedule PTO time at a minimum of 72 hours in advance with their supervisor. It is the philosophy of TSMA to try and grant every request for PTO. Because it is best for our students, this means our policy for school-based staff is that PTO may not be used during the first five days or the last five days of the school year in which the students are in attendance, or immediately before or after scheduled holidays or on mandated testing days, except in the case of an emergency. Employees will be asked to provide a reason when they are claiming an emergency. If circumstances, such as a medical or family emergency prevent advance scheduling, you must notify your supervisor (or Human Resources) via phone or email that you are taking paid time off. Do not leave a message unless it is on their specific phone line. Because PTO encompasses vacation and sick leave, employees must manage their PTO responsibly to ensure that they have time available for emergencies, such as personal or family illness. An employee who needs time off, but has no accrued PTO may be eligible to take unpaid leave.

Employees may not accrue more than 30 days of PTO. Once an employee’s PTO balance reaches this limit, they will be paid out at the end of the fiscal year for any days in excess of 30. The
payout percentage rate is determined by the number of years of service to The Schools of McKeel Academy at the following rates:

- Four (4) to Six (6) years - 50% of an employee’s current daily rate
- Seven (7+) years - 60% of an employee’s current daily rate

Those employees who have an excess of 30 days or have 30 days at the end of the fiscal year are eligible to take 5 days of PTO as a cash payout at that time. All payouts will follow the same rules and percentage rates as stated previously. All monies paid out for PTO will be done so every year on the July 15th paycheck. All staff requesting payout must complete a Request for PTO Payout form and submit it with a signature to the Payroll Specialist by July 6th of that year.

Employee may choose to donate up to 30 days of PTO to a co-worker who is out on medical leave in accordance to FS1012.61 (e). A donation period will be established by the Human Resources office. All employees wishing to donate days would need to complete the Transfer of PTO Days form and submit it to Human Resources within that time frame. All days donated are paid to the recipient at the cash out percentage established in this policy. Any employee who does not meet the PTO requirements for donating days may choose to send in a cash donation to the business office within the designated time frame.

When an employee resigns or their employment otherwise ends, any accrued and unused PTO will be paid at the appropriate payout rate based on years of service. Paid time off may not be used for the last day(s) of employment.
7:1.01 Gifting Policy

Gifting of PTO Days Policy

The heart of The Schools of McKeel Academy school system helps to ensure we take care of our staff and families. The Gifting of PTO Days Policy enables our staff to donate their PTO time to co-workers in need of paid time off from work.

What is gifting PTO?
This policy allows multiple employees to assist a fellow employee who is faced with a personal, serious illness or injury, or is caring for an immediate family member who has a serious illness or injury. More specifically, the employees are able to donate up to (30) thirty days of payroll to the employee who has exhausted their own PTO days, but must have a minimum of (10) ten days accrued to be eligible to donate.

Ineligible Situations
This policy may not be used in situations in which the recipient of the benefit is:

- An employee who has accrued PTO to cover their time off for the current pay period.
- Is currently covered by Short/Long Term Disability (STD/LTD) or Workers’ Compensation benefits.
- Has other paid benefits that apply (state paid family leave benefits, etc.)

Eligible Situations
This policy may be used when:

- The recipient of gifting benefits has a serious illness or injury such as cancer, serious accident, major surgery, AIDS, heart attack, etc.; that poses a threat to life and/or requires inpatient, hospice or residential health care and the employee needs time off from work. The recipient of gifting benefits is on maternity/paternity leave.
- The employee is providing care for an immediate family member (parent, spouse, child, step child, etc.,) who has a serious illness or injury such cancer, serious accident, major surgery, AIDS, heart attack, etc. and the employee needs time off from work.
- The recipient has exhausted all of their PTO benefits before receiving any gifted days of PTO, although the “Gifting” process may be initiated by Human Resources to ensure the employee has an opportunity to have a full salary paid in that current pay period and before disability would begin.
- The recipient is not eligible for Short/Long Term disability (STD/LTD), Workers’ Compensation or other state paid leave benefits during the days they would receive the gifted PTO time. Human Resources may initiate the “Gifting” process in anticipation of a benefits beginning/expiration date.

How it Works

- An employee can gift a minimum of one (1) day and a maximum of (30) thirty days to the recipient co-worker.
- Only accrued time may be gifted to the recipient. Donations must be made in the form of time off from work and cannot be “cashed out” for the equivalent dollar amount for that time off.
• Donations of time may not be reversed. By signing and submitting the form for “Gifting of PTO Days” you are authorizing Payroll to adjust your PTO balance.
• The maximum amount of days the recipient may be given is 30 in a rolling 12-month period. This should be sufficient to cover the 10 days prior to STD/LTD and a month of income following expiration of STD/LTD if necessary.
• Multiple employees may donate time in a pay period to cover the entire pay period. Donations will be received on a first come first give basis. There is no guarantee the full request of the day(s) donated will be utilized and any unused time will be given back to the donor.
• Donated time will be transferred on a dollar to dollar and day to day calculation. For example: if Donor X has a daily rate of $183.00 and the recipient has a daily rate of $214.00 it would equate to a full day of pay because it is over ½ of the daily rate of the recipient’s pay. If Donor X had a rate of $106.00 per day it would equate to ½ day of pay to the recipient as it is less than ½ the daily rate.
• Donated time may not be used retroactively.
• Donated time cannot be cashed out by the donor or the recipient.
• Donated time is taxable income to the recipient.

The Donation Process
• The requesting employee or their supervisor must submit a “Donation Request Form” to the Assistant Director – Instruction (ADI).
• All forms will be reviewed by the ADI, HR and Payroll to validate the need for donation of time and ensure all necessary forms (FMLA, STD, etc.) for time off have been documented.
• Payroll will validate the amount of PTO needed to cover initial 10-day period and HR will send out an email to the staff at the location the employee works to begin the gifting process.
• Employees wishing to donate time will need to complete a “Gift of Time” form with signature and submit it to the Payroll Specialist for processing.

Adopted By the Board of Trustees: 5/2013

Updated 07/2016
7:2 Holidays

All employees (including those in their Introductory period) are eligible for time-off during holidays and breaks throughout the year to include, but not limited to:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Break
- Winter Break
- MLK Day
- President’s Day
- Spring Break
- Memorial Day
- 4th of July

Please refer to the School Calendar for a schedule of all Staff, Teacher/Para holidays and breaks. The Board of Trustees approves the School Calendar that runs August through June for the upcoming year, in the spring of each year.

7:3 Maternity Leave

Employees who are with child and do not qualify for FMLA will still qualify for maternity leave. In accordance with the guidelines of our Short Term Disability (STD) policy employees may have either six or eight weeks of maternity leave.

7:4 Family Medical Leave Act

Employees, who have worked for our Organization for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous year, are eligible to take family and medical leave. 

Reasons for Leave

12-Week Entitlement

Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for these purposes:

- for the employee's own serious health condition
- to care for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition
- to bond with a newborn, newly adopted child, or recently placed foster child, or
- to handle a qualifying exigency relating to a spouse's, child's, or parent's deployment to a foreign country on active duty or call to active duty in the National Guard, Armed Forces, or Reserves.

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care practitioner for a condition that prevents the employee or family member from performing the functions of the job, participating in school, or performing other daily activities. Incapacity relating to
pregnancy, prenatal care, or childbirth is a serious health condition. If you have questions about what qualifies as a serious health condition, contact the Human Resources Department.

Qualifying exigencies include issues arising out of a family member's short notice deployment; attending military events and activities; arranging for alternative childcare; making financial and legal arrangements; attending counseling sessions; attending post-deployment activities; and visiting the family member while on short-term, temporary rest leave. Other activities and events may also qualify; if you have questions about qualifying exigencies, contact the Human Resources Department.

**26-Week Entitlement**
Employees may be eligible for additional leave if their child, parent, spouse, or next of kin (1) is a current member of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard or Reserves, (2) suffers or aggravates a serious illness or injury in the line of duty on active duty, and (3) is undergoing treatment, recuperation or therapy; is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list. This leave is also available for family members of veterans suffering from a serious, service-related illness or injury, if the veteran was a member of the Armed Forces, National Guard, or Reserves within five years of needing care. Employees in this situation may take up to 26 weeks of leave in a single 12-month period to care for the family member. This leave is not in addition to the 12 weeks of leave available for reasons addressed above. Employees eligible for this type of leave are entitled to 26 total weeks of leave in a 12-month period, for all reasons.

**Leave Available**
Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for any of the purposes listed under "12-Week Entitlement," above. This 12-month is calculated as a “rolling” 12-month period measured backward from the date of any FMLA leave usage. A parent who takes leave to care for a newborn, newly adopted child, or recently placed foster child must complete this leave within a year after the birth, adoption, or placement.

Eligible employees may take up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a family member who suffers a serious injury or illness, as described under "26-Week Entitlement," above. This 12-month period begins on the first day of leave.

If you and your spouse both work for our Organization, the two of you will be entitled to a combined total of 12 weeks of leave to care for a newborn, newly adopted child, or recently placed foster child, and to care for a parent with a serious health condition. If you both qualify for the leave described under "26-week Entitlement," above, you will be entitled to a combined total of 26 weeks of leave for this purpose, to care for a newborn, newly adopted child, or recently placed foster child, and to care for a parent with a serious health condition.

**Notice Requirements**
Employees are required to give notice at least 30 days in advance if their need for leave is foreseeable. If you fail to do so, this could delay the approval of your leave. If you can't give 30-days' notice, you must give notice as soon as is practicable under the circumstances and must
generally comply with our usual procedures. We may ask you to explain why you were unable to give 30-days' notice.

When you give notice, you must provide enough information for us to determine whether the leave qualifies as FMLA leave. If you have already taken FMLA leave for the same reason, you must refer either to the reason or to the need for FMLA leave when you give notice.

Health Insurance During Leave
Your health insurance benefits will continue during leave. You will be responsible for paying any portion of the premium that you ordinarily pay while you are working, and you must make arrangements to make these payments while you are out. Employees who choose not to return from family and medical leave may be required to reimburse the Organization for any premiums paid on the employee's behalf during the leave.

Reinstatement
When you return from leave, you have the right to return to your former position or an equivalent position, except:

- You have no greater right to reinstatement than you would have had if you had not been on leave. If your position is eliminated for reasons unrelated to your leave, for example, you have no right to reinstatement.
- The Organization may not be obligated to reinstate you if you are a key employee -- that is, you are among the highest paid 10% of our workforce and holding your job open would cause the Organization substantial economic harm. If the Organization classifies you as a key employee, you will be notified soon after you request leave.

Use of Paid Leave
An employee who has accrued paid time off must use these benefits to receive pay for all or a portion of family and medical leave, as long as the reason for leave is covered by the applicable type of time off. To use paid leave, you must comply with the usual requirements for using that type of leave (for example, notice or scheduling requirements). If you do not, you may not be allowed to use paid leave, but will still be entitled to take unpaid FMLA leave if you are eligible.

If an employee takes paid PTO leave; workers' compensation leave, disability leave, or other leave for a reason that qualifies for family and medical leave, the Organization may designate that time off as family and medical leave and count it against the employee's entitlement.

If you are receiving workers' compensation or disability benefits while on FMLA leave, you may not use accrued paid leave for all of the hours you miss; this would result in you receiving more than your usual pay. However, you may use accrued paid leave -- as long as you are otherwise eligible -- to supplement your benefits, so you receive your usual pay while on leave. For example, if you are receiving 60% of your usual compensation through disability insurance, you may use paid leave to be paid for the other 40%.
Certification
The Organization may ask employees to provide certification regarding the need for leave. If you take leave for your own or a family member's serious health condition, or to care for a family member who suffers or aggravates a serious injury or illness in military service, a health care practitioner must complete part of this form. For qualifying exigency leave, you must complete the form. We will provide you with the certification form you must submit.

The Organization has the right to seek a second opinion (and perhaps, a third opinion), and periodic re-certifications. We may also ask you to provide other types of documentation, such as a copy of active duty orders or proof of a family relationship to the person who you will be caring for. The Organization will ask you to provide a fitness for duty report from your doctor before you return to work after taking leave for your own serious health condition.

Intermittent Leave
Employees may take leave all at one time or intermittently -- that is, a few hours or days at a time—for all types of leave listed above except leave to care for a new child. In the case of leave for your own serious health condition, to care for a family member with a serious health condition, or to care for a family member who suffers or aggravates a serious injury or illness in military service, intermittent leave is available only if it is medically necessary.

If you need intermittent leave for scheduled medical treatment, you must make a reasonable effort to schedule your leave so it doesn't unduly disrupt the Organization's operations. We may temporarily assign you to a different position with equivalent pay and benefits to accommodate the intermittent schedule.

7:5 Military Leave
Our Organization supports those who serve in the Armed Forces to protect our country. In keeping with this commitment, and in accordance with State and Federal law, employees who must be absent from work for military service are entitled to take a military leave of absence. This leave will be unpaid. When an employee's military leave ends, that employee will be reinstated to the position he or she would have held if continuously employed, as long as the employee meets the requirements of Federal and State law.

Employees who are called to military service must tell their supervisors as soon as possible that they will need to take military leave. An employee whose military service has ended must return to work or inform the Organization that he or she wants to be reinstated in accordance with these guidelines:

- For a leave of 30 or fewer days, the employee must report back to work on the first regularly scheduled workday after completing military service, allowing for travel time.
- For a leave of 31 to 180 days, the employee must request reinstatement within 14 days after military service ends.
- For a leave of 181 days or more, the employee must request reinstatement within 90 days after military service ends.
During this unpaid leave, employees are entitled to use applicable paid time off (PTO). The Organization will continue your health insurance benefits during your leave, under these circumstances:

- If you are absent for 30 or fewer days, you will be treated as any employee not on leave. The Organization will continue to pay its share of the insurance premium, and you must continue to pay your usual share (if any).
- If your leave lasts longer than 30 days, you will have to pay the entire premium to continue your benefits.

**7:6 Jury Duty**

If you are called for jury duty, you are entitled to take time off, as necessary, to fulfill your jury obligations. No employee will face discipline or retaliation for jury service. You must immediately inform your supervisor when you receive your jury duty summons. If you are chosen to sit on a jury, you must inform your supervisor how long the trial is expected to last. During your jury service, you must also check in with your supervisor daily or when allowed by the courts, so the Organization knows when to expect you back at work.

You will be paid for jury service. On any day when your jury service ends before the end of your usual workday, you must check in with your supervisor to find out whether you need to return to work for that day.

**7:7 Bereavement Policy**

If an employee wishes to take time off due to the death of an immediate family member they must notify his/her supervisor immediately. An employee with supervisor approval may use PTO time for additional days off. McKeel Schools will honor bereavement for its benefit eligible employees. Bereavement pay is based on the daily rate of pay at the time of the absence and will not include any special forms of compensation such as overtime for non-exempt staff.

Bereavement pay is granted according to the following:

**3 Consecutive Days** – This bereavement policy is in the event of death of an employee’s immediate family member. Immediate family refers to; child, father, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law sister, brother, stepfather, stepmother, step son or step daughter. To be eligible for the paid leave the employee generally must attend the funeral of the deceased relative.

**1 Day of Bereavement** – Employees are permitted one day of leave in the event of death for employee’s brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, aunt, uncle, grandparent, or grandchild or spouse’s grandparent. To be eligible for the paid leave the employee generally must attend the funeral of the deceased relative.
Section 8
Performance Evaluations

Each and every employee contributes to the success of our Organization. We expect everyone to perform to the highest level possible. To continually strive to improve processes which sustain a high level of student achievement.

Formal performance evaluations are conducted to provide both supervisor and employee the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting future goals. In no way should a performance appraisal be used or viewed as a disciplinary tool. It is the goal of the Organization that no employee and supervisor enter into a performance review with varying degrees of outcome expectation. It is the intent of the Organization to conduct formal 90 day performance reviews at the end of every employee’s introductory period. (See Section 4:3 in this Handbook) At this time based on job performance the introductory period could be extended.

8:1 Non-Instructional Staff

Because our employees’ performance is vital to our success, we conduct annual reviews of individual employee performance. Our non-instructional employee’s complete self-assessments develop goals and participate in progress meetings with their supervisors. It is our desire that all employees have a clear understanding of the expectation associated to their specific position and they rise to the level of superior job performance.

The performance of all employees is generally evaluated according to an ongoing 12-month cycle, beginning at the fiscal-year end. The principal, assistant principal or their immediate supervisor could evaluate school support or office staff. Appraisals for our Business office staff are completed by their respective supervisors.

8:2 Administrative & Instructional Staff

All performance appraisals are a combination of input from employee self-appraisal and supervisor input. It is the responsibility of the Director of Schools and Assistant Director - Instruction combined to complete the performance appraisals on the Principals for the Organization. Administrative appraisals may also be comprised of parent surveys. Principals of the Organization are responsible to complete the appraisals on their Assistants and as well as take a dominant role in the appraisals of Instructional and Support staff. Instructional staff appraisals will be a combination of classroom observations, teacher reflection and input from all school administrators.

In accordance with SB 736 and FL Statute 1012.34(2) (a), 1012.34(3) (a) and 1008.22(8) the organization uses an evaluation system, which consists of a written evaluation of the employee’s performance in regard to the standards of the position or job description. Supervisors should keep formal/informal records of significant events, and/or daily work, concerning the position.
performance of their employees throughout the rating period. The performance of each employee shall be evaluated on the basis of the experience and training of the employee and the attainment of previously established goals and objectives as well as student achievement. If you have questions about the evaluation process, discuss them with your supervisor or principal.
Section 9
Workplace Behavior

9:1 Ethics and Professional Conduct

People who work together have an impact on each other's performance, productivity, and personal satisfaction in their jobs. In addition, how our employees act toward parents, visitors, volunteers, and vendors will influence whether those relationships are successful for our Organization.

Because your conduct affects more people than just yourself, we expect you to act in a professional manner whenever you are on Organization property, conducting Organization business, or representing the Organization at business or social functions. Although it is impossible to give an exhaustive list of everything that professional conduct means, it does, at a minimum, include the following:

- following all of the rules in this Handbook that apply to you;
- refraining from rude, offensive, or outrageous behavior;
- refraining from ridicule and hostile jokes;
- treating co-workers, students and their families, volunteers and vendors with patience, respect, and consideration
- being courteous and helpful to others, and
- communicating openly with supervisors and co-workers.

Individuals who act unprofessionally will face discipline, up to and including termination.

The Code of Ethics follows this page in this Handbook and includes the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida. The Code of Ethics outlines the obligations for educators to students and the importance of professional relationships with students, parents and members of the community. Please become familiar with this Code of Ethics. Individuals who violate any of these principles could have their educator’s certificate revoked or suspended, or be subjected to other penalties as provided by law.
Code of Ethics – Education Profession

6B-1.006 Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida

6B-1.001 Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida.

- The educator values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
- The educator's primary professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. The educator will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
- Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of other members of the community, the educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

Specific Authority 229.053(1), 231.546(2) (b) FS. Law Implemented 231.546(2) (b) FS. History - New 3-24-65, Amended 8-9-69, Repromulgated 12-5-74, Amended 8-12-81, 7-6-82, Formerly 6B-1.01.

6B-1.006 Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.

- The following disciplinary rule shall constitute the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.
- Violation of any of these principles shall subject the individual to revocation or suspension of the individual educator's certificate, or the other penalties as provided by law.
- Obligation to the student requires that the individual:
  - Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
  - Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
  - Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
  - Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
  - Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
  - Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
  - Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
● Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
● Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

● Obligation to the public requires that the individual:
  ○ Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
  ○ Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
  ○ Shall not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.
  ○ Shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.
  ○ Shall offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages.

● Obligation to the profession of education requires that the individual:
  ○ Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
  ○ Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.
  ○ Shall not interfere with a colleague’s exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
  ○ Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual’s performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
  ○ Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.
  ○ Shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgments of colleagues.
  ○ Shall not misrepresent one’s own professional qualifications.
  ○ Shall not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.
  ○ Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one’s own or another’s application for a professional position.
  ○ Shall not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
  ○ Shall provide upon the request of the certificated individual a written statement of specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
  ○ Shall not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with these Principles of Professional Conduct for
the Education Profession in Florida and other applicable Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.

○ Shall self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to appropriate authorities (as determined by district) any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt nor shall such notice be admissible for any purpose in any proceeding, civil or criminal, administrative or judicial, investigatory or adjudicatory. In addition, shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendre for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, school districts shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of Sections 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), Florida Statutes.

○ Shall report to appropriate authorities any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.

○ Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported any allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.

○ Shall comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission.

○ Shall, as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.
9:2 Organization Property

We have invested a great deal of money in the property and equipment that you use to perform your job. It negatively affects The Schools of McKeel Academy’s bottom line when people abuse Organization property, misuse it, or wear it out prematurely by using it for personal business. We ask all employees to take care of Organization property and to report any problems to your supervisor. If a piece of equipment or property is unsafe for use, please report it immediately. Please use property only in the manner intended and as instructed. We do not allow personal use of Organization property unless specifically authorized in this Handbook. Failure to use Organization property appropriately, and failure to report problems or unsafe conditions, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. For information on use of computers, the Internet, and software, see Section 12 of this Handbook. When your employment with this Organization ends, we expect you to return Organization property -- and to return it clean and in good repair. This includes but is not limited to this Employee Handbook, all manuals and guides, documents, phones, computers, equipment, keys, and tools.

Employees are responsible for lost or damaged Organization property that has been issued to them. Employees are liable for the depreciated value of the property. We reserve the right to take any lawful action to recover or protect our property.

9:3 Organization Vehicles

We have invested in Organization vehicles so that our employees can use them on Organization business in place of their own vehicles. This saves wear and tear on personal vehicles and eliminates the need for keeping track of mileage.

We need your help in keeping Organization vans/buses in good condition. Please keep them clean, and please remove any trash or personal items when you are finished using the vehicles. This is also applicable to vehicles the Organization rents for business use.

You must have a valid driver’s license to use Organization vans/buses or Organization rented vehicles, and we expect that you will drive in a safe and courteous manner. If you receive any tickets for parking violations or moving violations, you are personally responsible for taking care of them.

Please immediately report any accidents, mechanical problems, or other problems to your supervisor. We will try to have Organization vehicles repaired or serviced as soon as possible.

Only authorized employees may use Organization cars, and they may do so only on Organization business. Our transportation systems are not to be used for personal business, and family members should not travel with you during the scope of your work hours.

You may not use Organization vehicles while under the influence of drugs or alcohol or while otherwise impaired.

We know that our employees may use their cell phones or personal digital assistants (PDAs) for work-related matters, whether these devices belong to the employee or are issued by the Organization. Employees are prohibited from using cell phones or PDAs for work-related matters while driving. We are concerned for your safety and for the safety of other drivers and
pedestrians, and using a cell phone or PDA while driving can lead to accidents. If you must make a work-related call or send or read a text while driving, you must wait until you can pull over safely and stop the car before calling or texting. If you receive a work-related call while driving, you must ask the caller to wait while you pull over safely and stop the car. If you are unable to pull over safely, you must tell the caller that you will have to call back when it is safe to do so. Those who violate this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Employees may use hands-free equipment to make or answer calls while driving without violating this policy. However, safety must always be your first priority. We expect you to keep these calls brief. If, because of weather or traffic conditions or for any other reason, you are unable to concentrate fully on the road, you must either end the conversation or pull over and safely park your vehicle before resuming your call. Violating this policy in any way may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

9:4 Telephones/Personal Cell Phones

The Organization's telephone system is for business use. Employees are expected to keep personal calls to a minimum. If you must make or receive a personal call, please keep your conversation brief. Extensive personal use of Organization phones or personal cell phones during work hours is grounds for discipline.

Although our Organization allows employees to bring their personal cell phones to work, we expect employees to keep personal conversations to a minimum. While occasional, brief personal phone calls are acceptable, frequent or lengthy personal calls can affect productivity and disturb others. We generally expect employees to use personal cell phones during breaks only; this includes texting, checking email or other personal cell phone use.

Employees must turn off the ringers on their cell phones while away from their cell phones. If you share workspace with others, you must turn off the ringer on your phone while at work. Employees must turn off their cell phones or leave their phones elsewhere while in meetings, presentations, or trainings. Employees must also turn off their cell phones or leave their phones elsewhere while meeting with parents, students or co-workers.

It is inappropriate to interrupt a face-to-face conversation with a co-worker, student, parent or anyone, in order to take a personal phone call. Remember, others can hear your cell phone conversations. Try to talk quietly, and save intimate discussions for another time. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

See Section 12 of this Handbook for information on privacy and telephones.

9:5 Donations to the Schools

All donations to the schools become property of The Schools of McKeel Academy. This includes books, equipment, services and contributions. The donation should be properly recorded through the Finance Department, and in some cases, must be formally accepted by the Board of Trustees. The following information is required: donor’s name, Organization name (if applicable), mailing address, description, purpose and value of donation. The Finance Department will generate a tax-exempt contribution letter for the donor to use for tax purposes. Please inform your supervisor of any prospective donations.
9:6 Arrests

Any employee, who is arrested or charged with any crime, including driving under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances, must notify his or her department supervisor or principal of the alleged charges/allegations. Instructional staff must self-report within 48 hours to their supervisor, principal or Director of Schools any arrest/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance. Failure to self-report may result in disciplinary action. Refer to the Code of Ethics – Education Profession for further reporting requirements. (9:1)

9:7 Punctuality and Attendance

Because The Schools of McKeel Academy depends heavily upon its employees, it is important that employees attend work as scheduled. Dependability, attendance, and punctuality are essential at all times. As such, employees are expected at work on all scheduled workdays and during all scheduled work hours and to report on time ready to work. Employees are expected to follow the sign-in procedures of their specific department or campus as described in their Staff/Department Handbook.

For non-exempt positions, it is the responsibility of each employee to accurately record time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties. This includes when they begin and end their work, as well as any split shifts or departure from their work location for personal reasons. Their supervisor must approve overtime work in advance. Moreover, an employee must notify their supervisor as far in advance as possible, if he/she expects to be late or absent. This policy applies for each day of his/her absence. Refer to the Staff Handbook for Attendance/Substitute Teachers procedures for each school.

If you must be absent it is your responsibility to notify your principal, supervisor or their designee immediately. An employee who fails to contact his/her supervisor for three consecutive days may be considered to have abandoned their job and may be terminated. Altering, falsifying, or tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee’s time record will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Of course, things will sometimes happen that will prevent you from showing up to work on time. For example, weather, a sick child, or car trouble may delay you. If you are going to be late, please call your supervisor or their designee. Please give this notice as far in advance as possible.

If you must miss a full day of work for reasons other than paid time off or other approved leave (such as leave to serve on a jury), you must notify your supervisor as far in advance as possible. Information about this Organization’s PTO and leave policies can be found in this Handbook Section 7.
If you are late for work or fail to appear without calling in as required by this policy or by other policies in this Handbook, you may face disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

9:8  Leaving Work Site

Employees must notify their supervisor or designee in the event that they must leave their work site for any reason. Allowing students to leave campus for any reason is prohibited. Proper sign-in and sign-out procedures must be followed at all times. Employees who fail to follow this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

9:9  Employee Appearance and Dress

The Schools of McKeel Academy expects all employees to maintain a neat, well-groomed appearance at all times. Employees should dress professionally at all times, not only to represent the organization but to also model appropriate, professional dress for the students.

Employees are expected to wear clothing appropriate for their work environment, for example, PE coaches would dress differently than office personnel or classroom teachers, and cafeteria workers have uniforms. Any employees whose dress is not within the lines of our professional dress code may be sent home to changed or disciplined accordingly. Each Campus Handbook contains TSMA Dress Code standards.

On certain occasions such as the last day of the week, administrators can designate “dress down day” in which staff is permitted to wear staff shirts or collared McKeel polo shirts with casual pants. Jeans and spirit or other t-shirts are not considered appropriate attire for staff, however, special occasions or work details may allow for an exception. Supervisor approval is required. Refer to the Campus Handbook for staff dress guidelines. Any questions should be directed to your supervisor.

9:10  Insubordination

This workplace operates on a system of mutual respect between supervisors and employees. Supervisors must treat their employees with dignity and understanding, and employees must show due regard for their supervisors’ authority. Insubordination occurs when employees unreasonably refuse to obey the orders or follow the instructions of their supervisors. It also occurs when employees, through their actions or words, show disrespect toward their supervisors. Insubordinate employees will face discipline, up to and including termination.

We understand, however, that there will be times when employees have valid reasons for refusing to do as their supervisor says. Perhaps the employee fears for his or her safety or the safety of others. Perhaps the employee believes that following instructions will violate the law or pose some other problem for this organization. Or maybe the employee thinks that there is a better way to accomplish a goal or perform a task. When these issues arise, we do not ask that employees blindly follow orders. Instead, we ask that employees explain the situation to their supervisor. If, after hearing the employee’s side, the supervisor continues to give the same order
or rule, the employee must either obey or use the complaint procedures described in Section 17 of this Handbook.

9:11 Progressive Discipline

The Organization has adopted a progressive discipline policy to identify and address employee and employment related problems. This policy applies to any and all employee conduct that the Organization, in its sole discretion, determines must be addressed by discipline. Of course, no discipline policy can be expected to address each and every situation requiring corrective action that may arise in the workplace. Therefore, the Organization takes a comprehensive approach regarding discipline and will attempt to consider all relevant factors before making decisions regarding discipline.

Most often, employee conduct that warrants discipline results from unacceptable behavior, poor performance or violation of the Organization’s policies, practices or procedures. However, discipline may be issued for conduct that falls outside of those identified areas. Equally important, the Organization need not resort to progressive discipline, but may take whatever action it deems necessary to address the issue at hand. This may mean that more or less severe discipline is imposed in a given situation. Likewise, some Organization policies like sexual harassment and attendance, contain specific discipline procedures.

Our progressive discipline policy and procedures may apply after more than one rule or infraction has occurred and results in a higher step in the discipline progression. That is, violations of different rules shall be considered the same as repeated violations of the same rule for purposes of progressive action.

Introductory employees are held to the highest standards for behavior and job performance. Progressive discipline is the exception rather than the rule for Introductory employees.

The Organization will normally adhere to the following progressive disciplinary process:

1. First Warning:
   *Verbal Caution/Verbal Warning:* An employee will be given a verbal caution when he or she engages in problematic behavior. As the first step in the progressive discipline policy, a verbal caution is meant to alert the employee that a problem may exist or that one has been identified, which must be addressed. Verbal cautions will be documented and maintained by your supervisor. A verbal warning is more serious than a verbal caution. An employee will be given a verbal warning when a problem is identified that justifies a verbal warning or the employee engages in unacceptable behavior during the period a verbal caution is in effect. Verbal warnings are documented and placed in the employee’s personnel file.

2. Second Warning:
   *Written Warning/Suspension/Decision Making Leave:* A written warning is more serious than a verbal warning. A written warning will be given when an employee engages in conduct that justifies a written warning or the employee engages in unacceptable behavior during the period that a verbal warning is in effect. Written warnings are maintained in an employee’s personnel
A suspension without pay is more serious than a written warning. An employee will be suspended when he or she engages in conduct that justifies a suspension or the employee engages in unacceptable behavior during the period that a written warning is in effect. An employee’s suspension will be documented and added to the employee’s personnel file. Generally following a suspension, and if undesirable behavior continues an employee will be reprimanded then sent home for the day on decision-making leave. This is intended to help the employee decide whether they should continue employment with the Organization. If the employee returns, the supervisor and employee will have a meeting to clearly outline the expectations of job performance in writing with signatures of understanding. The employee will be expected to work harder than before to follow the Organization’s guidelines and continue their employment without interruption. The other option with this leave is the employee may choose to resign because employment with the Organization is not a match.

3. Final Warning:

Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)/Termination: Based on the seriousness of the behavior it may be necessary to place the employee on a 90 day Performance Improvement Plan. This plan will clearly outline the behavior that needs to be addressed and goals for improvement. It will put in place mandatory meetings between supervisor and employee during the course of the PIP to discuss improvement or short comings. By the end of the 90 days a decision is made to continue employment, extend PIP or terminated based on performance. An employee will be terminated when he or she engages in conduct (ex: gross violation of policy and procedure) that justifies termination or does not correct the matter that resulted in less severe discipline.

In Accordance with Florida Statute 1012.31 each employee will be given a copy of all evaluative, consultative, disciplinary, complimentary and/or derogatory documentation to be placed in their personnel file. All such reports are to be delivered in person and the employee will sign to acknowledge receipt of the documentation. The signature does not signify acceptance of the document and the employee has the right to answer in writing evaluative, consultative, disciplinary, complimentary and/or derogatory documentation. These answers must be in writing and delivered in person to the immediate supervisor, who must sign for them. All original documentation is to be placed in the personnel file kept in the Human Resources Department. Employees may review their personnel file and request copies of any file documentation (at their expense) in the presence of the Administrator or designee responsible for the safekeeping of the personnel records. The designee responsible for the personnel records must also maintain a log of those persons reviewing the file each time it is reviewed. Employees may request in writing that all documentation that is consultative, disciplinary and derogatory be placed in a sealed envelope marked “not relevant” for disciplinary purposes and returned to the personnel file. This would be done only after three consecutive years of no similar or serious reprimands and/or problems on record. This provision does not apply to criminal charges or convictions.
Section 10
Health and Safety

10:1 Workplace Safety

The Schools of McKeel Academy takes employee safety very seriously. In order to provide a safe workplace for everyone, every employee must follow our safety rules:

- Horseplay, roughhousing and other physical acts that may endanger employees or students or cause accidents are prohibited.
- Employees must follow their supervisors’ safety instructions and emergency procedures as detailed in Staff/Department Handbooks.
- Employees in certain positions may be required to wear protective equipment, such as hairnets, safety glasses, or masks. Your supervisor will let you know if your position requires protective gear.
- Employees in certain positions may be prohibited from wearing dangling jewelry or apparel, or may be required to pull back or cover their hair, for safety purposes. Your supervisor will tell you if you fall into one of these categories.
- All equipment and machinery must be used properly. This means all guards, restraints, and other safety devices must be used at all times. Do not use equipment for other than its intended purpose.
- Employees must immediately report any workplace condition that they believe to be unsafe to their supervisor. The Organization will look into the matter promptly. Failure to report accidents, injuries or unsafe work conditions may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- Employees must immediately report any workplace accident or injury to their supervisor.

10:2 Workplace Security

It is every employee’s responsibility to help keep our workplace secure from unauthorized intruders. Every employee must comply with these security precautions. When you leave your classroom anytime, please do all of the following:

- Make sure your door is locked and surrounding doors are closed and locked.
- Make sure exterior doors are closed securely and locked. In the event an exterior door cannot be closed or is otherwise not secure please contact your immediate supervisor to apprise them of the situation.

After-hours access to the workplace is limited to those employees who need to work late or be on campus after hours. Employees must get prior approval if you are going to be working or otherwise in the workplace past our regular school or office hours. Many areas require the alarm systems to be disarmed before you can enter. For example if you are the first or only person entering an area of the campus, such as the gym or the cafeteria before or after regular school hours or on the weekend, it is very likely that you will set off an alarm. False alarms cause inconvenience to administration and often a significant fee from the responding law
enforcement agency. Setting off an alarm which results in a security call will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

When the last member of administration leaves the worksite, all other staff must also leave the building so alarms can be set and staff has a co-worker to safety walk to their cars. If you are the last to leave the workplace for the evening, you are responsible for doing all of the following: make sure that your work area is secure; set the alarm (unless the custodial staff is on location); make sure that all exterior doors are secure. If you have questions about any of these responsibilities, please talk to your supervisor.

10:3 Visitors

To provide for the safety and security of students, employees and the staff at each of our campuses, only authorized visitors are allowed in the workplace. Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards, protects against theft, ensures security of equipment, protects confidential information, safeguards employee and student welfare, and avoids potential distractions and disturbances.

Because of safety and security reasons, family and friends of employees are not allowed without authorization from the front office and must follow visitor sign-in procedures. Staff will be called to meet any visitor in the front office or reception area. Visitors must wear identification at all times when they are on our campuses. If an unauthorized individual is observed on any Organization premises, employees should immediately notify the principal or supervisor, or if necessary, escort the individual to the front office/reception area. If you have a visitor, you must accompany your visitor at all times and you are responsible for the conduct and safety of your visitor. Do not leave your visitor unattended. This includes escorting your visitor to and from the front office or entrance.

10:4 Volunteers

The Schools of McKeel Academy encourages volunteer participation by individuals and groups in our schools. A volunteer is any non-paid person who is approved to work with students in PreK through grade 12, during and after school hours. School volunteers can be family members, senior citizens, business and community members and elementary, secondary and college students. Volunteers can serve many roles including but not limited to: Instructional (tutoring, mentoring and curriculum enrichment for students such as community resource speakers), Support Service (chaperones, homeroom parents, assistants for classroom teachers or guidance counselors, in the clinic and school office), Fundraising and Volunteer Organizations (PTO, Band parents, Senior parents).

Note: The Board of Trustees for The Schools of McKeel Academy are also volunteers serving in a leadership role governing our Organization.
Procedures:

- To become an approved volunteer, an applicant would complete a volunteer application form available in the front office of each campus, and undergo a Florida Department of Law Enforcement screening. Volunteer applicants must meet FDLE Level 1 or Level 2 standards to become an approved volunteer. (Refer to Section 10:5 below and the Jessica Lunsford Act).
- Approved volunteers must be a positive role model and follow the Organization’s policies governing health, safety, manner, dress and appearance. Volunteers shall work under the direction and supervision of designated school staff.
- Volunteers will not administer medication to students, grade subjective tests, place the grade on tests, discipline students or be left in charge of a classroom in the absence of a teacher.
- Volunteers are subject to Florida Statute, which protects the rights of privacy with regard to student information and records.
- Administrators are responsible for providing any required orientation and training for volunteers.
- Volunteers may not bring children who are not registered in the school when they are serving in a volunteer role unless prior approval has been granted by the principal or supervisor.
- Volunteers must transport students for school-sponsored activities in approved vehicles. Volunteers who transport students in their own vehicles for school-sponsored activities do so at their own risk since the Organization’s liability coverage is only in force for vehicles owned, leased, or rented by The Schools of McKeel Academy.
- Florida Statute 39.202 mandates that persons who have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, abandoned or neglected by persons responsible for the child’s welfare shall report immediately such knowledge or suspicion to the central abuse hotline (1-800-96ABUSE) at the Department of Children and Families. Volunteers should report those concerns to the designated school staff member.
- Volunteer privileges can be revoked if any of the Organization’s policies are violated. Any concerns should be reported to your immediate supervisor.

10:5 Child Protection Policy - Jessica Lunsford Act

This policy puts forward the commitment of all McKeel schools to protect children and adolescents with whom it comes into contact related to educational programs and extra-curricular activities of the schools.

This Child Protection Policy is supported by the following guidelines on how it will be implemented.

- Screening of Staff and Volunteers
  - All staff will be screened and cleared in accordance with the Jessica Lunsford Act prior to beginning employment.
- All volunteers will be screened and cleared in accordance with our school system guidelines and the State of Florida prior to any contact with students.

- **Student Conferences**
  - Conferences/meetings with students on a one-on-one basis will not be held behind a closed door.
  - When privacy is an utmost concern, any staff/coach needing to meet with a student(s) behind a closed door must include at least one additional staff member in such meeting.

- **Field Trips**
  - Students must be supervised by at least two (2) staff members and/or Screened Volunteers at all times.
  - For overnight trips,
    - there will be at least two (2) students of the same gender in each room;
    - all rooms must open into inside corridors/hallways;
    - there will be at least one chaperone (staff person) of each gender when mixed gender students participate; if all students participating are of one gender then at least one of the chaperone(s) will be of the same gender;
    - all rooms will be checked in the evenings and awakened in the morning by a chaperone of the same gender as the students within the room(s).

- **Transport of students in private vehicles** shall be in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Staff Handbooks.

- **Restroom facilities**
  - There will be separate restrooms for students and staff
  - There will be separate restrooms for male and female students

### 10.6 What to Do in an Emergency

In case of an emergency, such as a fire, tornado or accident, your first priority should be your own safety and the safety of your students. In the event of an emergency causing serious injuries, *IMMEDIATELY DIAL 9-1-1* to alert police and rescue workers of the situation. Then notify your supervisor.

If you hear a fire alarm or in case of an emergency that requires evacuation, please proceed quickly and calmly to the emergency exits. The Schools of McKeel Academy will hold fire drills to familiarize everyone with the routes they should take. Remember that every second may count -- don't return to the workplace to retrieve personal belongings or work-related items. Once you have exited the building, head toward your designated area. Refer to your Staff/Department Handbook for additional information.

### 10.7 Emergency School Closings

At times, emergencies such as severe weather emergencies, fires, power failures or hurricanes can disrupt school operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of
a work facility. In the event that such an emergency occurs during non-working hours, local radio and/or television stations will be asked to broadcast notification of the closing. When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from scheduled work may be paid. Employees in essential operations may be asked to work on a day when operations are officially closed. In these circumstances, employees who work will receive regular pay.

10.8 Wellness

The Schools of McKeel Academy is committed to providing an environment that promotes learning and lifelong wellness practices. It is believed that healthy staff can more effectively perform their assigned duties and model appropriate wellness behaviors for students. This policy encourages staff, students, and parents to pursue a lifestyle consistent with wellness. The complete Wellness Policy is posted on the McKeel Schools website.

This policy includes nutrition education and physical education included in the curriculum to meet Sunshine State Standards and Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. Integration in the classroom is encouraged to reinforce lifelong habits of a healthy lifestyle. Foodservice staff will support nutrition education by creating a learning environment as students apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills taught in the classroom when making choices at mealtime. Families and staff will be provided with information to help them teach their children about health and nutrition in providing nutritious meals for their families.

The schools will promote healthy snacks to be served as refreshments or at parties and celebrations during the school day. Teachers will be provided with alternative ideas for rewards and incentives to reduce the use of food as rewards and incentives in the classroom. The school will encourage sponsors of clubs and other group activities to include healthy food and beverage choices at school-based or extracurricular events. Staff will be encouraged to incorporate good nutritional practices and exercise into their lives.

Each school provides a physical education program that includes the development of positive attitudes toward wellness and physical activity, safety guidelines, responsible behavior in physical activity settings, appreciation for a variety of physical activities, and an understanding of the relationship between physical activity and wellness. Physical education includes the instruction of individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage life-long physical activity. Information will be provided to families to help them incorporate physical activity into their student’s lives. Students enrolled at McKeel Academy of Technology will have the opportunity and be encouraged to participate in the high school sports program pursuant to Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA).

Classrooms and other campus locations are equipped with automatic hand sanitizers for student and staff use. Students and staff are reminded to use the hand sanitizer before lunch and after other activities.

The Principal or Wellness Committee designee at each school ensures compliance with the established wellness policy. The Wellness Committee reports to The Schools of McKeel.
Academy Board of Trustees on an annual basis. Cafeteria menu creation and product selection shall utilize input from student, parent, staff and community advisory groups twice during the school year. To volunteer for Wellness Committee please contact Joyce Powell.

10:9 Tobacco-Free Environment

For the health, comfort, and safety of our employees and students, tobacco use is not allowed on Organization property.

Our Organization encourages staff to quit using tobacco products, including cigarettes, dip or snuff.

10:10 Violence In The Workplace

We will not tolerate violence in the workplace. Violence includes physical altercations, coercion, pushing or shoving, horseplay, intimidation, stalking, and threats of violence. Any comments about violence will be taken seriously—and may result in your termination. Please do not joke or make offhand remarks about violence.

No Weapons
No weapons are allowed in our workplaces or on our school grounds. This includes employees with a concealed weapons permit. Weapons include firearms, knives, swords, electronic devices, brass knuckles, martial arts equipment, clubs or bats, and explosives. If your work requires you to use an item that might qualify as a weapon, you must receive authorization from your supervisor to bring that item to work or use it in the workplace. Any employee found with an unauthorized weapon in the workplace will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination. Florida Statute 790.115

What to Do in Case of Violence
If you observe an incident or threat of violence that is immediate and serious, IMMEDIATELY DIAL 9-1-1 and report it to the police. If the incident or threat does not appear to require immediate police intervention, please contact your immediate supervisor and report it as soon as possible, using the Organization's complaint procedure. All complaints will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken. You will not face retaliation for making a complaint.

10:11 Domestic Violence

If you have been threatened or are concerned about violence or abuse by a current or former spouse, intimate partner, or other family member, we encourage you to report it to Human Resource Department. We will keep this information as confidential as possible. The Organization will not discriminate against employees who are victims of domestic violence.

Once you make a report, the Organization will decide what steps to take for your safety and the safety of other employees. The Organization may ask you to provide copies of any restraining
orders or other legal papers you have filed against the abuser, as well as a picture of the abuser, for security purposes.

**Domestic Violence Leave**

Employees who have worked for the Organization for three months or longer may be eligible for up to three days of unpaid leave under Florida's Domestic Violence Leave Law. Employees may be eligible for Domestic Violence Leave for one or more of the following reasons or activities:

* Seeking an injunction for protection against domestic violence or repeat violence, or sexual violence;

* Obtaining medical care or mental health counseling or both for the Employee or a family or household member to address injuries resulting from domestic violence;

* Obtaining services from victims services organizations such as a domestic violence shelter or rape crisis center;

* Making the Employee's home secure from the perpetrator of domestic violence or finding a new home to escape the perpetrator;

* Seeking legal assistance to address issues arising from domestic violence or attending or preparing for court related proceedings arising from the act of domestic violence.

Employees are required to provide appropriate (at least three days) advance notice unless prevented from doing so because of imminent danger to the health or safety of the employee or a family member. Domestic Violence Leave is unpaid; however, employees may elect to use any available vacation or sick time.

Employees must submit a request for the time off, including the date(s) and one or more of the reasons or activities listed above. The Organization will take all reasonable steps to keep confidential all information relating to leaves for domestic violence. You will not be penalized, discriminated or retaliated against for requesting Domestic Violence Leave in accordance with this policy.

We understand that domestic violence can affect performance and attendance. If you need time off to ensure your own safety, appear in court, or handle other matters relating to domestic violence, please notify your supervisor.
Section 11
Employee Privacy

11:1 Organization Property Searches

Employees do not have a right to privacy in their workspaces or in any other property belonging to the Organization. The Organization reserves the right to search Organization property at any time, without warning, to ensure compliance with our policies, including those that cover employee safety, workplace violence, harassment, theft, drug and alcohol use, and possession of prohibited items. Organization property includes, but is not limited to, lockers, desks, file cabinets, storage areas, laptops and workspaces. If you use a lock on any item of Organization property (for example a file cabinet or desk drawer) or password locked Organization-issued laptop or cell phone, you must give a copy of the key or combination or password to your immediate supervisor.

The Organization may also search personal property brought onto the Organization’s property including, but not limited to: toolboxes, briefcases, backpacks, purses and bags.
Section 12
Technology
(Email, Campus Network, McKeel Devices)

One of the goals of The Schools of McKeel Academy (TMSA) is to be a national leader in educating students through applied technology. To facilitate this goal, we strive to provide our employees with the most advanced and relevant technology tools; moreover, each employee is encouraged to obtain, develop and utilize new technology skills that can enhance the learning experience of our students.

This section will establish unique Terms of Use (TOU) for organization Email system, Data Networks and Devices to aid in defining the environment under which growth in the use and application of technology should occur. Every employee of TSMA is responsible for using organization technology in accordance with each respective TOU. In keeping with the spirit of academic freedom, these TOU are permissive wherever possible and restrictive wherever necessary. Employees should direct questions regarding the implementation or enforcement of these TOU to their supervisor or the Director of Schools.

12:1 Organization Email – Terms of Use

(1) SCOPE AND DEFINITION: The Schools of McKeel Academy (TSMA) establishes this Terms of Use (TOU) section for all employees that utilize the mckeelschools.com Email system.

(2) PRIVACY: TSMA has the right to access organization email at any time for any reason. Moreover, emails records made or received by the email system in the course of official business are Public Records and are available for inspection, unless specifically exempted by the Florida Legislature.

(3) DATA INTEGRITY: TSMA is not responsible for the availability or the safeguarding of user data. It is the sole responsibility of the user to maintain adequate backups and protections against data loss.

(4) UNACCEPTABLE USE: TSMA expects that its employees use their best professional judgment when utilizing the email system. Unacceptable uses of the email system includes, but is not limited to:
   a. promotion of religious views or activities,
   b. direct or indirect coercion to pay, lend or contribute to any party committee, organization, agency, person, etc. for political purposes,
   c. participation in any political campaign for an elective office,
   d. violations of HIPAA and FERPA requirements, or
   e. personal use.

(5) ENFORCEMENT: Violations of the TOU may result in revocation of email access. Employees are also subject to penalties as defined in other sections of this handbook. Additionally, illegal activities may result in prosecution in accordance with State and Federal law.
12:2 Organization Data Network Terms of Use

(1) SCOPE AND DEFINITION: The Schools of McKeel Academy (TSMA) establishes this Terms of Use (TOU) section for all employees that utilize the infrastructure and services that create the wired and wireless data networks at the various sites of TSMA.

(2) PRIVACY: While the Technology Department of TSMA strives to provide a degree of security, no data network can guarantee the privacy of data transmissions. Additionally, TSMA’s networks employ content filtering and network monitoring systems that enable the tracking of the online activities of its users. Users should not expect that his or her network activities are private.

(3) ACCESS: TSMA is under no obligation to provide network access; as such, this TOU does not imply any warranty or guarantee of service. TSMA reserves the right to deny any employee and/or device access to the networks at any time for any reason.

(4) DATA INTEGRITY: TSMA is not responsible for the availability or the safeguarding of user data. It is the sole responsibility of the user to maintain adequate backups and protections against data loss. Additionally, while the Technology Department strives to provide a secure network environment, they cannot guarantee the integrity of your data.

(5) UNACCEPTABLE USE: Unacceptable uses of the networks include, but are not limited to:
   a. willful participation in illegal transmission of copyrighted material,
   b. willful participation in the transmission of pornography,
   c. intentionally accessing or attempting to access real-money gambling,
   d. intentionally obtaining or attempting to obtain unauthorized access to devices or accounts,
   e. utilizing network resources to act for personal financial gain or profit, or
   f. providing an unauthorized network service.

(6) ENFORCEMENT: Violations of the TOU may result in revocation of network access. Employees are also subject to penalties as defined in other sections of this handbook. Additionally, illegal activities may result in prosecution in accordance with State and Federal law.

(7) INDEMNITY: Employees agree to release, indemnify and hold harmless TSMA and any of its employees and trustees from all liabilities, claims, damages, costs and expenses relating to or arising out of the network services or the use of such services.

(8) DISCLOSURE: In the event that conditions or circumstances not covered by the specific policies of this TOU occur, the administration and Technology Department of TSMA will
make decisions or pursue courses of actions to ensure the well-being of students, employees and the school-system. TSMA reserves the right to modify or change these terms at any time.

12:3 Organization Owned/Leased Device Terms of Use

(1) SCOPE AND DEFINITION: The Schools of McKeel Academy (TSMA) establishes this Terms of Use (TOU) section for all employees that utilize technology equipment purchased by TSMA, hereafter referred to as “devices”.

(2) PRIVACY: TSMA is under no obligation to ensure the privacy of device users. In fact, many of TSMA’s devices employ remote monitoring systems that enable the tracking of its user’s activities. Users should not expect that his or her activities are private on Organization-owned devices.

(3) ACCESS: TSMA is under no obligation to provide devices; as such, this TOU does not imply any guarantee of access to devices. TSMA reserves the right to deny any employee access to devices at any time for any reason.

(4) DATA INTEGRITY: TSMA is not responsible for the availability or the safeguarding of user data. It is the sole responsibility of the user to maintain adequate backups and protections against data loss.
   a. intentionally modifying or removing antivirus, security and/or management software, or
   b. negligence.

(5) ENFORCEMENT: Violations of the TOU may result in revocation of device access. Employees are also subject to penalties as defined in other sections of this handbook. Additionally, illegal activities may result in prosecution in accordance with State and Federal law.

(6) INDEMNITY: Employees agree to release, indemnify and hold harmless TSMA and any of its employees and trustees from all liabilities, claims, damages, costs and expenses relating to or arising out of the use of Organization-owned devices.

(7) DISCLOSURE: In the event that conditions or circumstances not covered by the specific policies of this TOU occur, the administration and Technology Department of TSMA will make decisions or pursue courses of actions to ensure the well-being of students, employees and the school-system. TSMA reserves the right to modify or change these terms at any time.

(8) UNACCEPTABLE USE: Unacceptable uses of the devices include, but are not limited to:
   a. unauthorized installation or modification of device operating systems,
Section 13
Employee Records

13:1 Your Personnel File and Confidentiality

The Schools of McKeel Academy maintains a personnel file on each employee. The purpose of this file is to allow us to make decisions and take actions that are personally important to you, including notifying your family in case of an emergency, tax filing status, deductions/supplements for payroll as well as performance appraisals and work related history.

We do not keep medical records or work eligibility forms in your personnel file. Those are kept in separate locked cabinets. Your personnel file is kept in the Human Resources Department (Custodian) of the business office. If you have any questions about your personnel file you may email the HR Department for assistance.

Personnel/employee records are processed and maintained in the Human Resources Department (Custodian). All personnel files are public records and as such, are available for public inspection. Personnel files may be reviewed by appointment only. It is the responsibility of the Custodian of the records to maintain a log of who schedules time to view personnel files.

Employees, whose addresses and phone numbers are exempt from public disclosure under Chapter 119 of Florida Statues, should notify Human Resources in writing.

13:2 Changes in Personal Information

Human Resources must be notified of any changes in personal information such as a name change. A new social security card is required for name changes to ensure payroll records and Social Security Administration records match. Because we use the information in your personnel file to take actions on your behalf, it is important that the information in that file be accurate.

Information regarding changes in personal status such as in address, emergency contacts, marital status, beneficiary for life insurance, and/or changes in number of dependents should be updated through the ADP payroll system. Questions for accessing ADP should be directed to the Payroll and Benefits Specialist (page 8).

For tracking purposes it is important that all changes to the personnel file be in written documented form. All changes to position status, title, location and earnings require a Personnel Action Form (PAF) located on the McKeel website under Human Resources. All PAF forms include the signature of your supervisor before being submitted to the Human Resources department.
13:3 Work Eligibility Records

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, all newly hired employees, (FT, PT or OPS) as a condition of employment must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. We must keep records related to that proof, including an original signed copy of the US Dept. of Justice INS Form I-9 with documentation verification. These forms are confidential. We do not keep them in your personnel file. If you would like more information about your I-9 Form, contact Human Resources. (See also Section 2:7 of this Handbook)

13:4 Medical Records

We understand the particularly sensitive nature of an employee's medical records, so we do not place any such records in the employee's personnel file. We keep all medical records in a separate and secure place. If you have any questions about the storage of your medical records or about inspecting your medical records, contact Human Resources.

13:5 HIPAA - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996

- Federal Law - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)
- Purpose - Health Insurance Reform
- Provides Portability for Employees and their families when they change or lose their jobs
- Provides Security and Privacy for Health Data
- Provides Criminal & Civil Penalties for Violations

Compliance
To the extent required by law, The Schools of McKeel Academy will comply with HIPAA.

Privacy - Protected Health Information (PHI)
- PHI is confidential health information that contains student or employee “identifiers” in any form: electronic, paper-based or oral.
- Individually Identifiable Health Information (IIHI) is information about the physical or mental health of an individual that identifies or can reasonably identify the individual, i.e. name, social security number, date of birth, etc.
- PHI shall not be shared or discussed with persons not having appropriate authority to receive confidential information either at work or away from work.
- Employee records and information that include PHI are confidential.
- Student records and information that include PHI are confidential.
- Student records and information are confidential and are covered by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- If in doubt, do not discuss or distribute any PHI or confidential (student) records and information to third parties. Ask your Human Resources before making any decisions to discuss
or disclose sensitive information.

**Employee Rights**
- Notice of Privacy Practices
- Right to Restrict Use and Disclosure of PHI
- Right of Access / Right to Inspect and Copy your PHI
- Right to Amend PHI
- Right to file Complaints with The Schools of McKeel Academy and/or the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services.

**Disclosures and Violations**
- Penalties for disclosure may include fines of $50,000 - $250,000 and imprisonment for up to 10 years.
- Penalties for noncompliance may include fines up to $1,000 per occurrence: maximum fines up to $25,000 per year.
- Violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In addition, violations may be prosecuted under state and/or federal law.
Section 14

Policy for Complying with The Florida Workers’ Compensation Drug-Free Workplace Act

I. PURPOSE

As a part of its commitment to safeguard the health of its employees, to provide a safe place for its employees to work, and to promote a drug-free community, this Organization has established this policy on the use or abuse of alcohol and drugs by its employees. Substance abuse, while at work or otherwise, seriously endangers the safety of employees, as well as the general public, and creates a variety of workplace problems, including increased injuries on the job, increased absenteeism, increased health care and benefit costs, increased theft, decreased morale, decreased productivity, and a decline in the quality of services provided. Continuing research and practical experience have proven that even limited quantities of narcotics, abused prescription drugs, or alcohol can impair your reflexes and judgment. For these reasons, we have adopted a policy that all employees must report to work completely free from the presence of drugs and the effects of alcohol.

We are implementing this policy pursuant to the Drug-Free Workplace program under the Florida Workers’ Compensation Act (Section 440.102, Florida Statutes). This law provides that an employee who is injured in the course and scope of his employment and who either tests positive on a drug or alcohol test or who refuses to be tested, forfeits his eligibility for Workers’ Compensation medical and indemnity benefits.

This policy should not be considered as contractual in nature. It represents the Organization’s current position on dealing with the serious problem of drugs and alcohol in the workplace and is subject to change at the Organization’s sole discretion. Questions concerning this policy should be directed to your Supervisor.

II. SCOPE

All current and future applicants and employees are covered by this policy and, as a condition of employment, are required to abide by the terms of this policy. Because of State and Federal laws and regulations, certain employees may be subject to additional requirements.

III. DEFINITIONS

The definitions set forth in the Florida Workers’ Compensation Drug Testing Rule will apply to the terms used in this policy.

Updated 07/2016
IV. ALCOHOL USE PROHIBITIONS

A. All employees are prohibited from distributing, dispensing, possessing, using or being impaired, intoxicated, or under the influence of alcohol while at work, on duty, or while operating an Organization vehicle.

B. Off-duty abuse of alcohol which adversely affects an employee's job performance, or which can be expected to cause harm to the Organization's image or relationship with other employees or the public, is prohibited.

C. For the purpose of this policy, an employee is presumed to be impaired, intoxicated, or under the influence of alcohol if a blood test or other scientifically acceptable testing procedure shows that the employee has a level of at least .02% g/DL blood alcohol in his/her system at the time of testing.

D. An employee who is perceived to be under the influence of alcohol will be removed immediately from the workplace and may be evaluated by medical personnel, if reasonably available. The Organization will take further action based on medical information, work history, and other relevant factors. The determination of what action is appropriate in each case rests solely with the Organization.

E. Employees arrested for an alcohol-related incident must immediately notify their supervisor if the incident occurs:

1. During scheduled working hours.

2. While operating an Organization vehicle on Organization or personal business.

3. While operating a personal vehicle on Organization business.

Failure to notify an appropriate Organization official as described above may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

V. DRUG USE PROHIBITIONS

A. All employees are prohibited from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, or using illegal drugs or other unauthorized or mind-altering or intoxicating substances while on Organization property (including parking areas and grounds), or while otherwise performing Organization duties away from Organization. Included within this prohibition are lawful controlled substances, which have been illegally or improperly obtained. Employees are also prohibited
from having any such illegal or unauthorized controlled substances in their systems while at work, and from having excessive amounts of otherwise lawful controlled substances in their systems.

B. For the purpose of this policy, an employee is presumed to be impaired by drugs if results of a urine test or other accepted testing procedure are positive for the presence of one or more of the illegal substances for which the Organization will test.

C. The proper use of medication prescribed by your physician is not prohibited; however, we do prohibit the misuse of prescribed medications. Prescription drugs may also affect the safety of the employee, fellow employees, or members of the public. Therefore, any employee who is taking any prescription drug, which might impair safety, performance, or any motor functions must advise his/her supervisor before reporting to work under such medication. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. It is the employee’s responsibility to determine from his/her physician whether a prescribed drug may impair job performance. If the Organization determines that such use does not pose a safety risk, the employee will be permitted to work. If such use impairs the employee’s ability to safely or effectively perform his or her job, the Organization may, at its sole discretion, temporarily reassign the employee or grant a leave of absence during the period of treatment. Improper use of “prescription drugs” is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Prescription medication must be kept in its original container if such medication is taken during working hours or on Organization property.

D. It shall be the responsibility of each employee who observes or has knowledge of another employee in a condition which impairs the employee to perform their job duties, or who presents a hazard to the safety and welfare of others, or is otherwise in violation of this policy, to promptly report that fact to their immediate supervisor.

VI. TESTING

The Organization shall conduct drug tests in the following circumstances:

A. Application for Employment

1. All job applicants will be tested for the presence of illegal drugs as a part of the application process.

2. Any job applicant who refuses to submit to drug testing, refuses to sign a consent form, fails to appear for testing, tampers with the test, or fails to pass the pre-employment drug test will be ineligible for hire. Such an
individual may not reapply for employment with the School for at least one (1) year from the date of the drug test.

B. Reasonable Suspicion

1. Employees must submit to a drug test if the School has reasonable suspicion that they have violated any of the rules set forth in this policy. "Reasonable suspicion" may arise from, among other factors:

   a. Direct observation of drug use or of the physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug.

   b. Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior while at work or a significant deterioration in work performance.

   c. Reports of drug use, provided by a reliable and credible source.

   d. Evidence that an individual has tampered with a drug test during his employment with the School.

   e. Information that an employee has caused, or contributed to, or been involved in a workplace accident.

   f. Evidence that an employee has used, possessed, sold, solicited, or transferred drugs while working or while on School premises or while operating School vehicles, machinery, or equipment.

   g. Attendance or behavioral changes.

C. Routine Fitness for Duty

An employee will submit to a drug test if the test is conducted as part of a routinely scheduled employee fitness-for-duty medical examination that is part of the School’s established policy or that is scheduled routinely for all members of an employment classification or group.

D. Follow-up Testing

If the employee in the course of employment enters an Employee Assistance Program for drug related problems, or an alcohol and drug rehabilitation program, the employer must require the employee to submit to a drug testing as a follow up to such program, unless the employee voluntarily entered the program. In those cases, the employer has the option to not require follow up testing. If follow up testing is required, it must be conducted at least once a year for a two-year period, after completion of the program.
Advance notice of a follow up testing date MUST not be given to the employee to be tested.

E. Additional Testing

Additional testing may also be conducted as required by applicable state or federal laws, rules, or regulations or as deemed necessary by the School.

VII. PRIOR TO TESTING

A. The School will test for the following drugs:

*Amphetamines (Binhetamine, Desoxyn, Dexedrine)*
*Cannabinoids (marijuana, hashish, hash, hash oil, pot, joint, roach, spliff, grass, weed, reefer)*
*Cocaine (coke, blow, nose candy, snow, flake, crack)*
*Phencyclidine (PCP, angel dust, hog)*
*Opiates (opium, dover’s powder, paregoric, parepectolin)*

B. Job applicants required to submit to drug testing and employees required to submit to drug and alcohol testing must sign a consent agreement prior to testing.

C. Because of the potential adverse consequences of positive test results on employees, the School will employ a very accurate testing program. All samples will be analyzed by a highly qualified independent laboratory which has been selected by the School and approved by the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration. (AHCA)

D. Applicants and employees will be given an opportunity prior to and after testing to provide any information they consider relevant to the test, including listing all drugs they have taken recently, including prescribed drugs, and to explain the circumstances of the use of those drugs. Applicants and employees will also be provided with a notice of the most common medications by brand name or common name, as well as the chemical name, which may alter or affect a drug test.

E. An employee injured at the workplace and required to be tested will be taken to a medical facility for immediate treatment of injury. If the injured employee is not at a designated collection site, the employee will be transported to one as soon as it is medically feasible and specimens will be obtained. If it is not medically feasible to move the injured employee, specimens will be obtained at the treating facility and transported to an approved testing laboratory.
F. No specimens will be taken prior to the administration of emergency medical care. Once this condition has been satisfied, an injured employee must release to the employer the result of any tests conducted for the purpose of showing the presence of alcohol or drugs in his/her system.

G. Body Specimens
Blood/Urine/Breath will be used for the initial test for all drugs except alcohol and for the confirmation of all drugs except alcohol. Blood will be used as the initial and confirmation test for alcohol.

H. Cost of Testing
The School will pay the cost of initial and confirmation drug test, which it requires of employees and job applicants. An employee or job applicant will pay the cost of any additional drug tests not required by the School.

VIII. PROCEDURE

A. The HR Department will coordinate all testing requests. Questions regarding this policy or requests for approval for testing should be directed to the HR Department.

B. Drug testing shall be conducted in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Collection, transportation, and storage of samples shall be conducted with due regard to the privacy of the individual providing the sample and in a manner reasonably calculated to prevent substitution or contamination of the sample. The School shall use chain-of-custody procedures as established by the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA).

2. Each specimen container shall be labeled.

3. Employees and applicants shall be given a form in which they may provide any information they consider relevant to the test, including identification of currently or recently used prescription or non-prescription medications or other relevant medical information.

4. Tests shall be conducted by a licensed laboratory.

5. Specimens may be taken or collected by a physician, a physician assistant, a licensed practical nurse, a nurse practitioner, or certified paramedic who is present at the scene of an accident for the purpose of rendering emergency medical service or treatment or a qualified person employed by a licensed laboratory.
6. Specimens yielding a positive confirmed result shall be preserved by the licensed laboratory:

a.) for at least 210 days after the results are mailed or otherwise delivered to the medical review officer or

b.) if the employee or job applicant undertakes an administrative or legal challenge to the test result, until the case or administrative appeal is settled.

c.) during the 180-day period after written notification of a positive test result, the employee or job applicant who provided the sample may obtain a portion of the sample for retesting by another laboratory, licensed and approved by the Agency for Health Care Administration. The cost of such testing will be paid by the employee or the applicant. The laboratory which performed the original test and confirmation is responsible for the transfer of the sample and for the integrity of the chain of custody during the transfer.

d.) within five (5) working days after receipt of a positive confirmed test result from the medical review officer, the School shall notify the employee or job applicant in writing of the result, its consequences and the employee's or job applicant's options.

e.) The School shall provide to the employee or applicant a copy of the test results upon request.

f.) within five (5) working days after receiving notice of a positive confirmed test result, the employee or job applicant may submit information to the School in order to contest the result or to explain why the results do not constitute a violation of this policy. If the challenge or explanation is unsatisfactory, the School shall provide an explanation as to why the employee's or job applicant's explanation is unsatisfactory, along with a report of the positive test results. All such documentation shall be kept confidential and retained for one year.

C. Employee Protection

1. The drug testing laboratory will not disclose any information concerning the health or mental condition of the tested employee.

2. The School will not request or receive from the testing facility any information concerning the personal health, habit or condition of the employee including, but not limited to, the presence or absence of HIV antibodies in the body fluids.
3. The School will not discharge, discipline, refuse to hire, discriminate against, or request or require rehabilitation of an employee or job applicant on the sole basis of a positive test result that has not been verified by a confirmation test and by a medical review officer.

4. The School shall not discharge, discipline, or discriminate against an employee solely upon the employee’s voluntarily seeking treatment for a drug-related problem if the employee has not previously tested positive for drug use, entered an Employee Assistance Program for drug-related problems, or entered an alcohol and drug rehabilitation program. An employee who voluntarily comes forward before being confronted, tested, or involved in a drug-related incident may be provided rehabilitative opportunities, leave, or an opportunity to resign as determined by management in consultation with a School coordinating physician.

5. The School shall promptly detail in writing the circumstances that formed the basis of a determination of reasonable suspicion and shall provide this documentation to the employee upon request. The documentation shall be kept confidential and shall be retained by the School for at one (1) year.

IX. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

A. In the case of a first-time violation of the School’s policy, including a positive drug or alcohol test result, the employee will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. Refusal to submit to testing under this policy will result in forfeiture of eligibility for all medical and indemnity benefits and possible termination or other disciplinary action.

B. The School may, at its sole discretion, suspend employees without pay under this policy pending the results of a drug test or investigation.

C. Any employee having a second positive drug test during his/her employment with the School will be discharged.

D. Employees who are not immediately terminated for testing positive or for some other violation of the policy may, at the School’s sole discretion, be placed on probation and required to execute an agreement acknowledging:

1. That they tested positive or otherwise violated the policy; and,

2. That in exchange for the School not terminating them for this instance of testing positive or otherwise violating the policy, they agree to undergo rehabilitation, counseling or other activities prescribed by the School’s coordination physician in conjunction with management; to undergo periodic
unannounced screening for a set period; and be subject to termination for any future violation of the policy.

3. Employees who test positive, admit to drug or alcohol use or related misconduct, or voluntarily seek assistance, and are not terminated, will not be returned to work or continue working until they have been evaluated by a School coordinating physician in conjunction with the administration to determine if they can safely return to work.

X. INVESTIGATION/SEARCHES

A. Where a supervisor has reasonable suspicion that an employee has violated the substance abuse policy, the supervisor may inspect vehicles, lockers, work areas, desks, purses, briefcases, toolboxes and other locations or belongings without prior notice, in order to ensure a work environment free of prohibited substances. An employee may be asked to be present and remove a personal lock. Where the employee is not present or refuses to remove a personal lock, the School may do so for him/her, and compensate the employee for the lock. Any such searches will be coordinated with a representative of administration.

B. Individuals may be requested to display personal property for visual inspection upon School request. Failure to consent to a search or display personal property for visual inspection will be grounds for discharge or denial of access to School premises.

C. Individuals may be required to empty their pockets, but under no circumstances will an employee be required to remove articles of clothing or be physically searched.

D. Employees will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for refusing to cooperate with searches or investigations.

XI. ARREST OR CONVICTION FOR DRUG-RELATED CRIME

A. If an employee is arrested for or convicted of a drug-related crime; the School will investigate the circumstance and direct the implementation of drug-testing procedure if cause is established by the investigation. In most cases, an arrest for a drug-related crime constitutes reasonable suspicion of drug use under this policy. The following procedures will apply:

1. During investigation, an employee may, at the School’s discretion, be placed on leave without pay. After the investigation is completed, the leave may be converted to a suspension or the employee may be reinstated depending upon the facts and circumstances.
2. If convicted of a drug-related crime, an employee will be terminated.

3. If an employee has been suspended and the case has been dismissed or otherwise disposed of, the School will make a determination as to whether to authorize the employee's return to work based on its investigation. If the employee is authorized to return to work, the employee must agree in writing to unannounced, periodic testing for a period of up to 2 years.

4. Because of the seriousness of such situations, the School reserves the right to alter or change its policy or decision on a given situation depending upon its investigation and the totality of the circumstances.

B. As a condition of employment, all personnel shall self-report in writing to the Organization within forty-eight (48) hours of any arrests, citations or charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance or charges involving Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Battery, Possession (includes Email transmissions) or Sale of Pornography Involving Minors and Sexual Relations with Students. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt nor shall such notice be admissible for any purpose in any proceeding, civil or criminal, administrative or judicial.

XII. CONFIDENTIALITY

A. All information received by the Organization through drug testing is confidential and may not be used or received in evidence, obtained in discovery, or disclosed in any public or private proceedings, except:

1. Confidential information may be released pursuant to a written consent form signed voluntarily by the person tested.

2. Confidential information may be released if such release is compelled by a hearing officer or a court of competent jurisdiction pursuant to an appeal taken under Florida Statute 440.102.

3. Confidential information may be released to a professional or occupational licensing board in a related disciplinary proceeding.

4. The Organization, agents of Organization, or laboratories conducting drug tests may have access to employee drug test information when consulting with legal counsel in connection with actions brought under or related to Florida Statute 440.102 or when the information is relevant to the School's defense in a civil or administrative matter.

B. Information on drug test results shall not be released or used in any criminal proceedings against the employee or applicant.
Section 15
Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest

15:1 Confidentiality

The protection of confidential business information is vital to the interests and the success of The Schools of McKeel Academy. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- Compensation Data
- Student Demographics
- Labor Relations Strategies
- Technological Prototypes
- Student Health Records
- Student Addresses
- Student Lists
- Financial Information
- Pending Projects and Proposals
- Curriculum Development
- Student Records

The sharing of confidential information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and legal action.

15:2 Conflicts of Interest

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes only the framework within which The Schools of McKeel Academy wishes the business to operate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Contact your supervisor for more information or questions about conflicts of interest.

Transactions with outside firms must be conducted within a framework established and controlled by the Director and Senior Management-level administration of The Schools of McKeel Academy. Business dealings with outside firms should not result in unusual gains for those firms. Unusual gain refers to bribes, product bonuses, special fringe benefits, unusual price breaks, and other windfalls designed to ultimately benefit the employer, the employee, or both. Promotional plans that could be interpreted to involve unusual gain require specific Director and Senior Management level approval.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of The Schools of McKeel Academy business dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, it is imperative that they disclose to the Organization as soon as possible the existence of
any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may result not only in cases where an employee or relative has a significant ownership in a firm with which the Organization does business, but also when an employee or relative receives any kickback, bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving the Organization. The receipt of such benefit are strictly prohibited.

15:3 Outside Employment

Employees may hold outside jobs as long as they meet the performance standards of their job with the Organization. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to Organization’s scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements.

If the Organization determines that an employee’s outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the requirements of their job or the Organization as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he/she wishes to remain with The Schools of McKeel Academy.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside the Organization for materials produced or services rendered while performing their jobs unless authorized by the McKeel Board of Trustees.
Section 16
Discrimination and Harassment

16:1 Our Commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity

Our Organization is strongly committed to providing equal employment opportunity for all employees and all applicants for employment. For us, this is the only acceptable way to do business.

All employment decisions at our Organization -- including those relating to hiring, promotion, transfers, benefits, compensation, placement, and termination -- will be made without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, genetic information, disability, age or marital status.

Any employee or applicant who believes that he or she has been discriminated against in violation of this policy should immediately file a complaint with your immediate supervisor, as explained in our Grievance Policy (Section 17). We encourage you to come forward if you have suffered or witnessed what you believe to be discrimination -- we cannot solve the problem until you let us know about it. The Organization will not retaliate, or allow retaliation, against any employee or applicant who complains of discrimination, assists in an investigation of possible discrimination, or files an administrative charge or lawsuit alleging discrimination. The Organization will not tolerate discrimination against any employee or applicant. We will take immediate and appropriate disciplinary action against any employee who violates this policy.

Managers are required to report any discriminatory conduct or incidents, as described in our Grievance Procedures in Section 17.

16:2 Harassment Will Not Be Tolerated – Anti-Harassment Policy

The Schools of McKeel Academy is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, The Schools of McKeel Academy expects that all relationships will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment among persons in the workplace, including employees, applicants for employment, students, volunteers and visitors.

Definitions of Harassment

a. Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: (i) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's
employment; (ii) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (iii) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include, but are not limited to: unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, catcalls or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display or circulation in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures (including through email); and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

b. Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her genetic information, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, [citizenship status, marital status, creed, genetic predisposition or carrier status, sexual orientation] or any other characteristic protected by law or that of his/her relatives, friends or associates, and that: (i) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; (ii) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; or (iii) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to: epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes and display or circulation in the workplace of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group (including through Email).

Bullying

Bullying is a form of harassment and will not be tolerated. The Schools of McKeel Academy is committed to an environment for all students, staff, visitors and vendors that is free from bullying and harassment. All employees of The Schools of McKeel Academy are expected to model and support a school culture that promotes positive interactions and respect for others. Bullying is more specifically addressed in the Code of Student Conduct, Section 6.07 and is defined as follows:

- Aggressive behavior or intentional harm-doing
- Can be physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual
- Is carried out repeatedly over time
- Occurs within an interpersonal relationship characterized by an imbalance of power

Staff members who witness or become aware of bullying will immediately intervene in the following manner:
Establish the safety of the victim of bullying
Report to administration

**Individuals and Conduct Covered**

These policies apply to all applicants, employees and students and prohibit harassment, discrimination and retaliation whether engaged in by fellow employees, by a supervisor or manager or by someone not directly connected to The Schools of McKeel Academy (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant or visitor).

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during school-sponsored trips, Organization or board meetings and Organization-related social events.

**Retaliation Is Prohibited**

The Schools of McKeel Academy prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports. Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action.
Section 17
Grievance Policy

17:1 Open-Door Policy

We want to maintain a positive and pleasant environment for all of our employees. To help us meet this goal, our Organization has an open-door policy, by which employees are encouraged to report work-related concerns. If something about your job is bothering you, or if you have a question, concern, idea, or problem related to your work, please discuss it with your immediate supervisor as soon as possible. If for any reason you don't feel comfortable bringing the matter to your supervisor, feel free to raise the issue with any Organization director. We encourage you to make your concerns known to the Organization because we can't solve the problem if we don't know about it.

17:2 Grievance Procedures

Our Organization is committed to providing a safe and productive work environment, free of threats to the health, safety, and well-being of our workers. These threats include, but are not limited to, harassment, discrimination, violations of health and safety rules, and violence.

Any employee who witnesses or is subject to inappropriate conduct in the workplace may remonstrate to the Human Resource Department or to any Organization administrator (Director, Principal, or Assistant Principal). Any supervisor, or Organization director, who receives a complaint about, hears of, or witnesses any inappropriate conduct is required to immediately notify Human Resources. Inappropriate conduct includes any conduct prohibited by our policies about harassment, discrimination, discipline, workplace violence, health and safety, pay, and drug and alcohol use. In addition, we encourage employees to come forward with any workplace grievance, even if the subject of the grievance is not explicitly covered by our written policies.

We encourage you to come forward with a grievance immediately, so we can take whatever action is needed to handle the problem. Once a grievance has been made, Human Resources will determine how to handle it. Some grievances will require an investigation to be conducted immediately. This will require Human Resource to seek assistance from the Office of Director of Schools (or Assistant Director as appropriate) for managerial and financial support.

We expect all employees to cooperate fully in Organization investigations by, for example, answering questions completely and honestly and giving the investigator all documents and other material that might be relevant. All grievances will be handled as confidentially as possible but keep in mind that we are all subject to public record and our Board of Trustees operates under “Government within the Sunshine.” When the investigation is complete, the Organization will take corrective action, if appropriate.
We will not engage in or allow retaliation against any employee who makes a good faith grievance or participates in an investigation. If you believe that you are being subjected to any kind of negative treatment because you made or were questioned about a grievance, report the conduct immediately to Human Resources.

The following pages contain the Grievance Policy/Procedures adopted and put into practice by our Board of Trustees.
The Schools of McKeel Academy
Employee Grievance Policy

The Schools of McKeel Academy are committed to providing the best possible working conditions for its employees. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion or question receives a timely response from McKeel personnel. McKeel strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all employees. All employees are expected to treat each other with mutual respect. Employees are encouraged to offer positive and constructive criticism.

McKeel supports voluntary resolution of work-related conflicts, problems and concerns. Whenever an employee feels that he or she has a complaint, every effort is to be made to arrive at a satisfactory resolution of the problem on an informal basis. It is a firm belief of McKeel that most issues can be handled quickly and appropriately to everyone’s satisfaction. Employees are encouraged to raise concerns with their supervisor as soon as practical.

1. If an employee believes there is a basis for complaint, he or she shall discuss the complaint with his or her immediate supervisor or, if the complaint involves the immediate supervisor, the Assistant Director. Everyone shall use his/her best efforts to resolve the issue.

2. If the complaint is not resolved through the informal process described above, he or she may file a written complaint with the Director of Schools within five (5) calendar days after the informal meeting with his or her supervisor. If the Director is unavailable, or the employee believes it would be inappropriate to contact that person, the employee may present the problem to the Assistant Director or Human Resources. The complaint must include (a) a statement of the relevant facts; (b) copies of relevant documents; (c) the remedy sought by the grievant; (d) any corroborating witnesses; and (e) the steps previously taken to resolve the grievance. If applicable, the other party shall be notified and shall have five (5) calendar days to respond to the grievance in writing. The Director (or Assistant Director as appropriate) has the authority to hire an outside investigation firm to work in conjunction with the Human Resources.

3. If the grievant or any one of the parties is not satisfied with the resolution provided by the Director or (Assistant Director as appropriate) and Human Resources, they may give the grievance to the Board of Trustees who may vote to appoint a committee to fully investigate the grievance. At the committee’s discretion, it may hold a meeting with the grievant and other relevant parties. It will review all documentation pertaining to the grievance, obtained by the parties above in their investigation. The committee shall issue its findings and recommendations for further process to Board of Trustees for a vote. The committee’s recommendation shall be issued within thirty (30) days of receipt of the grievance by the Board of Trustees. If necessary, the committee may request of the full Board additional time if necessitated by the circumstances.

Anonymous complaints may not be investigated. McKeel will not permit any negative or adverse actions to be taken against any employee or individual for making a good-faith report of a possible violation of school policies or applicable law. Retaliation in any form will not be tolerated. Any act of alleged retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. This policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within McKeel without fear of retaliation.

Approved by the Board of Trustees: 02/18/2014

Updated 07/2016
Section 18  
Ending Employment

18:1 Resignation

If you decide to leave our Organization for another position, we wish you well. Please notify your immediate supervisor in writing about your plans to resign. We also request that you give us two (2) weeks’ notice as this will give us time to calculate your final paycheck and any accrued overtime, PTO days, and any other money that the Organization owes you. Please see next Section on final paychecks.

You must return all Organization property in good condition. Please see Section 9:2 of this Handbook for more about Organization property.

Even as you leave this Organization and move on to future endeavors, you still have an obligation to keep confidential this Organization's sensitive information. Please see Section 15:1 of this Handbook for more about this obligation.

18:2 Final Paychecks

Employees who resign or are terminated from their job will receive their final paycheck on the next regularly scheduled payday. Final paychecks will include all compensation earned but not paid through the date of termination. Final paychecks will also include the payout of any accrued PTO at the rate established in section 7:1 and any payroll corrections as described in section 5:4.

18:3 No Severance Pay

Our Organization does not pay severance to departing employees, whether they quit, are laid off or are fired for any reason.

18:4 Continuing Your Health Insurance Coverage (COBRA)

Our Organization offers employees group health insurance coverage as a benefit of employment. If you are no longer eligible for insurance coverage because of a reduction in hours, because you quit, or because your employment is terminated, you have the right to continue your health insurance coverage for up to eighteen (18) months. You will have to pay the cost of this coverage. Others covered by your insurance (your spouse and children, for example) also have the right to continue coverage if they are no longer eligible for certain reasons. If you and your spouse divorce or legally separate, or if you die while in our employ, your spouse may continue coverage under our group health plan. And once your children lose their dependent status, they may continue their health care as well. In any of these situations, your family members are entitled to up to eighteen (18) months of continued health care. They must pay the cost of this coverage.
You will receive an initial notice of your right to continued health insurance coverage when you first become eligible for health insurance under the Organization’s group plan. You will receive an additional notice when your hours are reduced, you quit, or your employment is terminated. This second notice will tell you how to choose continuation coverage, what your obligations will be, whether you are entitled to a partial subsidy, and how much you will have to pay for coverage. You must notify us if any of your family members become eligible for continued coverage due to divorce, separation, or reaching the age of majority.

18:5 Exit Interviews

We will hold an exit interview with every employee who leaves the Organization, for any reason. During the interview, you will have the opportunity to tell us about your employment experience here -- what you liked, what you didn't like, and where you think we can improve. We greatly value these comments.

The exit interview also gives us a chance to handle some practical matters relating to the end of your employment. You will be expected to return all Organization property at the interview. You will also have an opportunity to ask any questions you might have about insurance, benefits, final paychecks, references, or any other matter relating to your employment.

18:6 References

When we are contacted by prospective employers seeking information about former employees, we will release the following data only: the position(s) the employee held, the dates the employee worked for our Organization, and the employee's salary or rate of pay.

Employees are not permitted to write letters of recommendation on behalf of the Organization. Please direct all reference requests to Human Resources.