Academy of Collaborative Education

Annual Meeting + Board Retreat

Published on June 25, 2026 at 2:12 AM CDT
Amended on June 25, 2026 at 8:13 PM CDT

Date and Time

Saturday June 27, 2026 at 8:00 AM CDT

Location

The Center for Children and Families
622 Riverside Drive
Monroe, LA 71201

Pursuant to Louisiana Open Meetings Law - La. R.S. 42:19, notice is hereby given to the members of the Board of Directors of Academy of Collaborative Education and to the general public that the Board will hold a regular, special, or re-scheduled meeting, open to the public as specified below. To ensure compliance with the Open Meeting Law, recipients of this message should not forward it to other Board members, and Board members should not reply to this message.

Agenda

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
I.	**Opening Items**			**8:00 AM**
	A. Record Attendance		Holly Allen	3 m
	B. Call the Meeting to Order		Anna Grimmett	2 m

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
II.	**Breakfast + Gathering**			**8:05 AM**
A.	Breakfast + Document Upkeep	FYI	Joellen Freeman	25 m
	Board members gather for breakfast, socializing, accessing + updating BoardOnTrack, and any outstanding document execution.			
III.	**Annual Reports**			**8:30 AM**
A.	Annual Executive Director Report	FYI	Joellen Freeman	30 m
	Organizational health, progress to goals, enrollment, staffing, celebrations, FY27 goals.			
B.	SY2026-27 Academic Report	FYI	Joellen Freeman	30 m
	Executive Director, Joellen Freeman, will provide the board with an overview of SY26-27 academic goals and progress to those goals as well as a full briefing on the assessments taken by ACE students and how students performed on those assessments both this school year and overtime.			
IV.	**Executive Session**			**9:30 AM**
A.	Executive Director FY26 Evaluation	Discuss	Anna Grimmett	30 m
	Motion: Move to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters.			
V.	**Discussion of New Business**			**10:00 AM**
A.	FY2027 Budget (Second) Discussion	Discuss	Joellen Freeman	30 m
B.	Employee Handbook Presentation + Discussion	Discuss	Joellen Freeman	15 m
	Executive Director, Joellen Freeman, presents changes to the employee handbook for FY2027 and facilitates discussion among board members.			
C.	Policy and Procedure Review and Discussion	Discuss	Joellen Freeman	15 m
	Executive Director, Joellen Freeman, present two new policy and procedures for the FY27 school year and facilitates discussion among board members.			
D.	FY27 Student/Parent Handbook Review and Discussion	Discuss	Curtis Eberts	15 m

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
	Executive Director, Joellen Freeman, present the Student/Parent Handbook for the FY27 school year and facilitates discussion among board members.			

VI. Action Items — 11:15 AM

A.	Approval of FY2027 Budget	Vote	Anna Grimmett	2 m
	Motion: Approve FY2027 budget as presented during our discussion.			
B.	Approval of FY2027 Employee Handbook	Vote	Anna Grimmett	2 m
	Motion: Conditionally approve the FY2027 Employee Handbook as presented by Executive Director, Joellen Freeman, with final approval contingent upon sign-off by the legal team.			
C.	Approval of FY2027 Student Handbook	Vote	Anna Grimmett	2 m
	Motion: Conditionally approve FY2027 student handbook as presented by Executive Director, Joellen Freeman, with final approval contingent upon sign-off by the legal team.			
D.	FY2027 Board Officers			9 m
	Motion: Approve Anna Grimmett as Chair, Curtis Eberts as Vice Chair, and Holly Allen as Treasurer for one term during FY2027.			
E.	Approval of Policy and Procedure Documents	Vote	Anna Grimmett	5 m
	Motion: Approve 2 Policy and Procedure Documents: Student Entry and Drop Off and Internet Usage and Safety Policy and Procedures for FY2027.			

VII. FY2027 Committee Formation + Planning — 11:35 AM

A.	Announcement of FY2027 Board Committees + Committee Meeting Schedule	FYI	Anna Grimmett	15 m
	Board committee rosters and meeting guidelines are attached as packet materials.			
B.	Committee Goals + Meeting Schedule Creation	Discuss	Anna Grimmett	60 m
	Committees, led by committee chairs, create annual goals for FY2027 to drive their work within the committee. Exact meeting dates within the assigned meeting months are created. Both goals and schedule are reported to the full board.			
C.	Report: Committees Goals + Schedules	FYI	Anna Grimmett	15 m
	Committee chairs report on the work done re: goals and schedules to the full board.			

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
VIII.	**Other Business**			**1:05 PM**
A.	Reminder: Board Meeting Schedule	FYI	Anna Grimmett	2 m

Board meetings, with the exception of specially called meetings, will be held every month (August, October, December, February, April, June) on the third Wednesday from 3:30-4:30pm. Please be sure to block your calendars and plan for fully engaged attendance.

IX.	**Annual Online Ethics Training (and working lunch)**			**1:07 PM**
A.	Online Ethics Training Completion	FYI	Anna Grimmett	60 m

All board members complete the required online ethics training and email their completion certificates to Executive Director, Joellen Freeman, and Board Chair, Anna Grimmett.

Link to Portal Login: https://laethics.net/EthicsTraining/login.aspx

X.	**Closing Items**			**2:07 PM**
A.	Adjourn Meeting	Vote	Anna Grimmett	1 m

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance at a public meeting of Academy of Collaborative Education, please contact Joellen Freeman at jcfreeman@aceforasd.orgdescribing the assistance that is necessary.

Coversheet

FY2027 Budget (Second) Discussion

Section: V. Discussion of New Business
Item: A. FY2027 Budget (Second) Discussion
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: ACE_FY2027_Budget_Presentation_EdOps_6.4.pdf

EDOPS

Operational excellence in support of student achievement

FY2027

Budget Presentation

Academy of Collaborative Education



PREPARED JUNE 2026 BY EdOps

Executive Summary

Budget Process: Timeline

- Developed over several months with school leaders and EdOps staff, starting in February
- Public notice of Budget Hearing posted in newspaper
- Budget presentation and feedback (6/17/26)
- Proposed formal budget adoption by full board (6/27/26)

Budget Process: Approach

- Built on historical revenue and expenses, analyzing the school's use of vendors and staff
- Used scenario budgeting to right-size staffing, enrollment, and programmatic change
- Fiscal year runs July 1 to June 30; FY27 is part of the school's larger 3-year plan
- Conservative approach applied across all revenue and expense categories

Context

ACE begins the year with a solid plan after a challenging FY26 driven by: disqualification of High Cost Services (HCS) revenue, delayed Medicaid payments, higher property costs for a new campus, repairs to aging plant and equipment, and unexpected legal costs. The school has been laser focused all year on cost containment and cashflow management but is still facing a small deficit which may increase pending the approval of the recent executive order proposal.

This year's budget process was tasked with:

- Right-sizing staff to provide services consistent with the mission
- Adjusting to the expiration of CSP grant funding and disqualification of HCS funds
- Anticipating added costs of operating a new campus
- Creating a viable path for the next 3 to 5 years

Mission & Vision

MISSION

To provide a best-in-class integrated academic and therapeutic school model for students with ASD.

VISION

To provide access to an innovative academic environment that grows lifelong learners of curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking.

Our Commitment

ACE provides a safe and enriching learning environment where the whole student is nurtured and developed. Our teachers and administrators pledge to support the academic and emotional well-being of each and every student. Our rigorous standards challenge all students to rise to their potential and become the best citizens they can be.

Budget Drivers

REVENUES

Enrollment

+ Strong enrollment growth to 160 students in FY27 (116 prior year); healthy waitlist. Out-years capped at 180 (+10%) until raised by LDOE
– MFP per-pupil funding largely flat in FY27 vs. prior year, with no major rate changes expected in out-years*

Federal Funds

+ Substantial increase in Medicaid reimbursements
– Expiration of CSP grant
– Some reduction in grant awards

Development

+ Strong fundraising history the school hopes to grow as the program matures

*Gov. Landry has issued an executive order to redirect $168M in MFP funding to one-time stipends for teachers and support staff. If passed, it would reduce ACE's MFP revenue by roughly $90k. Because approval is uncertain, this reduction is NOT included in this version of the budget. The legislature plans to vote by June 23rd.

EXPENSES

Staff

+ Adding 11 paraprofessionals, 2 SPED teachers, and 1 speech therapist to deepen student support
– Maintaining lean administrative staff to maximize resources for instruction

Professional Services

– Substantial savings in legal and accounting costs; new-campus design services ending
– Reduced professional development and some administrative support subsidies

Other Purchased Services

+ Higher transportation and insurance costs tied to enrollment and the new campus

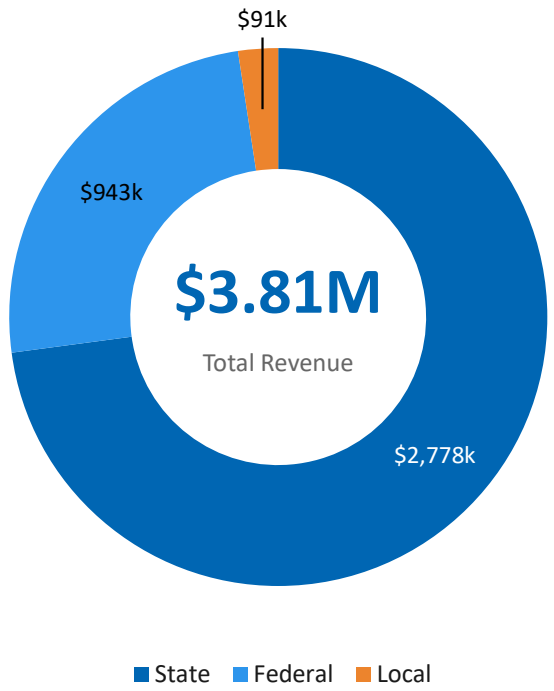
Property Services

+ Higher costs to rent and maintain the new campus

Supplies, Equipment & Capital

– HVAC project for new campus
+ Large prior-year purchases not recurring

Revenue Breakdown



State Revenue

- $2.7M in MFP funding (reduced by $89k per the Governor's Executive Order scenario)
- Prior-year teacher stipends phased out (CCA, DCA, EEF, HDT)

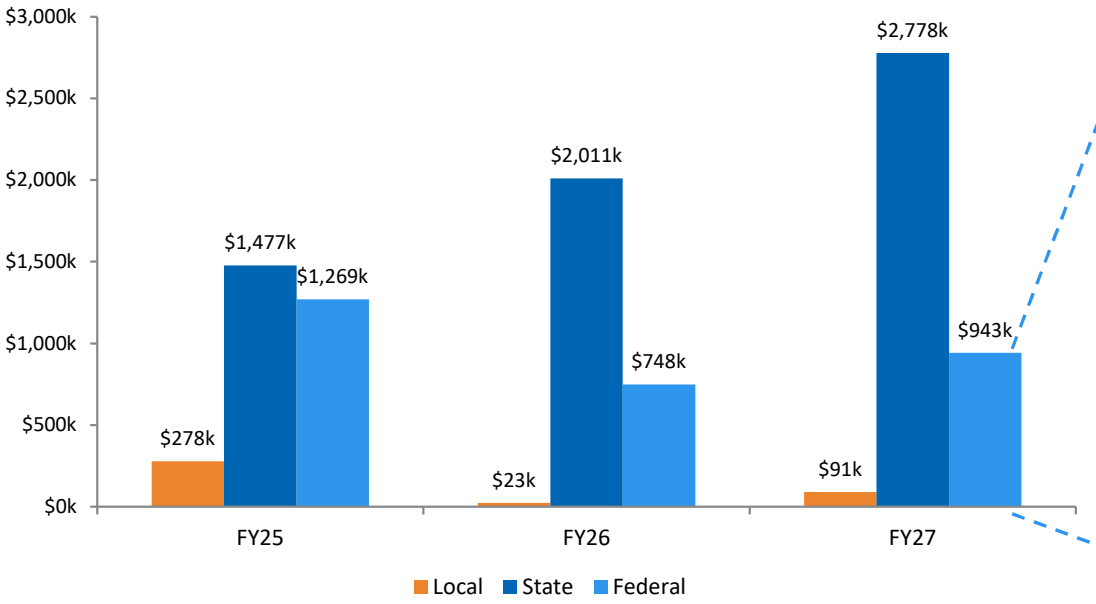
Federal Revenue

- $774k in expected Medicaid reimbursements, including monthly and annual disbursements for ABA, Speech/OT, and other therapeutic services
- Recurring federal grants down slightly (Title, IDEA)
- Includes $20k CSP supplemental grant

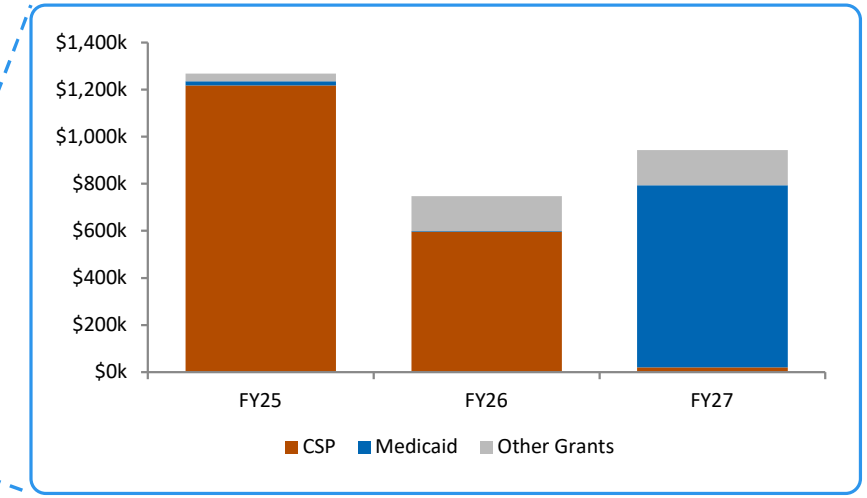
Local Revenue

- Fundraising (~$80k) and student activity revenue

Revenues Over Time



Inside the Federal Bars: CSP → Medicaid



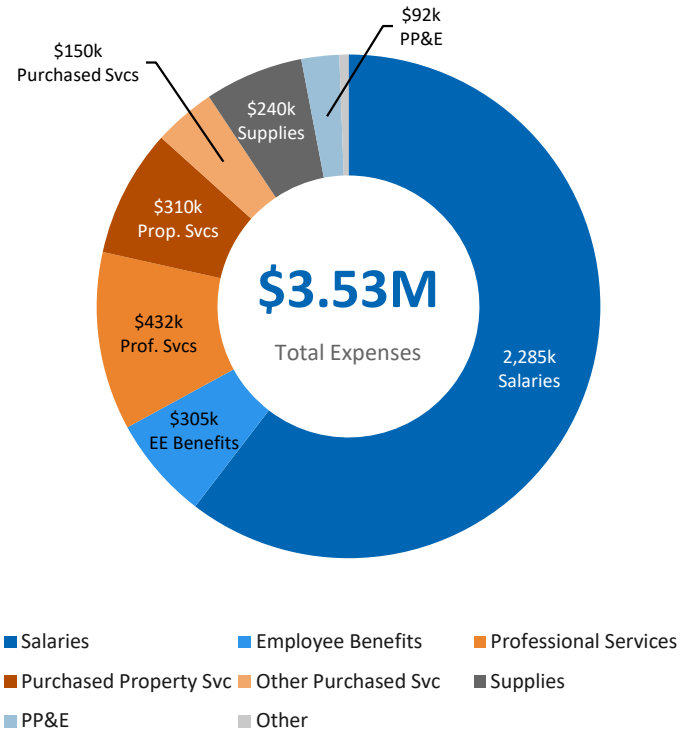
State Revenue PPF rates have stayed relatively flat; MFP funding grows with enrollment.

Federal Revenue FY26 brought the last tranche of CSP funding. FY27 is the first year of substantial Medicaid reimbursement.

Local Revenue The school raised significant funds to establish itself and hopes to grow development capacity.

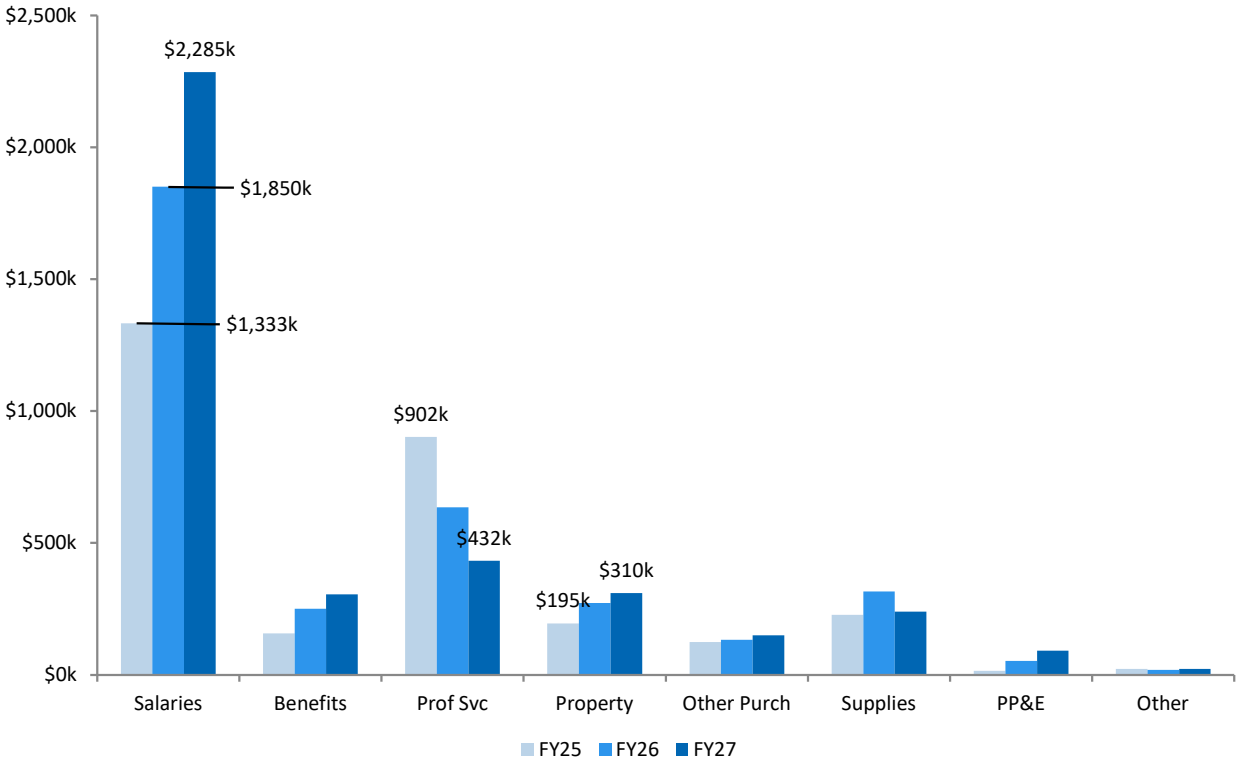
Federal, broken out: This panel zooms in on the Federal bars at left. The CSP start-up grant winds down after FY26, and Medicaid reimbursement scales up in FY27 to become the largest federal source.

Expense Breakdown



- **Salaries:** Headcount up from 45 to 60 staff (11 paras, 2 SPED teachers, 1 therapist, 1 admin)
- **Employee Benefits:** Higher health insurance rates and additional enrollees
- **Professional Services:** Student therapy ($114k), professional development ($21k), legal ($75k), and administrative support
- **Purchased Property Services:** Rent ($186k), repairs/maintenance ($78k), and other site services
- **Other Purchased Services:** Insurance ($79k), transportation ($28k), and communications
- **Supplies:** Utilities ($81k), education supplies ($58k), and technology ($27k)
- **PP&E:** Depreciation ($53k) and some equipment

Expenses Over Time



Expense Trends

- Staff has continued to grow with enrollment and to adequately meet student needs (45 FTE FY26 to 60 FTE FY27)
- Professional services falling as legal, accounting, and new-campus design costs wind down, and as the school shifts to providing more services in-house
- Property costs have increased as the school handles repairs to an aging building while expanding into a new space
- PP&E up as depreciation on new assets begins
- Supplies costs easing after one-time prior-year purchases

Net Income and Liquidity

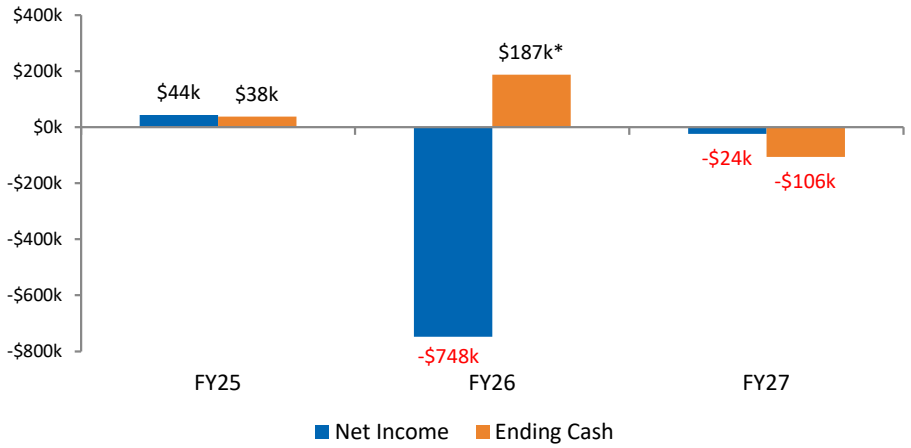
-$24k

Budgeted Net Income

-$106k

Projected EOY Cash Balance*

**$250k line of credit available to the school.*



While the school has taken many steps to control costs and now expects substantial Medicaid funding, the budgeted deficit stands at -$24k and would grow to roughly -$113k if the executive order passes. Management and the board must work together to improve or manage the gap.

Key revenue drivers in the assumptions:

- $80k in fundraising
- $774k in Medicaid funding

Cash management outlook

Despite a significant deficit in FY26, the school has managed to maintain a positive cash position at the end of the year by receiving EOY MFP adjusting payments, utilizing a line of credit, holding accounts payable, and collecting on outstanding accounts receivable. As the budget stands, the school will face significant cash management issues through FY27. While the current line of credit would cover the projected shortfall, ebbs and flows in revenue collection and expense payments may strain the line of credit past it's limit. While the school is seeking forward funding and a larger line of credit, the budget presumes the school would still closely manage A/P to remain solvent.

Financial Statements Summary

Balance Sheet

	FY26 Proj	FY27	FY28	FY29
Assets				
Cash	186,965	(105,682)	(52,737)	(38,263)
Accounts Receivable	16,250	121,250	226,250	231,250
Prepaid Expenses	48,752	53,752	58,752	63,752
Fixed Assets, Net	213,368	210,961	161,554	112,147
Long Term Assets	2,842,930	2,842,930	2,842,930	2,842,930
Total Assets	**3,308,265**	**3,123,210**	**3,236,749**	**3,211,816**
Liabilities				
Accounts Payable	329,242	329,242	329,242	329,242
Accrued Wages	196,808	285,656	342,535	352,245
Line of Credit	250,000	0	0	0
Long Term Liabilities	2,842,930	2,842,930	2,842,930	2,842,930
Total Liabilities	**3,618,979**	**3,457,828**	**3,514,707**	**3,524,416**
Equity				
Unrestricted Net Assets	(310,714)	(334,617)	(277,958)	(312,600)
Total Liabilities & Equity	**3,308,265**	**3,123,210**	**3,236,749**	**3,211,816**

Statement of Activities

	FY26 Proj	FY27	FY28	FY29
Enrollment	116	160	180	180
Staff	45	60	68	68
Revenue				
Local Revenue	23,081	91,100	95,280	97,178
State Revenue	2,010,529	2,778,081	3,107,215	3,107,215
Federal Revenue	747,801	942,648	1,140,393	1,157,404
Total Revenue	**2,781,411**	**3,811,829**	**4,342,888**	**4,361,796**
Expense				
Salaries & Wages	1,849,948	2,284,622	2,667,550	2,743,401
Employee Benefits	250,572	304,826	343,251	357,139
Professional Services	635,117	432,463	439,423	445,838
Purchased Property Svc	273,352	309,684	311,144	313,068
Other Purchased Svc	133,416	150,452	152,456	154,519
Supplies	316,058	239,750	257,810	267,197
Property, Plant & Equip	52,536	91,936	91,936	91,936
Debt Service	8,587	12,000	12,360	12,731
Miscellaneous	10,128	10,000	10,300	10,609
Total Expenses	**3,529,713**	**3,835,732**	**4,286,228**	**4,396,438**
Net Income	**(748,302)**	**(23,903)**	**56,660**	**(34,643)**

Coversheet

Employee Handbook Presentation + Discussion

Section:	V. Discussion of New Business
Item:	B. Employee Handbook Presentation + Discussion
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Proposed.26-27EmployeeHandbook.jcf.docx (1).pdf



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
2026-2027

Effective: July 1, 2025

Appendix A - 1

Introduction – About This Handbook

This Employee Handbook (Handbook) is provided to help acquaint employees with the Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Pillars of Academy of Collaborative Education (ACE), and to clarify ACE's Employee Policies and Procedures.

Understanding and complying with ACE policies, procedures, and rules is essential to performing any role at ACE and maintaining optimal school operations. Employees will be expected to sign a Handbook Acknowledgement, confirming your understanding of and agreement to adhere to the policies, rules, and procedures contained in this Handbook. Employees have up to seven (7) days to read the Handbook and ask any questions for further clarification.

While ACE believes in the procedures, policies, and rules contained in this Handbook, they are for informational purposes, and they do not constitute an express or implied employment contract. Thus, this Handbook does not alter the "at-will" nature of employment, meaning the employee or ACE have the right to terminate employment at any time, with or without cause or notice. You should understand that ACE has the right to change the compensation, duties, assignments, responsibilities, or geographic location of your job at any time, with or without cause. Furthermore, your status as an "at-will" employee may not be changed, except in writing, signed by the employee and the executive director of Academy of Collaborative Education.

If you have questions regarding your employment obligations, rights, and/or benefits, speak to the Executive Director, Joellen Freeman, at 505 Glenmar Avenue, Monroe, LA 71201, or via email at jcfreeman@aceforasd.org.

About Academy of Collaborative Education

Mission Statement

ACE's mission is to provide a best-in-class integrated academic and therapeutic school model for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Vision Statement

ACE's vision is to provide access to an innovative academic environment that grows lifelong learners with curiosity, creativity, and strong critical thinking skills.

Pillars

1. **Access**: All students learn in an environment specifically designed to support and develop lifelong learners.
2. **Communication**: ACE's educators develop confident communicators through verbal expression and/or augmentative communication.
3. **Empowerment**: All students boldly stretch past the perceptions of autism.
4. **Community**: All students experience and thrive in the local community with curiosity and purpose.

Cover Values

- **Passion:** Celebrating big and small successes and working with gusto and enthusiasm are the foundations for a positive environment.
- **Respect:** ACE values strong listening skills, empathy, punctuality, preparedness, kindness in actions and words, and the understanding that everyone has purpose and value.
- **Perseverance:** To be dedicated to the success of the whole school, you must be committed to yourself and others and work through challenges with a collaborative mindset.
- **Collaboration:** Therefore, working together to achieve common goals, share ideas, build on each other's strengths, and solve complex problems is required.
- **Excellence:** For excellence to be our standard, our faculty must be empowered by the desires for learning, adaptation, growth, and evolution.

At ACE, we believe…

- in cultivating an environment where all feel safe and respected to express their true selves without judgment.
- in celebrating successes, big and small.
- in communicating professionally so that all voices are heard and valued.
- that collaboration and support are at the heart of our success.
- in persevering through challenges.
- in setting high expectations to change the educational narrative.

The Employment Relationship

At-will Employment

Employment with ACE is terminable at will, which means you or ACE may terminate the employment relationship for any reason, at any time, and without notice. Any modifications with respect to the at-will nature of an individual's employment must be in writing, signed, and approved by the Executive Director.

This Handbook is not a contract of employment and does not create any rights for employees or obligations for ACE. ACE reserves the unconditional right to modify, delete, or make any changes or exceptions to anything in the Handbook without notice. No oral statements, representations, or promises contradicting this Handbook, including promises of employment for any specified period, will be enforceable.

Equal Employment Opportunities

ACE is an equal-opportunity employer. ACE will make employment decisions based on merit and factors such as business needs, skills, knowledge, experience, work quality, and performance and without regard to race, color, national origin or ancestry, religion, creed, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, age (40 and over), disability, genetic information, genetic testing and cancer screening, veteran status, sickle cell trait, natural or cultural hairstyles, or any other legally protected status under local, state, or federal law (collectively "Protected Characteristics"). This policy applies to all areas of employment, including recruitment, hiring, training and development, promotion, transfer, termination, layoff, compensation, benefits, social and recreational programs, and all other conditions and privileges of employment in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

All employees are expected to comply with this Policy. Employees with complaints or concerns about discrimination or harassment against themselves or others must immediately report this conduct verbally or in writing to their supervisor or the Executive Director.

Immigration Law Compliance

In compliance with the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), as amended, ACE is committed to employing only authorized individuals to work in the United States. All employment offers are contingent on verifying the individual's right to work in the United States. On the first day of work, the individual will be asked to provide original documents confirming their right to work and, as federal law requires, to complete and sign the Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9 Form).

If an employee is authorized to work in this country for a limited period, the individual will be required to submit proof of renewed employment eligibility before the expiration of that period to remain employed by ACE. If a person cannot verify their right to work in the United States at any time, ACE may be obligated to terminate their employment.

Criminal History Review

As a condition of employment, all employees are required to submit to a criminal history review through the Office of the Louisiana State Police, and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) The criminal history review shall include a fingerprint check and a simultaneous FBI check along with the Louisiana State Police Background check. Individuals who refuse to submit to a criminal history review will not be offered employment. Individuals whose criminal history reveals that they have been convicted of or have pleaded *nolo contendere* to a crime listed in LA-R.S. 15:587.1(C) will not be offered employment for a position of supervisory or disciplinary authority over school children unless approved in writing by a district judge of the parish and the district attorney. Any person who is employed and who is convicted of or has pleaded *nolo contendere* to a crime listed in LA-R.S. 15:587.1(C) during their term of employment shall self-report their conviction or their plea of *nolo contendere* to ACE within forty-eight hours of the conviction or *nolo contendere* plea. No person employed or otherwise associated with ACE, including members of the Board, who has been convicted of or has pleaded *nolo contendere* to a crime related to the misappropriation of funds or theft shall not be engaged in direct processing of charter school funds. All contractors, subcontractors, vendors, or their employees who provide services to ACE must also obtain a current/compliant criminal history review.

Job Classification/Designations

Each employee is classified as either non-exempt or exempt from applicable wage and hour laws. Non-exempt employees are generally entitled to overtime pay for time worked over 40 hours in a workweek. Exempt employees are not entitled to overtime compensation. The method of base pay received (hourly or salary) will not necessarily determine the employee's non-exempt or exempt status. An employee's non-exempt or exempt classification may be changed only upon written notification by ACE.

Employees are designated as full-time, part-time, or substitute positions. See Table 2.1 below for a general description of these designations:

Table 2.1 - Employee Designations

Classification	Description
Part-time	Hourly non-exempt employee working less than 30 hours per week
Full-time hourly	Hourly non-exempt employees working 40 hours per week with overtime are paid at time + half for approved hours over 40 hours per week.

Full-time Salaried	Salaried employee **(exempt**) is defined as a position requiring the employee to work the agreed upon contracted hours, working a 10 month school term. Salaried employee (**non-exempt**) is defined as a position requiring the employee to work the agreed upon contracted hours, working a 10 month school term. Overtime is paid at time + half for approved hours over 40 hours per week.

Anti-Harassment, Anti-Discrimination, and Anti-Retaliation

ACE is committed to establishing a workplace free from discrimination or harassment. All employees are expected to conduct themselves at all times to ensure an atmosphere free from unlawful discrimination or harassment. ACE strictly prohibits and will not tolerate discrimination or harassment by any student, employee, vendor, or representative of ACE against any employee, applicant, or student because of any Protected Characteristics. ACE strives to ensure equal opportunity for all qualified employees. Conduct prohibited by this policy is unacceptable in the workplace and any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings, and business-related social events.

Harassment

Harassment is any verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion towards an individual because of an individual's Protected Characteristics. Harassment can take many forms, including but not limited to the following:

- Verbal (epithets, derogatory statements, slurs, derogatory comments, or jokes).
- Physical (threats of harm, violence, or assault or other unwelcome touching).
- Visual (displaying derogatory posters, cartoons, drawings, or derogatory gestures).
- Online (derogatory statements or sexually suggestive messages, posting or other communications via text messages, instant messages, websites, emails voicemails, or social media including but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, or similar platforms).

This list is illustrative only and not exhaustive. No form of unlawful harassment will be tolerated.

Title IX Sexual Harassment and Related Conduct

Further, to maintain a safe, civil, and supportive learning environment, all forms of sexual harassment and discrimination based on sex are prohibited. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Title IX regulations prohibit discrimination based on sex, including gender-based and sexual harassment discrimination, in the ACE's educational programs and activities, including employment. ACE has designated a Title IX Coordinator to address any concerns regarding sexual harassment or discrimination based on sex. ACE's designated and authorized Title IX Coordinator can be reached as follows:

Joellen Freeman, Executive Director
505 Glenmar Drive
Monroe, LA 71201
318.450.7669 | jcfreeman@aceforasd.org

Sexual harassment is defined under Title IX as conduct on the basis of sex that involves one or more of the following:

1. A school employee conditioning an aid, benefit, or service of an education program or activity on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the education program or activity; or
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in state and federal law.

Behaviors that constitute sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Sexually suggestive remarks;
2. Verbal harassment or abuse;
3. Sexually suggestive pictures;
4. Sexually suggestive gesturing;
5. Harassing or sexually suggestive or offensive messages that are written or electronic;
6. Unwelcome sexual advances;
7. Subtle or direct propositions for sexual favors; and
8. Touching of a sexual nature.

This list is illustrative only and not exhaustive. No form of sexual harassment will be tolerated.

Title VII Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined under Title VII as unwelcome harassing behavior because of sex. This includes harassment that is not sexual in nature (for example, offensive remarks about an individual's sex), as well as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as uninvited touching or sexually-related comments, when (1) submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the person involved; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment under either Title IX or Title VII may be directed against a particular person or persons or a group, whether of the opposite sex or the same sex.

No employee may be required to submit to sexual advances in order to retain or improve their job. No one has the right to make the work environment intolerable because of unwanted touching, insults, unwelcome jokes, etc. No employee may discuss sexual conduct and/or sexual jokes while at work. No sexually oriented materials or objects may be brought onto or accessed from ACE premises

or systems. Any physical contact between employees at work that may be construed as sexual is strictly prohibited.

Under certain circumstances, sexual harassment of a student or employee may constitute sexual abuse as defined under state law. In such situations, ACE will comply with applicable law and school policies regarding reporting suspected abuse to appropriate authorities.

Reporting

ACE requires reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. If you believe you have been subjected to or witnessed any conduct that violates this policy, you must report those concerns to your immediate supervisor or contact the Executive Director. If the complaint involves someone in the employee's direct line of supervision, or the employee feels uncomfortable reporting the conduct to his/her supervisor, the employee may inform the Executive Director directly. Employees who believe they have been subjected to or witnessed sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, must report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator at the contact information provided above.

Investigation

All complaints of harassment and/or discrimination will be promptly investigated. Investigation of sexual harassment and/or sex discrimination shall be performed in accordance with the detailed Title IX Procedures set forth in Appendix A to this Handbook. To the extent possible, the investigation will be conducted in confidence; however, please be advised that absolute confidentiality is not always possible.

If the investigation substantiates the accusations or a violation of this policy, appropriate corrective action will be taken. This may include, but not be limited to, reprimand, suspension, or dismissal, or other forms of discipline depending on the nature and severity of the offense. Appropriate action may also be taken should evidence during the investigations reveal that the accusations are intentionally false or malicious in intent.

Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is prohibited and, like harassment or discrimination itself, anyone engaging in retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed.

ACE will take prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action to address any violations of this policy. All employees must cooperate fully with any internal investigation. An employee found to have discriminated against, harassed, or retaliated against another individual will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Disabilities Accommodations

ACE's policy is to comply with all relevant and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ACE will not discriminate against any qualified employee or job applicant with respect to any terms, privileges, or conditions of employment because of a person's physical or mental disability. ACE is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities to assist them in performing the essential functions of their employment positions unless doing so would create an undue hardship. Do not assume that ACE is aware of an employee's need for reasonable accommodation. To request reasonable accommodation, please contact the Executive Director.

Not all qualified individuals with disabilities, or all qualified individuals with the same disability, will require the same accommodation. Once a request for reasonable accommodation is made, the Executive Director will engage in the interactive process with the employee to discuss and document his/her needs/restrictions/limitations and consider an appropriate reasonable accommodation to remove workplace barriers. The employee will be required to provide medical documentation regarding the type of impairment and how the impairment impacts an employee's ability to perform the essential functions of their job. ACE will not seek genetic information in connection with accommodation requests. ACE may request information about how an accommodation will enable the employee to perform job-related tasks. Employees will be asked to provide such information and to participate in the interactive process.

ACE treats records of medical of applicants and employees as confidential and maintains such records in a medical file separate from an employee's personnel file. The results of all medical examinations or information from inquiries about a disability are also kept confidential and maintained in the separate medical file. Disclosure of medical and/or genetic information will only be made in limited circumstances and in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws.

If you have any questions regarding reasonable accommodation, please contact the Executive Director.

Pregnancy Accommodation

ACE will provide reasonable accommodations to female employees in connection with known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, to the extent the accommodation can be made without imposing undue hardship on ACE or students they serve.

An employee or applicant may request an accommodation under this policy by submitting a request to your supervisor or Human Resources. When an employee requests an accommodation under this policy, ACE will explore with the employee the possible means of providing a reasonable accommodation, which may include, but are not limited to:

- allowing more frequent breaks or periodic rest

- assisting with manual labor
- modifying non-essential job duties
- temporary suspension of essential job duties
- modifying the work environment
- providing a leave of absence beyond that available under ACE's available leave policies

Depending on the nature of the requested accommodation and to the extent allowed by law, the individual may be required to provide documentation from a health care provider substantiating the need for the accommodation. All such medical information ACE receives concerning an accommodation request will be treated as confidential. If leave is provided as a reasonable accommodation, you may use any accrued annual leave or sick leave. This leave may also run concurrently with any other leave, where permitted by state and federal law.

ACE will also accommodate eligible employees who wish to take reasonable breaks to express breast milk during their workday. For up to one year after the child's birth, any employee who is nursing will be provided reasonable break times to express breast milk for her baby. ACE encourages all eligible employees who intend to take breaks under this policy to notify the Executive Director of their intent to use this policy so that ACE can ensure that all job duties are appropriately covered during break times and provide information about the designated location for lactation breaks.

Religious Accommodations

ACE is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all individuals, regardless of their religious beliefs and practices. Consistent with this commitment, ACE will provide a reasonable accommodation of an employee's sincerely held religious belief if the accommodation would resolve a conflict between the individual's religious beliefs or practices and a work requirement, unless doing so would create an undue hardship for ACE. If you believe you need an accommodation because of your religious beliefs or practices, you should request an accommodation from your supervisor and provide details regarding your reason for needing an accommodation, a description of the accommodation sought, and how the accommodation will help.

Performance Evaluations

All employees will be evaluated at least once per year at the end of the school year and in accordance with Bulletin 130 – Guidelines for Personnel Evaluation where applicable.

Time Off and Leave

Attendance & Absenteeism

Employees are employed because ACE requires the essential services they provide to students and the school community. Excessive absenteeism negatively impacts the mission of ACE, disrupts continuity of services for students, and places additional burdens on colleagues.

An unexcused absence is defined as any missed work time, including full-day absences, partial-day absences, tardiness, or early departures, that occurs for one of the following reasons:

1. The absence exceeds the maximum leave available under an applicable ACE policy;
2. The absence does not qualify under any ACE leave policy; or
3. The employee fails to report to work without prior notification to their supervisor (no call/no show).

Employees are required to notify their immediate supervisor of any unexpected absence or tardiness as soon as possible, but no later than one (1) hour prior to the start of their scheduled workday, unless extenuating circumstances prevent such notification.

Employees who accumulate three (3) unexcused absences, no call/no show occurrences, or instances of unexcused tardiness during a school year may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

A no call/no show is considered a serious violation of this policy and may result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

An employee who cannot obtain prior approval for an absence due to illness or emergency must request approval as soon as possible. An employee absent from work without prior approval or who does not qualify for delayed approval is subject to disciplinary action, including termination. An employee absent from work for two consecutive days will be required to supply a note from their healthcare provider to return to work.

An employee who fails to report to work or notify their supervisor for three (3) consecutive scheduled workdays will be considered to have voluntarily resigned employment with ACE.

Paid Leave

Paid leave varies according to each employee's status and designations assigned. Table 7.1 below outlines the holidays (school and federal) and Paid Time Off available for each. Further discussion of holidays observed and the availability of Paid Time Off is in Sections D and E below.

Classification	School Holiday/Break Paid	Federal Holiday Paid	PTO	Paid Sick Time
Part-time/Substitue positions	None	None	None	None
Full-time hourly	8 hours per day as indicated by the calendar	8 hours per day as indicated by the calendar	Employees will receive an initial allocation of forty (40) hours of Paid Time Off (PTO) at the beginning of each school year. In addition, employees will accrue up to forty (40) additional hours of PTO during the school year of actual workdays, earned proportionately over the employee's 180 contracted workdays.	In PTO
Salaried	8 hours per day as indicated by the calendar	8 hours per day as indicated by the calendar	Employees will receive an initial allocation of forty (40) hours of Paid Time Off (PTO) at the beginning of each school year. In addition, employees will accrue up to forty (40) additional hours of PTO during the school year of actual workdays, earned proportionately over the employee's 180 contracted workdays employment	In PTO
ED, Principal, Director of Operations, Curriculum Coordinator, Director of Behavioral Support, Coordinator of Therapy Services	8 hours per day as indicated by the calendar	8 hours per day as indicated by the calendar	15 days (120 Hours)	In PTO

Table 7.1 – Available Time Off***All Employees must work their entire shift the day before and the workday after the holiday to receive pay for that holiday**.

Paid Holiday 2026-2027

School holidays/breaks (i.e., days other than Federal Holidays when school is not in session) are paid for salaried employees. If a paid Federal Holiday falls in a school holiday/break, full time hourly employees will be paid for those days. Federal holidays and school breaks remain unpaid for part-time positions. **These days are considered black out days for requesting time off and for sick time.** These dates are approved by the Governing Board prior to the start of the school year. School holidays are indicated by ACE's school calendar. Holidays change every school year; please refer to the school calendar to determine the holidays your assigned campus observes.

Federal Holidays (hourly and salaried employees)

- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Easter
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- July 4th

School Holidays/Breaks (salaried employees only)

- Fall Break (October 19-23)
- Thanksgiving Break (November 23-27)
- Winter Break (December 21-January 1)
- Spring Break (March 22-30)

Personal Leave/PTO

Paid Time Off (PTO) is a generic term that includes both Personal Days and Sick Time.

- PTO Policy
    - **Employees are assigned PTO based on the classification below at the beginning of each school year.**
    - **No PTO will be granted in the first 4 weeks of school.**
    - **No PTO will be granted to new employees for the first 30 days of employment.**

***For hourly and salaried employees, the federal holiday is only paid if the employee works their entire shift the day before and the day after said federal holiday..**

PTO Carryover

- A maximum of five unused days of PTO time may be carried over from one fiscal year to the next.

PTO Payout

Unused PTO may be paid back, with stipulations, as outlined below

- Employees must have unused PTO at the time of the request
- Requested hours to payout may be made in increments of 24, 32, or 40 hours only. An employee may only request a maximum of 120 hours of PTO if a balance of unused PTO remains.
- PTO payout is subject to a 20% reduction factor per IRS regulations.
- Payments will be made and included with the final payroll run of the school year. Employees will be paid for any unused PTO upon separation/termination in their last paycheck.

Use of PTO

- The employee is expected to request PTO from the Executive Director 2 weeks prior to planned time off. If 2 weeks prior notice is not given, the employee will not receive the benefit of PTO. If the time is taken, this will show up as unpaid time off (UPTO).
- Every effort will be made to grant PTO requests; however, without appropriate coverage for instructional time, adjustments to PTO may be necessary. Employees should plan their PTO around business and classroom needs, including training, when applicable. The Executive Director has the right to deny PTO requests depending on staffing needs and circumstances.
- For unplanned absences, the employee must use “call off” procedures and enter time off on the employee self-service.
- Prior to using PTO, all Teachers must have an emergency portfolio for use by a substitute, including lesson plans as required by ACE’s operating manual.
- Paid Time Off may be used for illness of the employee and immediate family members (spouse, children, stepchildren, parents, and the grandparents of the employee)when a 10 day notice is not able to be given due to illness.
- Paid Time Off may be taken as ½ day or full day increments for salaried and hourly employees.
- If an employee requests PTO greater than the employee’s allotted PTO, the employee may request time off without pay with approval. Paid Time Off must be exhausted prior to unpaid leave as part of FMLA leave for eligible employees. For example, an FMLA-eligible employee who requests leave for 20 days and has six days of PTO must take six days of paid leave and 14 days of unpaid leave. See FMLA Policy for more information.

Jury Duty Leave

ACE encourages employees to fulfill their legal and civic responsibilities, which include jury duty and court appearances. Employees must provide documentation of the need for leave in connection with

a court appearance or jury duty to their immediate Supervisor and Executive Director as soon as possible. Hourly employees will be paid for a maximum of 7.5 hours per day up to five (5) days for jury duty. Exempt salaried employees who are absent from work for part of a week for jury duty will be paid their regular salary for the week. When serving judicial duty, employees must notify their immediate Supervisor and Executive Director daily if they are expected to be absent from work. Employees are required to return to work as soon as the duty is completed. Employees must provide the Executive Director with certification of services the Jury Commissioner provides when jury duty is completed.

Death in the Family/Funeral Leave

If an eligible employee should suffer the death of an immediate family member, the employee will be entitled to two (2) days of paid bereavement leave, with the approval of the Executive Director, to make funeral arrangements and attend services. For this purpose, “immediate family members” are defined as mother, father, brother, sister, spouse, child, grandparent, and the same relatives of the employee’s spouse/domestic partner. Requests for time off related to the death of any individual other than an immediate family member may be granted using available PTO or as time off without pay. The Executive Director may request supporting documentation of the death. Bereavement payment will not be counted as hours worked for overtime purposes.

Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

ACE provides leave in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which provides unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees in certain circumstances. If eligible, you may take up to 12 or 26 weeks of family or medical leave, whichever is applicable (as explained below), within the relevant 12-month period defined below. While you are on FMLA leave, ACE will maintain your group insurance coverage at the same level and under the same circumstances as when you were actively working, as explained more fully below. On returning from approved FMLA leave, you have the right to be restored to the same job or an equivalent position, subject to the terms, limitations, and exceptions provided by law.

Eligibility

- To be an “eligible employee,” you must satisfy the following conditions:
    - You must have worked for ACE for at least 12 months consecutively
    - You must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12 months preceding the start of your request for leave
    - You must work at an eligible worksite. You work at an “eligible worksite” if at least 50 employees, including part-time employees, work within a 75-mile radius of you.

Leave Entitlement

- You may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid FMLA leave in a 12-month period, which uses a "rolling" method that is measured backward from the date you use any FMLA leave for any of the following reasons:
    - The birth of a child and in order to care for that child (leave to be completed within one year of the child's birth);
    - The placement of a child with you for adoption or foster care and in order to care for the newly placed child (leave to be completed within one year of the child's placement);
    - To care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition;
    - To care for your own serious health condition, which renders you unable to perform any of the essential functions of your position or
    - Qualifying exigency of a spouse, child, or parent who is a military member on covered active duty or called to covered active duty status (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty).

You may take up to 26 weeks of unpaid FMLA leave in a single 12-month period, beginning on the first day that you take FMLA leave to care for a spouse, child, or next of kin who is a covered service member and who has a serious injury or illness related to active duty service, as defined by the FMLA's regulations (known as military caregiver leave).

Requesting Leave

To qualify for a leave, you must apply using the "Application for Family or Medical Leave of Absences." The completed application must state the reason for leave, the expected duration of the leave, and the starting and ending dates of the leave. You may also be required to complete certification from a healthcare provider. All applications are kept confidential and separate from your personnel file.

In the event of a foreseeable leave of absence, you must notify Human Resources 30 days prior to the day you want to start your leave. If this is not possible, you must at least give notice as soon as is practicable. If you fail to do so, your leave starting date may be delayed for up to 30 days after you do apply. In the case of a leave that is not foreseeable, you must notify ACE as soon as possible, generally within one or two days.

ACE will determine whether or not you meet the eligibility requirements at the time you provide notification for the leave.

Approval of Leave

ACE will approve or disapprove of the leave as qualifying under this policy as soon as practical after all required information is received from you.

In no event will ACE tolerate outside employment in any capacity by an employee on FMLA leave. Any outside employment or work for compensation on any basis by an employee on leave under this policy will result in immediate dismissal and forfeiture of all rights.

Medical Certificates

You will be required to provide a healthcare provider certification if you request a leave to care for a seriously ill family member or if you request a leave because you cannot perform your job due to a serious health condition. The certification must state the date on which the health conditions commenced, the probable duration of the conditions, and the appropriate medical facts regarding the condition. You must use the “Certification of Physician or Practitioner” form from Human Resources. You must give your physician or practitioner a copy of your most recent job description to review when completing the form. A similar certification will be required for reduced hours or intermittent leave due to your health condition or your family member's. In that case, the certification must be completed to state that such leave is medically necessary, the expected duration, and your leave schedule.

If you provide at least 30 days’ notice of medical leave, you should also provide the medical certification before leave begins. Failure to provide requested medical certification in a timely manner may result in denial of FMLA-covered leave until it is provided.

At its own expense, ACE may require an examination by a second healthcare provider to confirm the first opinion. ACE designates or selects this physician or practitioner for the second certification. If the first two opinions conflict, ACE may require a third certification, again at ACE’s expense, by a physician or practitioner jointly approved by you and ACE. This third opinion is binding on everyone.

Intermittent or Reduced Hours Leaves

Where medically necessary, FMLA leaves occasioned by the need to care for a seriously ill family member or due to your own illness may be taken on a reduced-hours basis or intermittently (in other words, you can take hours or days off, rather than leaving work altogether for 12 weeks). The total leave is still limited to 12 weeks per year.

Intermittent or reduced-hour leave schedules will need to be pre-approved by ACE if it is requested for the care of a child following birth or preceding adoption or foster care placement. ACE may require you to have a schedule that does not disrupt its business operation.

While you are on intermittent or reduced-hour leave, ACE may temporarily transfer you to a position for which you are qualified (without your approval) that better accommodates your new schedule while still providing you with equivalent pay and benefits.

Substitution of Paid Leave

FMLA leave is unpaid. You will be required to substitute your accrued paid time off for unpaid leave, a part of your 12 weeks of leave. If you are taking paid time off when you have an event qualifying for leave under this policy, your 12 weeks will be measured from the date of the event. The substitution of paid leave time for unpaid FMLA leave time does not extend the 12 or 26 weeks (whichever is applicable) of the FMLA leave period. In no case can the substitution of paid leave time for unpaid leave time result in your receipt of more than 100% of your salary. Your FMLA leave runs concurrently with other types of leave, such as accrued paid time off that is substituted for unpaid FMLA leave and any state family leave laws, to the extent state law allows.

Health Benefits During Leave

During an approved FMLA leave, ACE will continue to provide coverage under our health plans under the same conditions as when you were not on leave. You also will be eligible for and subject to any new health plans or changes to existing health plans that take effect while you are on your leave. Your regular health benefits will end when you indicate that you will not be returning to work, but you may choose to elect continued medical coverage under our plan at your expense at that time.

If you receive a paycheck during your leave due to the substitution of paid days off, your portion of the health plan premiums may be deducted pre-tax, provided you designate that you agree to this treatment when you apply for the leave. Otherwise, you must pay the premiums on an after-tax basis at two-week intervals. You must pay your premium contributions toward health care benefits by sending them to the address below:

Academy of Collaborative Education
505 Glenmar Avenue
Monroe, LA 71201

ACE will continue to pay its share of the health premiums, if any, during your leave. Your health coverage will be terminated following a 30-day grace period if you fail to pay your required premiums.

ACE may collect its premiums relating to the unpaid portion of your leave (and any paid on your behalf, should you fail to pay them) from you if you fail to return to work and the end of your leave. The only exceptions to ACE's reimbursement rights are if (1) the event that prevents you from returning to work is a serious health condition of you or your family member or (2) is beyond your control (as determined by ACE in its sole discretion). ACE will require you to provide a certification of the serious health condition within 30 days of ACE's request if even preventing your return to work is a serious health condition. If you fail to provide the certification, ACE can recover the premiums paid on your behalf during the leave period. An employee is not entitled to the accrual of any seniority or employment benefits that would have occurred if not for the taking of leave.

An employee who takes family or medical leave will retain all employment benefits accrued before the date leave began.

Return to Work and Restoration of Job

Upon your return from a leave under this FMLA policy, you will be entitled to be restored to the same position you held when your leave started or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. ACE cannot guarantee that an employee will be returned to their original job. If you cannot be returned to your original job, you will be assigned to an equivalent position with equivalent pay and benefits. Under federal guidelines, the equivalent position will be determined by ACE in its sole discretion.

Some key employees (those in the top 10% of the workforce in terms of compensation for a 75-mile radius of the worksite) may not be eligible for reinstatement. If the return of a key employee would cause substantial and grievous economic injury to the employer, ACE can deny their reinstatement based on factors such as workplace disruption. If you desire more information about the rules relating to key employees, please ask your benefits manager for details. After applying for a leave, you will be notified whether you are a "key employee" and may or may not be eligible for reinstatement.

Instructional Employees

Suppose the intermittent or reduced time-off leave is for an instructional employee whose principal responsibility is to instruct students in the classroom, small setting, or individually. In that case, ACE can require the employee to take the leave for a specific duration not more significant than the planned duration of treatment, or ACE can temporarily transfer an employee to an alternate position with comparable pay and benefits, which better accommodates the recurring periods of leave. However, the leave must be requested to care for a qualifying family member or as a result of the employee's serious health condition; must be based upon planned, foreseeable medical treatment; and must be for more than twenty percent of the working days in the leave period.

An employee may only use FMLA leave when the employee would otherwise be working. For example, the period during the summer vacation when the employee would not have been required to work is not counted against the employee's twelve weeks of FMLA leave. There are also specific FMLA rules for "instructional employees" of public and private elementary and secondary schools whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, small group, or individual setting. The purpose of these rules is to help avoid the disruption to the educational process that can result when instructional employees take leave and would otherwise return shortly before the end of the school term. For example, where an employee plans two weeks of leave to care for a family member, and that leave begins three weeks before the end of the semester, the employer could potentially require the employee to stay out on leave until the end of the semester.

If an instructional employee needs to take family and medical leave near the end of the semester, the instructional employee might be required to continue leave through the end of the semester under the following circumstances:

- If the employee leave begins more than five weeks before the end of the semester, the leave is scheduled to last longer than three weeks, and the employee will return during the last three weeks of the semester.
- If the employee leave begins less than five weeks before the end of the semester, the leave is scheduled to last longer than two weeks, and the employee will return during the two weeks of the semester.
- If the employee leave begins less than three weeks before the end of the semester and the scheduled leave is longer than five days.

Upon your return, you will also be entitled to participate in all of the employee welfare benefits plans you participated in prior to your leave without meeting any otherwise applicable qualification requirements (such as satisfying a waiting period or pre-existing condition waiting period, waiting for open enrollment, or passing a medical examination). Any increases in benefits that do not depend on seniority or accrual during the leave period will be provided upon your return. Additional Information - you may obtain additional explanation by contacting our Human Resources at the address below:

505 Glenmar Avenue
Monroe, LA 71201

Military Service

An employee called to temporary active duty or required to participate in training as a member of a military reserve organization will be granted a leave of absence per applicable state and federal laws. The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services and applicants to the uniformed services.

Reemployment Rights with military service

An employee is entitled to be restored to the job and benefits they would have attained if they had not been absent due to military service if:

- ACE received advance written or verbal notice of the service;
- The employee has five years or less of cumulative service in the uniformed services while with ACE
- The employee returns to work or applies for reemployment in a timely manner after the conclusion of the service; and
- The employee had not been separated from service with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions.

Health Insurance Coverage

During military service leave, all benefits provided under an employee benefit plan are governed by the terms and conditions of the applicable employee benefit plan documents in accordance with applicable law. Upon return to work, the employee is entitled to be reinstated to ACE's health plan upon reemployment without waiting periods or exclusions.

Employee Conduct

Employment of Close Relatives

No person employed by ACE may be directly supervised by a close relative (father, mother, sister, brother, son, daughter, spouse, grandparent, first cousin, or grandchild) unless approved in writing by the Executive Director/Board. This policy applies to all positions: part-time, full-time, and contract employment.

Staff Conduct

All staff members on school property or using school property for any purpose shall refrain from engaging in:

- Any conduct intended to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with teaching, research, service, administrative, or disciplinary functions or any activity sponsored by the Board.
- Physical or verbal abuse of or threat of harm to anyone on property owned or controlled by ACE or at functions sponsored or supervised by ACE.
- Damage or threat of damage to ACE property when the property is located on premises controlled by ACE.
- Forceful or unauthorized entry to or occupation of ACE's facilities, including buildings and grounds.
- Use, possession, distribution, or sale of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, imitation drugs, drug paraphernalia, or other illegal contraband on school property or at school-sponsored functions.
- Failure to comply with the lawful direction of the school officials or any other law-enforcement officers performing their duties or failure to identify oneself to such officials or officers when lawfully requested to do so.
- The carrying or possession of a weapon on school grounds.
- A knowing violation of ACE's policies and regulations.
- Any conduct violating federal, state, or city law or regulation.

At a minimum, all staff members will:

- Thoroughly acquaint themselves with the provisions, rules, regulations, and applicable information contained within the policies adopted by the Board.
- Conduct themselves in a manner consistent with effective and orderly education and protect the students and school property.
- Maintain order and carry out all directives given by the Executive Director concerning the maintenance of order.
- Dress and maintain a general appearance to reflect their position so as not to be detrimental to ACE's educational program.

Immediately report to Supervisor, SPED Director, or Executive Director, a violation of Louisiana Revised Statutes Tit. 40, § 966, when they observe a person present in a drug-free school zone who:

- Possess or uses marijuana, peyote, or narcotic drugs; or
- Is intentionally present in a drug-free zone for the purpose of selling marijuana, peyote, dangerous drugs, prescription-only drugs, or narcotic drugs.

Employees may only request students, families, or staff to donate or participate in a fundraiser if the fundraiser is school-sponsored and approved by the Administration.

If the Administration has approved this action, employees may only solicit students, families, or staff by asking them to purchase personal items such as food or items from another business, such as Girl Scouts.

Employees of ACE who violate these rules may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Staff Conduct with Students

Employees are expected to exercise general supervision over the conduct of students, not only while in the classroom but also before and after school and during recess. Teachers and staff are dedicated to fostering a culture of dignity and understanding, ensuring that each student's individual needs and emotions are acknowledged and respected. The expectation is to proactively work to prevent situations that could potentially embarrass or discomfort any student, employing sensitivity, empathy, and discretion in their interactions. Through proactive communication, attentive observation, and compassionate intervention, ACE strives to uphold the emotional well-being and dignity of every student, promoting a supportive learning environment where all individuals can thrive and succeed.

Staff members, including teachers and support personnel, are strictly prohibited from engaging in private communication with students through personal social media accounts, text messaging, or private messaging platforms. All communication with students must occur through approved and monitored school channels (e.g., official school email or learning platforms) and should be professional, transparent, and appropriate.

This policy is in place to protect both students and staff, maintain professional boundaries, and ensure the safety and integrity of all interactions within the school community.

Relationships between staff members and students that include “dating,” “courtship,” or “romantic involvement” are prohibited. These behaviors deviate from ethical or professional standards and are unacceptable and contrary to the expectations of ACE governance. Staff/student relationships shall reflect mutual respect between staff members and students and support the dignity of the profession and educational process. At no time should employees allow themselves to be in a situation where this policy appears in violation.

Refer to the social media policy within this Handbook for additional direction on the use of social media with students and families.

Violations of the above shall be considered serious and may result in severe disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Social Media Policy

Maintaining professional boundaries on social media is critical to sustaining public trust and ensuring that relationships with students, families, and colleagues remain professional.

- All online dialogue and interactions with students and family “friend requests” or “follow” students or ACE families on social media.
- Do not send private messages or direct messages to students or their families on any social media platform. You must use ACE's email system to communicate directly with a student or family.
- If you want to use texting to communicate with parents, you must get their written permission first and provide it to the office for filing.
- Never share information with students online, and never share student information online unless it is through ACE-approved applications.
- Keep in mind that not all students have or use social media accounts. When considering the use of a social media account for educational purposes, also consider communicating educational information through other channels.
- Become familiar with students with a photo/video restriction on file. Posting/publishing/filming live students without written permission is a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
- If you have a classroom social media account where you share essential classroom items with students, students may follow your account for the purpose of learning. Employees are not allowed to follow students. Instead, encourage students to use hashtags so you may follow the online conversation linked to a specific area of study. Employees must inform their supervisor that they are using a social media account.
- If you post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video, or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, or intimidating, disparaging customers, members, associates, or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone’s reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment based on race, sex, disability, religion, or any other status protected by law or company policy.

Drug-Free Workplace

ACE is dedicated to maintaining a safe educational environment. Thus, ACE has implemented a drug and alcohol-free work environment policy.

No employee shall report to work while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The use, sale, distribution, manufacture, or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, hallucinogens, stimulants, sedatives, controlled substances, imitation drugs, or drug paraphernalia on ACE property/premises is strictly prohibited. ACE property/premises includes any school building or premises, any school-owned vehicle, or any school-owned vehicles used to transport staff members or students to and from school, school activities, or school business. Therefore, this includes the misuse of prescription drugs or any mood-altering substances while on ACE property, during ACE paid time (i.e., conference, training sessions, etc.), at a school-sponsored or school-approved activity or event, or in circumstances the school believes will adversely affect ACE's operations or safety.

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment and/or notification of law enforcement authorities. The transferring, manufacturing, offering, selling, or arranging for the sale of any alcohol, narcotic, hallucinogen, stimulant, sedative, drug, imitation drugs, or any other mood-altering substance while on ACE property or during working time will result in immediate termination.

As a condition of employment, each employee shall abide by the terms of this policy respecting a drug-free workplace.

Drug Testing Policy

ACE reserves the right in certain circumstances to require employees, as a condition of employment and/or continued employment, to submit to urine, blood, or other drug tests to determine the presence of illegal or unauthorized drugs/alcohol or other prohibited substances. Each employee so tested will be required to provide written consent prior to testing. All sampling will be performed with concern for each employee's personal privacy, dignity, and confidentiality. The final test results will be disclosed only on a need-to-know basis or as legally required. These unannounced tests may be exercised under the following circumstances:

- Pre-Employment Testing: Job applicants may be required to undergo screening for the presence of illegal drugs or alcohol as a condition of employment at ACE. Such screenings will require voluntarily submission to a urinalysis test at a laboratory chosen by the school and by signing consent agreement to release the school from liability. Any applicant with positive test results will be denied employment at that time but may initiate another inquiry with the school after six (6) months. ACE will not tolerate the current abuse of drugs/alcohol.
- For Cause/Post-Incident Testing: When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a working employee's behavior, performance, error in judgment, accident, incident, or unsafe actions are related to substance abuse or when there is an accident or near accident involving personnel in which injury to persons or damage to property has occurred or potentially could have occurred, the employee must submit to a requested drug screening.
- Post-Accident Testing: If an employee suffers an occupational on-the-job injury requiring treatment from a doctor, causes injury to a coworker requiring treatment from a doctor, or is

injured due to the employee's failure to wear required personal protective equipment, drug testing may be required.

- Random Testing: All employees in safety-sensitive and security-sensitive positions or with a previous positive result may be subject to routine drug/alcohol testing to prevent and detect substance abuse.
- Post-Treatment/Counseling/Rehabilitation or Return-to-Work Testing: Submission to a drug screening test will be a condition of reinstatement of employment upon completion of a drug/alcohol treatment or counseling program or any other return-to-work established procedure.

Any preliminary investigation of violation of this policy may require placing an employee on suspension pending a review of the surrounding circumstances, facts, and test results. Failure to comply with these provisions will be considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge or suspension without pay even for a first offense.

Weapons

Weapons are prohibited on school grounds, except for firearms in a program approved by the school and carried by a peace officer while performing official duties. Any employee aware that a student is carrying a weapon **must report it immediately**.

Recording Purpose

- Establish rules pertaining to employee conduct, performance, and responsibilities so that all personnel can conduct themselves according to specific rules of good behavior and conduct.
- The purpose of these rules is not to restrict anyone's rights but rather to help people work together harmoniously according to our standards for efficient and courteous services for our customers.
- Reasonable rules concerning the personal conduct of employees are necessary if ACE is to function safely and effectively.

Policy

Degrees of discipline (disciplinary steps) are generally progressive and are used to ensure that the employee has the opportunity to correct his/her performance.

Any step or steps of the disciplinary process may be skipped at ACE's discretion. For serious offenses, such as fighting, theft, insubordination, threats of violence, the sale or possession of drugs or alcohol on school grounds, etc., termination may be the first and only disciplinary step taken.

ACE's culture is to teach the way children with autism learn. Our driving force is to empower students with ASD to reach their full potential in motivating and engaging environments using individualized programs so that each child gains the skills to integrate into the community and become a fulfilled, productive citizen.

In order to accomplish this culture, we have organization-wide core values that every employee is expected to demonstrate daily. In order to ensure all students can learn at the highest levels, all ACE employees must demonstrate the following core values at every opportunity. Poor performance and habits diminish students' opportunities for learning and will not be tolerated by any staff member.

1. Respect
2. Passion
3. Excellence
4. Collaboration
5. Perseverance

Documentation

ACE will document a disciplinary process beginning with the first notice. The employee must sign all disciplinary actions to demonstrate acknowledgment and understanding of the discipline.

ACE reserves the right to remove any disciplinary action in the file based on the employee's improved behavior and/or performance. However, the removal is not guaranteed and is at ACE's discretion.

Child Abuse Reporting

Louisiana law requires school personnel, in addition to parents and professionals, to report suspected child abuse to law enforcement or the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline whenever there is a reasonable belief that a child has been abused, regardless of who the perpetrator is. This law applies to any individual who works for ACE. A "reasonable belief" is when there are facts from which any employee could reasonably conclude that a child has been abused. The person knowing those facts is required to report the facts to the appropriate authorities.

Employees are required to make a report "immediately" once it is believed that a child has been the victim of abuse. Employees must inform a supervisor of suspected abuse; however, this does not relieve the employee of the duty to report the abuse to the appropriate authorities. Failure to report suspected child abuse can result in criminal and civil penalties.

Abuse can be inflicted on a child by a parent, a relative, another adult, a school employee, or even another child. If an employee believes the perpetrator is the child's parent or guardian, the report of suspected child abuse should be made to the DCFS Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 855-452-5437 (855-4LA-KIDS). All other reports should be made to law enforcement. If school personnel suspect that an adult is being abused (e.g., an 18-year-old student or an adult student on an IEP), the report of the suspected abuse should be made to Adult Protective Services (APS) at 800-898-4910.

Employees are required to report suspected abuse to the Executive Director and Local Law Enforcement Agency, or DCFS. Tribal Law Enforcement or Tribal Social Services are to be contacted when the child is Native American and resides on tribal land. A written report with the following

information must be emailed to the Executive Director within seventy-two (72) hours of the initial report:

- The names and addresses of the minor and the minor's parents or person or persons having custody of said minor if known.
- The minor's age and the nature and extent of injuries or physical neglect, including any evidence of previous injuries or physical neglect.
- Any other information that such person believes might help establish the cause of the abuse, child abuse, physical injury, or neglect.

A person furnishing a report, information, or records required or authorized under Louisiana State Statutes or a person participating in a judicial or administrative proceeding or investigation resulting from a report, information, or records required or authorized under Louisiana State Statutes shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability by reason of such action, unless such person has acted with malice or unless such person has been charged with or is suspected of abusing or neglecting the child or children in question.

Facilities & Safety

Cell Phone Use

While at work, employees are expected to exercise discretion in using personal cell phones and devices. Excessive personal calls/texts during the workday can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others. In general, cell phones should not be used when they pose a security or safety risk, distract from work tasks, or while working with students.

Employees are not permitted to use personal cell phones/electronic devices

- While working with students
- While driving during work hours
- For inappropriate camera use
- For inappropriate voice recorder use
- Or to download, upload, or view offensive, obscene, or discriminatory images and text

Cell phone storage areas in classrooms will be used when personal cell phones are not in use in the classroom. If device usage results in a decline in productivity or interferes with an employee's duties, the administration may suspend the employee's right to use a cellular device and may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including termination.

School Property

All ACE computers, networks, communication systems, and other IT resources, including computer passwords, are school property. Computer, copier, fax, or other school equipment may only be used for personal business if the administration approves. Employees are required to take due care and

consideration of such equipment. Willful damage may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Depending on the job assignment, employees may receive school vehicles or equipment for use on the job. School property and equipment are only to be taken off school premises where authorized by your supervisor. Employees are prohibited from undertaking any unauthorized modifications to school vehicles or equipment.

Computer and Internet Usage Policy

ACE has established a policy relating to access to the Internet and ACE's private network.

Certain employees may be provided access to the Internet to assist them in performing their jobs. The Internet can be a valuable source of information and research. However, Internet use must be tempered with common sense and good judgment. Any individuals using systems expressly consent to monitoring their activities. Anyone using systems in violation of ACE's Internet Usage Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination. Furthermore, employees could be exposed to civil and criminal liability. ACE reserves the right to amend or modify this policy at any time as may be required.

ACE is not responsible for material viewed or downloaded by users from the Internet. The Internet is a worldwide network of computers that contains millions of pages of information. Users are cautioned that many of these pages include explicit and inappropriate material. Even innocuous search requests may lead to sites with highly offensive content.

Employees must not deliberately perform acts unrelated to legitimate business interests that waste computer resources. These acts include but are not limited to sending mass mailings or chain letters, spending excessive amounts of time on the Internet unrelated to business playing games, engaging in online chat groups, listening to streaming audio (radio, music, etc.) or streaming video (Newscasts, TV, Movie Trailers, etc.), or otherwise creating unnecessary network traffic. Because audio, video, and picture files require significant storage space, files of this, or any other sort, shall not be downloaded unless they are business-related.

The computers and computer accounts provided to employees are to assist them in the performance of their jobs. Employees should not have expectations of privacy or ownership in anything they create, store, send, or receive on the computer system. The computer and computer system belong to ACE and may only be used for business purposes. ACE has the right, but not the duty, to monitor any and all of the aspects of its computer system, including, but not limited to, monitoring sites visited by employees on the Internet, email traffic, any document created or stored on the computer system, and installed software applications.

ACE may use software to identify inappropriate Internet sites, including but not limited to sexually explicit sites. Such sites may be blocked from access by ACE's network. If you encounter inappropriate material while browsing the Internet, immediately disconnect from the site, regardless of whether the site is subject to ACE's blocking software.

Unlawful material (including, but not limited to, illegal copies of the software, music files, movie files, malware, malicious software, such as computer viruses, Trojan horse spyware, keyloggers, etc.), harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, or otherwise offensive, including offensive material concerning sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, other characteristics protected by law, or in violation of ACE's equal employment opportunity policy and its policies against sexual or other harassment, may not be loaded, downloaded from the Internet, displayed, or stored on ACE's computers. Employees encountering or receiving this kind of material should immediately report the incident to their administrator. ACE's equal employment opportunity policy and its policies against sexual or other harassment apply entirely to the use of the Internet, and any violation of those policies is grounds for discipline, up to and including termination.

Employees may not illegally copy material protected under copyright law or make that material available to others for copying. Employees are responsible for complying with copyright law and applicable licenses that may apply to software, music files (mp3, WMA, rm, ra, etc.), movie files (ripped copies of movies/videos to .avi, .mpg, .wmv, MOV, etc,), graphics documents, messages and other material you wish to download or copy. Employees may not agree to a license or download any material for which a registration fee is charged without first obtaining the express written permission of ACE's Executive Director.

To ensure security and avoid the spread of viruses, employees connecting to our network from computers not supplied by ACE must have up-to-date virus protection, a secure VPN connection, and a hardware-based router or software firewall. ACE will provide, upon approval, VPN (Virtual Private Network) client software for installation on your personal computer. However, all other security software is the responsibility of the end user.

Files obtained from sources outside ACE, including disks brought from home, files downloaded from the Internet, bulletin boards, or other online services, files attached to email, and files provided by clients or vendors, may contain dangerous computer viruses that may damage ACE's computer network. If you suspect a virus has been introduced into ACE's network, notify the Executive Director immediately.

Information posted on ACE's network is the property of ACE. Any copying or unauthorized use of such information is strictly prohibited without the express written consent of ACE.

Electronic Mail Policy

ACE has established a policy concerning access and disclosure of electronic mail messages created, sent, or received by school employees using ACE's email system.

ACE reserves the right to amend or modify this policy at any time as may be required. ACE's email network, both network-based and internet-based, is a private information system of ACE. Individuals using this system expressly consent to the monitoring of their activities. Any employee who violates this policy or uses the electronic mail system for improper purposes may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

1. ACE maintains an email system, which includes both network-based programs and web-based email programs accessed via ACE's computer network, and all email messages, together with attachments, sent or received via, or creased or stored on, ACE's email system. ACE provides this system to assist in conducting school business.
2. The email system is the property of ACE. Additionally, all messages composed, sent, or received on the email system are and remain the property of ACE. They are not the private property of any employee.
3. The use of the email system is reserved solely for the conduct of ACE business. The email system shall not be used for personal business. Further, the use of passwords for security does not guarantee the confidentiality of the email.
4. Employees may not use the email system to solicit for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other no-job-related solicitations.
5. The email system shall not be used to create any offensive or disruptive messages. Among those that are considered offensive are any messages that contain profanity, sexual implications, racial slurs, gender-specific slurs, or any other comment that offensively addresses someone's age, gender, religious or political beliefs, national origin, color, or disability, or any other characteristic protected by law.
6. Without prior authorization, the email system shall not be used to send (upload) or receive (download) unauthorized or illegal copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary financial information, or similar materials.
7. ACE reserves and intends to exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access, and disclose all messages created, received, or sent over the email system for any purpose. There should be no expectation of personal privacy or ownership of any email, including attachments, created, sent, received via, or stored on ACE's email system.
8. Users of the email system should routinely delete outdated or otherwise unnecessary emails and attachments, being careful not to delete messages that are considered public records and that must be stored according to ACE guidelines.
9. Employees shall not retrieve or read any email messages not sent to them. Notwithstanding ACE's right to retrieve and read any email, other employees should treat such messages as confidential and accessed only by the intended recipient. Employees shall not send emails from another employee's account without the intended sender's permission and identification. All business-related emails should be stored in ACE's document management system within the respective case or department collection.

10. ACE will attempt to block/delete with security software any potentially dangerous emails, such as those infected with a computer virus or that might have embedded links to corrupt Internet sites. However, there may be some email messages that “slip past” such software. It is essential that users NOT open any email from unrecognized senders or if the email looks suspicious. ACE’s network security requires everyone’s participation and diligence.
11. Any employee who discovers a violation of this policy shall notify the Administration.

Personal Laptop Use Policy

ACE has established a policy regarding access to ACE’s Internet via a personal laptop. Personal laptops are not allowed on the ACE school network.

Safety and Health

ACE's policy is to provide safe working conditions for all employees and establish the safety regulations necessary to ensure that safe working conditions are maintained. ACE’s policy is also to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local health and safety regulations. Some of the best safety improvement ideas come from employees. Individuals with ideas, concerns, or suggestions for improved safety in the workplace are encouraged to address them with their supervisor.

Each employee is expected to obey all safety rules, including wearing safety gear if necessary and exercising caution in all work activities. Employees must immediately report any unsafe conditions to the appropriate supervisor. Employees who violate safety standards, cause dangerous situations, or fail to report them or remedy such situations may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, employees must immediately notify their supervisor and complete an incident report. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and initiate insurance and workers’ compensation benefits procedures.

An employee is required to complete a Staff Incident Report on Google Forms and check in with the nurse immediately following an injury.

The school will notify employees of any additions to safety protocols and procedures.

Security

Surveillance cameras are installed where the security of either property or people would be enhanced, including, but not limited to, inside and outside buildings and on school buses. Surveillance cameras will not be used in locations with a reasonable expectation of privacy, as defined by law. In addition, each classroom will also have a camera.

Video and/or audio recordings may be used as evidence in any disciplinary action or administrative or criminal proceeding. They may become a part of a student's educational record or an employee's personnel file. All recordings of illegal activities of employees, students, or others will be forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement authority. ACE will comply with all requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy ACE (FERPA) prior to releasing any recordings to parents or guardians of students involved in disciplinary matters.

All classroom doors must remain locked at all times. All windows are to remain closed at all times. Please make sure all windows are locked at the end of each day.

ID/Access Badge

Each employee is provided with one ID/badge, which remains the property of ACE. This badge **must be worn** at all times while on campus as it grants access to all campus doors. Employees are responsible for the care of their ID/badge. If an ID/badge is misplaced, broken, or damaged, the employee must replace it at their own expense, see the Executive Assistant for replacement. If the employee is unable to pay, the replacement cost will be deducted from their paycheck.

Security Codes

The following codes should **not** be shared with students or parents. If a question regarding the meaning of the code arises, please refer the individual to the administrative team. Please become familiar with the following security codes:

Code Blue

This code should be used in a medical emergency anywhere on campus. When the announcement is made, the location of the emergency should be given. All available administrators and office staff will respond.

Code Red

This code is for a general Emergency. It means there are events taking place in the school that require a lockdown. All classroom doors should be locked, and the students must remain quiet so information announcements can be heard. Students in the hallway will report to the office or an administrator. No information about the incident will be announced. The nature of the incident will be relayed to the administration. Teachers will be notified as needed.

Code Ronald McDonald

This code should be used when an intruder is on the school premises.

Code Eloper

This code will be used if a student has eloped and/or is on the run. When the announcement is made, all staff should check the nearest hallway and notify the office that all is clear.

Code Adam
This code quickly alerts the entire campus team that a student is not in their appropriate location, and the assigned teacher needs to be made aware of their current location.

Campus Security
To continually improve the safety of our campus, we ask you to consider and assist us with the following:

- All faculty members are asked to monitor outside doors to ensure they remain closed at all times during the school day.
- All faculty members must keep their classroom doors locked during the school day.
- Please be aware of visitors on the ACE campus. All visitors must have a visitor's badge or be redirected to the office.
- Faculty members may not dismiss students from school. All students must be signed out at the office.

Staff Participation in Political Activities
An employee acting on behalf of ACE may not use ACE personnel, equipment, buildings, or other resources for the purpose of influencing the outcome of an election. Further, ACE employees are prohibited from their authority to influence the outcome of an election.

An employee acting on behalf of ACE may not provide pupils with written materials to influence the outcome of an election.

Smoking
In keeping with ACE's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment and in compliance with federal, state, and local laws, smoking, using vapor products, and using tobacco products is prohibited on any ACE property, in any school bus or school vehicle, and while working in any capacity for the school or with any student. This policy applies equally to all employees and visitors.

Dress Code
ACE expects all employees to exercise appropriate judgment regarding personal appearance, dress, and grooming to be most effective in performing their workplace duties. All employees are expected to present to work and dress professionally in ACE-approved attire to represent ACE's while on campus, at sponsored events, and when with students, parents, or visitors. ACE supervisors, leaders, and school administrators will monitor and enforce this policy.

ACE DRESS CODE:

Dress Code Policy for Classroom Staff, Paraprofessionals, Behavior Specialists, Teachers and Related Services:

- ***Tops*:**

- Colors: Navy blue, smoke gray, heather gray
- Logo: ACE logo on left chest
- Type of top: Daily: T-shirt, polo with logo **(No sleeveless shirts)**
- Type of Jacket: Navy fleece jacket with logo
- Type of Rain Jacket: Navy, gray, or white rain jacket with logo
- Special Occasion Shirts: To be announced as available through vendor

- ***Bottoms*:**
  - Scrub pants: Navy, smoke gray, black
  - Jeans: Fridays only or when announced by Leadership - no holes, frays, or rips
  - Employees with a religious exemption, may wear skirts below the knee with leggings in navy, smoke gray or black.
  - **NO SWEAT PANTS PERMITTED**
- **Dresses or Skirts/Skorts:**
  - Dresses, skirts or skorts must be no shorter than mid-thigh. Please wear athletic shorts underneath skirts or dresses.
  - Longer dresses must not impede staff members' ability to be mobile with students.
- ***Shoes:*** Closed toe shoes, only, are permitted such as tennis shoes, boots, or flats. Flip-flops and slides are not permitted.

- **Dress Code Policy for Office Staff, Directors, and Administrators:**
- ***Tops*:**
  - Colors: Navy blue, smoke gray, heather gray, white, black
  - Logo: ACE logo on left chest (ACE lapel pin for dress shirts)
  - Type of top: Daily: Business casual shirts with logo or lapel pin. Sleeveless tops are permitted with cardigan, jacket or suit jacket only.
  - Type of Jacket: Fleece jacket, cardigan, sweaters with logo or lapel pin
  - Type of Rain Jacket: Navy, gray, black or white rain jacket with logo or lapel pin
  - Special Occasion Shirts: To be announced as available through vendor
- **Dresses or Skirts/Skorts:**
  - Dresses, skirts or skorts must be no shorter than mid-thigh. Please wear athletic shorts underneath skirts or dresses.
  - Longer dresses must not impede staff members' ability to be mobile with students.
- ***Bottoms*:**
  - Pants: Business casual
  - Jeans: Fridays only or when announced by Leadership - no holes, frays, or rips
  - Employees with a religious exemption, may wear skirts below the knee with leggings in navy, smoke gray or black.
- ***Shoes*:** Closed toe shoes such as tennis shoes, boots, or heels. Heels must have a strap around the back of the heel. Any shoes with a heel may not exceed 2 inches. Flip-flops and slides are not permitted.

- The Executive team may wear formal business attire with an ACE lapel pin for special occasions, meetings, tours, and presentations.

Tattoo and Jewelry Policy:

ACE recognizes that personal appearance is an important element of self-expression and strives not to control or dictate appropriate employee appearance, specifically concerning jewelry or tattoos worn as a matter of personal choice. In keeping with this approach, ACE allows reasonable self-expression through personal appearance and permits employees to wear jewelry or display tattoos at the workplace within guidelines. Guidelines that management will consider to determine whether jewelry or tattoos may pose a conflict with the employee's job or work environment may include:

- No tattoos can be visible above the neckline on the neck or face.
- No tattoos or jewelry can be offensive or harassing to co-workers, students, parents, vendors, or others with whom ACE conducts business based on racial, sexual, religious, ethnic, or other characteristics or attributes of a sensitive or legally protected nature, including offensive language, images, and/or symbols.
- Personal jewelry such as long necklaces and oversized earrings (hoops or other earrings that are easily accessible) are prohibited for safety reasons.

NO SEE-THRU OR REVEALING CLOTHING, RIPPED PANTS, LEGGINS, OR EXERCISE CLOTHING CAN BE WORN AT ANY TIME.

If the administration determines an employee's jewelry or tattoos may present such a conflict, the employee will be encouraged to identify appropriate options, such as removing excess or offensive jewelry, covering tattoos, transferring to an alternate position, or other reasonable means to resolve the conflict.

Resignation

Any employee who feels the work environment is not a good fit and, therefore, must resign and notify his or her immediate supervisor or Administrator in writing ten business days prior to the date of resignation and include the reason for resignation.

Confidentiality/Non-Disclosure

Protecting confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to ACE's interests and success. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Student Records, activities or information
- Family Information
- Computer processes

- Computer Programs and Codes
- Financial Information Regarding ACE Marketing Strategies
- Educational Strategies

Employees who improperly use or disclose trade secrets or confidential business information will be terminated and may be subject to legal action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

Bringing others to work

Employees may not bring their children, family, or friends to work. Employees are required to focus on their responsibilities, and visitors can be a distraction from those responsibilities. If the need arises to bring someone to work with you, the employee must seek and receive approval from the administration.

Conflict of Interest

If a staff member is an outside provider for a student and family, the staff member cannot be placed in the same class or cohort with said student during their contracted year. Additionally, if a staff member is an outside provider for an ACE student, they must disclose this information to the Administration upon hire. This policy protects the employee from being placed in an uncomfortable situation or a possible ethical dilemma. Proper and appropriate boundaries are essential for protecting ACE's students, families, and staff.

Workplace Respect

All employees must demonstrate appropriate respect for students, families, staff members, and leaders at all times. Proper respect includes but is not limited to spoken words, gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice, volume of voice, listening to the other person, seeking assistance when needed, asking for clarification, and compromising. It is imperative to maintain a balanced culture where all are appreciated and work together in harmony.

In addition, respect must be shown to the school supplies, equipment, and property. Respect for property is crucial in working with others. Employees are required to return supplies (if not used) and equipment to the proper area when finishing utilizing to enable these to be ready for the following user. Employees should demonstrate care for school property by leaving work areas, classrooms, and shared spaces such as the multi-purpose room, therapy rooms, bathrooms, copier area, supply areas, playground, common areas, and lounge areas clean and neat once finished utilizing the area thus making it ready for the next user. Employees should pick up items from the floors for neatness and safety. Employees should be the model for students in demonstrating how to care for school supplies, equipment, and property and involving students in cleaning up, if appropriate.

Student & Staff Records

Student Records/FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) was enacted to protect the privacy interests of student records. All employees must fulfill the requirements outlined in FERPA.
FERPA establishes:

- The right for parents to access and review the education records of their children and the right for eligible students to inspect and review their own records;
- The right for parents and eligible students to challenge any records that they feel are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their privacy rights;
- The rights for parents and eligible students to give prior consent before a third party can have access to any education records and
- The right to be informed of the rights granted by FERPA and the procedures for exercising those rights.

Pursuant to FERPA, personally identifiable information generally cannot be disclosed to others without the parent's prior consent. Consent must be obtained in writing and should be signed and dated, specify the records to be disclosed, state the purpose of the disclosure, and identify the parties to whom the disclosure is to be made.

FERPA allows for the disclosure of student records without parental consent in the following circumstances:

- Directory information
- Teachers or other school officials
- Officials of another school system where the student seeks to enroll
- State juvenile justice systems or their officials
- State and federal educational authorities
- In compliance with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena
- In connection with the receipt or application of financial aid
- Organizations conducting educational studies
- Accrediting organizations, or
- Health and safety emergency

School officials must also maintain records of all requests for student information, except requests made by parents or school officials with a legitimate educational interest. Parents have the right to access and review these records to see who has had access to their child’s records.

Public Records

The public records of ACE will be open to inspection as provided by law. Public records consist of any recorded information made or received by ACE in the performance of ACE’s business. These public records include much of the information contained in personnel files.

Personnel Records

ACE maintains a personnel file for each employee. The personnel file includes information such as the employee's job application, resume, training records, performance appraisals and salary increases, and other employment records. Personnel files may also contain documents relative to a particular school employee that are necessary to comply with federal, state, or local laws.

It is necessary for an employee to inform the administration about any changes in name, address, telephone number, number of dependents, etc., in order for personal information to be up to date, which allows ACE to handle benefits, pay, and other vital matters properly.

Current employees may access their personnel files to inspect their contents. The contents of an employee's personnel file shall be kept confidential and will not be divulged to third parties absent either the employee's written consent or a court order. The Superintendent or designee shall serve as the official custodian of records for maintaining and securing of the files.

Compensation

Furloughs

ACE reserves the right to decrease by furloughing personnel for up to three (3) days during the school year when necessary. Personnel will not be required to perform any duties on any furlough days and will receive no compensation for such days. Personnel may not use paid sick or paid leave on such furlough days. Dates of furlough days, if any, shall be designated by ACE.

Payday

Please see the Payroll Calendar.

Overtime

ACE will pay time and a half to non-exempt employees who exceed 40 hours of work in a workweek. Paid leave, such as holiday, sick, or vacation pay, does not apply toward hours worked. The workweek begins at noon on Sunday and ends at 11:59 p.m. on Saturday.

Although hourly employees are generally scheduled for a 40-hour workweek, overtime payments commence once the employee exceeds 40 hours in a workweek. Non-exempt employees are required to punch in and out for lunch each workday.

Overtime Approval

All non-exempt employees are required to obtain approval from the Supervisor before using overtime. Employees anticipating the need for overtime to complete the week's work must notify the Supervisor and obtain approval before working hours beyond their regular schedule. Staff must obtain approval for overtime from the Supervisor via email. Once the Supervisor has received approval from the ED,

the employee may work the overtime hours. Approval is required for hours that exceed 40 hours in a workweek.

Mandatory Overtime

During busy periods, ACE may require non-exempt employees to work extended hours. Overtime is considered a condition of employment, and refusal to accept when reasonable notice has been given is cause for discipline, up to and including termination.

Consequences of Overuse of Overtime

Directors who authorize staff members to work overtime without prior approval from the Head of Schools will be subject to disciplinary action. Directors who continually rely on overtime hours to complete a week's work without it being deemed extenuating circumstances by management will be subject to disciplinary action.

Consequences of Unauthorized Overtime

Employees who fail to obtain approval before working hours beyond their typical 40-hour work week will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Timekeeping:

Employees are required to accurately record their time worked. Hourly and Salaried employees are required to use the ACE clock in/out system. Time and attendance are kept on an electronic system: Bamboo. No one may record hours worked for another employee. Altering, falsifying, or tampering with timekeeping records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of both employees. In the event of an error in recording your time, please report the matter to the supervisor immediately.

Benefits

Benefit Eligibility

If you are an active, full-time employee working at least 30 hours per week, you are eligible to enroll in ACE's benefits program. Temporary and part-time employees do not qualify for benefits. The following family members are eligible for medical, dental, vision, and voluntary Dependent Life/AD&D coverage:

- Legal spouse
- Child(ren) up to age 26 for medical, dental, and/or vision
- Voluntary Dependent Life includes unmarried children from 15 days up to 19 or up to 25 if full-time student
- Extended coverage available for children with special needs
  Please see the plan documents for details

Newly hired employees are subject to a waiting period based on their classification:

- Hourly employees - benefits will become effective on the first day of the month following 60 days of employment or in accordance with the plan documents
- Salary employees - benefits will become effective on the first day following the date of hire or in accordance with the plan documents.

Initial medical benefits forms must be completed by the employee's start date. It is the employee's responsibility to complete the medical benefits forms reflecting elections of benefits. Eligible employees, who choose not to obtain medical insurance through UVA, must sign a waiver of participation in the benefit programs. **Changes to benefits elections can only be made to an existing benefits policy during open enrollment or with a qualifying event.** Open enrollment will be announced each Fall. New coverage, or any changes made to an existing policy during open enrollment, will become effective on January 1 of the following calendar year.

Workers' Compensation

Our Workers' Compensation Insurance Policy covers on-the-job injuries. ACE provides this insurance at no cost to ACE employees. An on-the-job injury is defined as an accidental injury suffered in the course of work or an illness that is directly related to performing assigned job duties. Employees who cannot work due to a job-related injury or illness may have their medical bills and a portion of their income paid by Workers' Compensation insurance until they can return to work.

All injuries or illnesses arising from an employee's employment scope must be reported to the employee's supervisor immediately. Prompt reporting is the key to immediate benefits. Consistent with applicable state law, failure to report an injury within a reasonable period of time could jeopardize your claim. Employees should ensure their right to benefits by reporting every injury, no matter how slight.

Neither ACE nor its 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 by ACE, or injury because of horseplay, or drugs or alcohol abuse.

*Employees returning to work after being absent due to a work-related injury must report to Joellen Freeman, Executive with a doctor's clearance for returning to work.

COBRA

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) allows employees and their enrolled dependents to elect to continue health care coverage in a school-sponsored plan even after termination of employment or other loss of eligibility. Generally, you are required to pay the entire premium for the coverage provided under COBRA. their exit interview or upon termination, UVA will provide notice regarding how to continue insurance coverage and any other benefits employees currently have that are eligible for continuation. Please contact the Executive Director for further information.

Telework Policy

Requests/Permission to Telework

Permission to telework is at ACE's discretion and, even where initially approved, can be withdrawn at any time. For example, ACE may need to pivot from operating a traditional in-person instruction program to a hybrid program that includes live attendance to a fully remote instruction program. Therefore, the criteria the School uses to approve telework requests and the weight assigned to each criterion may vary based on the instructional needs at that time.

If the employee wishes to telework and has yet to be required to telework under the instructional program in effect at that time, that employee may submit a written request to the school for permission to telework. All teleworking arrangements must be approved in advance by the Executive Director, and permission to telework is at the School's sole discretion, which can be withdrawn at any time. A request for permission to telework should:

- Be in writing
- Identify what, if any, technology or other resources or equipment the employee would need from the School in order to telework
- Specify if the telework request is based on a disability for which a reasonable accommodation is requested.
- Must be submitted to the employee's direct supervisor and Executive Director
- The employee's supervisor may request a list of deliverables prior to approval.

Upon receipt of the request, the School may contact the employee for additional information.

Trial Period of Teleworking

The School may approve a request to telework for a trial period. After the trial period, the school will review the teleworking arrangement, and it may be withdrawn, amended, or extended.

Teleworking Procedures

Neither the Policy nor any permission provided by the School for an employee to telework alters the terms and conditions of the employee's employment with the School. Employees permitted to telework must continue to abide by all the School's employee policies, including all policies maintained by the School. Failure to follow any of the School's employee policies may result in discipline, termination of the teleworking arrangement, or even termination of employment. Employees are prohibited from engaging in unauthorized work during their teleworking work hours.

Timekeeping

Non-exempt employees will be required to accurately record all their work hours while teleworking. Teleworking employees must comply with the School's timekeeping policy and payroll policies and procedures, including using the School's timekeeping system. Employees are prohibited from working in excess of the scheduled hours per day and per workweek without obtaining advanced written approval from their supervisor. In no case may teleworking non-exempt employees work overtime without express advance written approval from their supervisor. Failure to comply with the requirement may result in the immediate termination of the teleworking arrangement.

Obligation of a Teleworking Employee

When a request to telework is approved, the School will communicate that decision to the employee along with any relevant time, reporting, communication, or other expectations to which the employee will be held accountable. Teleworking employees agree to all of the following:

- The School may withdraw the employee's permission to telework at any time
- The employee will fully comply with the teleworking expectations communicated by the School to the employee, including:
    - The expectation set forth in this policy
    - The employee will regularly communicate with their supervisor (at least daily)
    - The employee will set up a schedule and communicate that schedule to their direct supervisor
    - The employee will timely participate in all required video, phone, or other meetings (failure to do so may result in disciplinary action)
    - The employee will timely provide their supervisor with any status reports, check-ins, or other communications as reasonably requested by the supervisor from time to time
- Employees are solely responsible for accounting for their time and communicating with their supervisors and colleagues.
- The employee is solely responsible for determining and complying with any tax or other obligations arising from the federal, state, or local laws and regulations with respect to working from a home office.
- The employee will safeguard the School's equipment and confidential information, including student education records that are protected under FERPA.
- The employee's supervisor may request a list of deliverables prior to approval.

Equipment, Connectivity, and Technology Support

Unless otherwise expressly agreed, when teleworking, the employee will be responsible for providing all furniture and connectivity requirements needed to telework, and the School will not be responsible for expenses related to such items or for any damage to the employee's furniture.

To the extent the School elects to supply any equipment to employees to support teleworking, the teleworking employee will be required to sign an inventory and acknowledgment for all School equipment received. School equipment is to be used solely by the employee for job-related purposes only, and the employee has no expectation of privacy when using School-provided equipment. The employee must comply with the School's information technology, privacy protection, and record retention policies when using School-provided equipment.

The employee is responsible for any damage to any School-provided equipment other than through normal wear and tear, and the cost of such damage may be deducted from the employee's paychecks. Employees are required to return all School equipment when their teleworking arrangement ends unless the School has agreed to other arrangements in writing.

The School's technology support through IT is available to assist employees who telework during regular school hours. Employees can contact the School IT support via email.

By engaging in teleworking, employees agree that their access and connection to the School's network(s) may be monitored and that they have no expectation of privacy when connecting to the School's network.

Security

Employees who telework are responsible for securing School property from theft. Employees must use secure remote access procedures and maintain the security of student education records as required by applicable law, such as FERPA.

As appropriate based on the employee's particular job responsibilities, the employee shall maintain the confidentiality of School records (including student education records) by using and periodically updating passwords; maintaining physical files in a locked cabinet, drawer, or room; and maintaining current anti-virus protection and computer backup. Employees are prohibited from downloading confidential information, trade secrets, or student records onto a non-secure device.

Employees are prohibited from sharing their password with anyone outside of the School. If any unauthorized access or disclosure occurs, the employee must immediately inform the School.

Location and Safety

The teleworking employee must be responsive and prepared with an internet connection and other technology sufficient to promptly and satisfactorily perform their job duties, including any necessary communication with their supervisor or other School personnel. The employee will establish an

appropriate homework environment with sufficient internet connectivity. The School is not responsible for any costs associated with setting up the employee's home office. It will not pay for expenses like internet access, phone charges, electric bills, remodeling, buying furniture or lighting, or repairs or modifications to the home office space.
Workers' compensation does not apply to injuries to any third parties or members of the employee's family on the employee's premises. In the event of a job-related injury, employees should report the incident to their supervisor as soon as possible.

Enforcement
Failure to comply with these teleworking measures may result in employee discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Employees who witness or become aware of employees or other individuals violating this policy are encouraged to report them to their supervisor immediately.

If any part of this telework policy conflicts with applicable local, parish, or state law, regulation, or public health guidance, the School will comply with the applicable law, regulation, or public health guidance.

Documentation Completion
All staff are required to review the training video on completing all appropriate forms necessary to ensure proper compliance with civil rights requirements related to teaching and caring for students with ASD. The video and the related forms are located in Google Drive.

- Staff Incident Report
- Student Incident Report
- Body Check
- Bully Report
- Physical Management (CPI)
- CPI Student Debrief
- CPI Staff Debrief

Appendix A
Title IX Procedures

Title IX Non-Discrimination Sexual Harassment

ACE is committed to maintaining an educational and working environment free from sex discrimination and harassment and encourages any student or employee who believes they have been subjected to discrimination based on sex, whether by students or by ACE employees, to utilize this procedure. Title IX Coordinator - ACE's designated and authorized Title IX Coordinator can be reached as follows:

Joellen Freeman, Executive Director
505 Glenmar Drive
Monroe, LA 71201
318.450.7669 | jcfreeman@aceforasd.org

The Title IX Coordinator is designated and authorized to coordinate ACE's compliance with Title IX.

Reports of Sex Discrimination

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, in person, by mail, by telephone, or by email to the Title IX Coordinator at any time regardless of whether the person is the alleged victim of the conduct. ACE employees who believe they have been subject to or observed conduct that violates this policy must report that information to the Title IX coordinator. Complaints of sex discrimination that are not sexual harassment will be handled pursuant to ACE's regular procedures for resolving student or employee complaints and grievances promptly and equitably. Sexual harassment complaints will be handled using the grievance procedures set forth below.

Formal Complaints of Sexual Harassment

A report under this policy will need to include the nature of the alleged violation, names of persons responsible for the alleged violation (when known) and any other relevant background information. A Complainant or their parent/guardian or the Title IX Coordinator, but not a third-party reporter, may sign a formal complaint. The alleged victim (Complainant) and the alleged harasser (Respondent) are the parties to any formal complaint, even if the complaint is signed by the Title IX Coordinator.

Initial Contact with Complainant

Upon receiving notification of alleged sexual harassment, whether through a report, a formal complaint, or an actual knowledge report from an ACE employee, the Title IX Coordinator shall promptly and confidentially contact the Complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the Complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the Complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain the process for filing a formal complaint, if applicable.

Supportive Measures

The Title IX Coordinator shall offer supportive measures to both the Complainant and the alleged Respondent, either before or after filing a formal complaint or following a report where no complaint has been filed. The supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive, individualized services. They shall be designed to restore or preserve equal access to the ACE's educational program and activities without unreasonably burdening the other party and offered without charge. Supportive measures may include counseling, class modifications or schedule changes, and/or increased monitoring and supervision as the Title IX Coordinator deems appropriate.

Emergency Removal/Administration Leave

ACE may remove a student who is a Respondent from ACE's educational program or activity on an emergency basis, provided that removal is necessary to protect the student or another individual from an immediate threat to physical health or safety. If a student has an IEP or a Section 504 plan, the decision to remove the student on an emergency basis must be coordinated with ACE's special education staff and in compliance with relevant IDEA or Section 504 requirements.

ACE may place an employee who is a Respondent on administrative leave while allegations are investigated and resolved in accordance with the Policy.

General Principles Governing Grievance Process for Responding to Formal Complaints

Following filing a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator or an assigned investigator with training in Title IX investigation will investigate the allegations unless they are summarily dismissed per Section 12 below. The investigation will evaluate all available evidence and may include witness interviews, review of relevant documents, and consultation with other staff members as necessary. The Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, and Decision Maker must be free from conflicts of interest or bias.

The investigation will be premised on a presumption that the Respondent is not responsible for the alleged act(s) of sexual harassment, and both parties will be treated equitably during the investigation. The burden of proof is on ACE to prove a violation of this Policy by a preponderance of the evidence, which means that it is more likely than not that the Respondent engaged in the prohibited behavior.

Upon a determination that the Respondent engaged in prohibited behavior (pursuant to the procedures set forth below), ACE may:

- Offer the Complainant any remedies that will restore or preserve the Complainant's access to ACE's educational program and activities, including any support measures. These remedies may be kept confidential to the extent deemed necessary by ACE.

- Impose any disciplinary sanctions on a Respondent student, including participation in counseling services; revocation of privileges related to extra-curricular programs, including sports; no-contact orders; schedule changes; short-term suspension; or expulsion.
- Impose any disciplinary sanctions on a Respondent employee, including participation in counseling services, no-contact order, reassignment, suspension without pay, or termination of employment.

This Policy prohibits the Complainant, the Respondent, and any witnesses from knowingly making a false statement or providing false evidence in connection with a Title IX investigation. ACE may take disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct or Employee Handbook against individuals who make such false statements.

Written Notice of Formal Complaint

The Title IX Coordinator or investigator will provide written notice to the complainant and the Respondent of the allegations of a formal complaint and the grievance process, including any informal resolution process. The notice of the allegations must include the following:

- Sufficient detail to allow the Respondent to prepare a response, including a description of the alleged conduct, the date and location of the conduct, and the names of the Complainant and other involved parties, if any.
- A statement that the Respondent is presumed not to be responsible for the conduct and that responsibility will be determined at the conclusion of the process.
- A notice of the Complainants and Respondents rights to have an attorney or non-attorney advisor
- The right of Complainant and Respondent to inspect and review any evidence
- The prohibition on providing false statements or evidence in connection with the investigation of the complaint.

If additional allegations arise during an investigation and will be investigated, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator will provide written notice of those additional allegations to the Complainant and Respondent.

Summary Dismissal

If the Title IX Coordinator or investigator determines that the allegations in a formal complaint do not meet the definition of “sexual harassment” under the applicable Title IX regulations, did not occur in ACE’s educational program or activity, or did not occur in the United States, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator shall summarily dismiss the formal complaint. The Title IX Coordinator or investigator may dismiss a formal complaint if the Complainant requests withdrawal of the complaint, the Respondent withdraws from ACE or terminates their employment with ACE, or specific circumstances prevent ACE from gathering appropriate evidence to determine the allegations. Upon dismissal of a

formal complaint or any allegations contained in a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator will promptly and simultaneously provide written notice of the dismissal notice of the dismissal and the reason(s) for the dismissal to the Complainant and Respondent. If a complaint is summarily dismissed, ACE may nevertheless take whatever additional disciplinary action it deems appropriate against the Respondent under its Student Code of Conduct and related procedures.

Submission of Evident to Title IX Coordinator or Investigator

Both the Complainant and the Respondent will have a reasonable opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence to the Title IX Coordinator or investigator, provided, however, that such evidence must be submitted within 21 calendar days of the date on which written notice of the formal complaint is provided to the Complainant and Respondent. The Title IX Coordinator or investigator will meet with each party and give at least 24 hours advance written notice of the date, time, location, and purpose of the meeting.

Before the Title IX Coordinator or investigator prepares the final investigation report, the Complainant, the Respondent, and their advisors (if any) will be provided an equal opportunity to review all evidence directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint. If possible, the evidence will be provided to the parties in an electronic format and manner that does not permit copying or downloading of the evidence. The evidence provided must include any evidence that the Title IX Coordinator or investigator does not intend to rely upon and any exculpatory or inculpatory evidence from any source. Within ten calendar days of the date they were provided with access to the evidence, the parties may prepare and submit to the Title IX Coordinator or investigator must consider before preparing a final, written investigation report. Following the expiration date on which the parties may respond to the evidence, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator will promptly prepare and issue a written investigation report that fairly summarizes the relevant evidence discovered during the investigation.

ACE will not restrict either party's ability to discuss the allegations and gather evidence related to the allegations of a formal complaint.

Determination of Responsibility

ACE will not hold a live hearing to determine responsibility for any violations of this policy. The written investigation report and any responses submitted by the Complainant and/or Respondent will be provided to Decision Maker, who will determine responsibility. The Decision Maker will provide each party with an opportunity to submit written, relevant questions for any party or witness within five calendar days of the date the Decision Maker is provided with a copy of the final written investigation report and any responses to the report. If written questions are submitted to the Decision Maker, the Decision Maker will promptly provide the questions to the appropriate party so that the party can answer the questions. Answers to the questions must be provided to the Decision Maker within five calendar days of the date they are provided to a party. The Decision Maker will promptly provide

each party with the answers to the questions and allow additional, limited follow-up questions in writing from both the complainant and Respondent within three calendar days. If written follow-up questions are submitted to the Decision Maker, the Decision Maker will promptly provide the questions to the appropriate party so that the party can answer the questions. Any answers to those additional questions must be submitted to the Decision Maker within three calendar days of the date they are provided to a party. The Decision Maker will promptly respond to both parties' additional questions. Any questions regarding a Complainant's prior sexual behavior or sexual predisposition will be deemed irrelevant unless they are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the alleged misconduct or are offered to prove consent.

No sooner than ten calendar days after receiving the investigation report but no later than 45 calendar days after receiving the investigation report, the Decision Maker will issue a written determination (the "Determination") that includes:

- A statement of the allegations;
- A description of the procedures used to investigate the allegations;
- The findings of fact;
- A determination of responsibility for each allegation;
- Any sanctions that will be imposed on the Respondent for violations;
- Whether remedies to restore or preserve the Complainant's and/or other equal access to ACE's educational program or activities will be provided, and
- A description of the right to an appeal, how to request an appeal, and the permitted bases for appeal.

The deadline for the Decision Maker to issue the Determination may be extended for good cause at the Decision Maker's sole discretion.

The Determination must be based upon a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., whether it is more likely than not that the violation occurred). The complainant and the Respondent will be notified of the Determination concurrently.

Students who violate Title IX will be referred for potential disciplinary action. Employees found to have violated Title IX will be subject to employment actions, including discipline or termination of employment.

Timing of Resolution of Formal Complaints

ACE will attempt to resolve all formal complaints alleging a violation of this policy within 120 days, not including any time for an appeal of the Determination. However, ACE may modify this presumptive deadline and any related deadlines for grievance procedures as required by the circumstances of the report and equity to the parties, so long as the matter is resolved in a timely manner. The Title IX Coordinator or investigator will not wait for the conclusion of a law enforcement investigation or

criminal proceeding to begin the Title IX investigation. However, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator may consider such investigations, or extensions of the deadlines will be explained in writing to both parties.

Appeals

Either the Complainant or the Respondent may appeal from (a) the Determination regarding a formal complaint, (b) ACE's handling of a report, or © the dismissal of a formal complaint by submitting a notice of appeal that includes the bases of the appeal to the Decision Maker within ten calendar days of the date of the Determination. Written notice of the appeal will be provided to both parties by ACE. Either party may file a written response in support of or challenging the Determination and the basis for the appeal within five calendar days of the date on which written notice of the appeal was provided to all parties. An appeal may be filed on the following bases only:

- A procedural irregularity affected the outcome of the matter,
- There is newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter and that was not available at the time the Determination was made and/or
- The Title IX Coordinator, the investigator, or the Decision Maker had a conflict of interest or bias that affected the outcome of the matter.

The Executive Director or School Governing Board will decide the appeal on written submissions from the parties only. No hearing will be held for an appeal.

The Executive Director or School Governing Board will simultaneously provide the parties with a written decision regarding the appeal, which will describe the result of the appeal and the rationale for the decision.

Informal Resolution

Allegations may be resolved informally only if a formal complaint is filed and only if the complaint does not allege that an ACE employee harassed a student. Both parties to a formal complaint must voluntarily agree, in writing, to participate in a potential informal resolution. As a part of the informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator may conduct interviews and other fact-finding. Available informal resolution methods include arbitration, mediation, and restorative justice procedures. Either party may withdraw for an informal resolution at any time before agreeing to a resolution and resume the grievance process. Once the parties agree to an informal resolution, it becomes binding. The Title IX Coordinator or the investigator has the discretion to decline informal resolution for some complaints, including complaints of sexual violence, and instead require their formal investigation.

Retaliation

Title IX prohibits retaliation for reporting or participating in an investigation of a report regarding sex discrimination or harassment. No person shall be retaliated against by ACE in any way or subjected

to discharge, suspension, discipline, harassment, or any form of discrimination for participating in any proceeding under this policy. In addition, it shall be a violation of this policy for any person to retaliate against another individual to interfere with that individual's Title IX rights or because an individual has participated or refused to participate in proceedings under this policy. Individuals may be subject to actions under this policy and/or under the Student Code of Conduct or the Handbook for retaliation in violation of this policy.

Recordkeeping

ACE will maintain all documents related to allegations of sexual harassment for at least seven years. The records maintained by ACE will document that ACE's response to allegations of sexual harassment was not deliberately indifferent and that measures were taken to restore or preserve equal access to ACE's educational program or activity. If ACE did not offer supportive measures in response to a report made under the policy, ACE's records will document why that response was not unreasonable under the circumstances known at the time.

Training

ACE will provide training on the definition of sexual harassment, ACE's grievance procedures, how to serve impartially in their roles, and any other required or appropriate subjects to the Title IX Coordinator, any investigators, the Decision Maker, anyone who facilitates informal resolution of formal complaints, and anyone involved in the appeal process at least as often as required by the Title IX regulations.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, _____(employee name), acknowledge that on _____/_____/_____, received a copy of Academy of Collaborative Education's Employee Handbook, and that I read it, understood it, and agree to comply with it. I understand that the Academy of Collaborative Education has the maximum discretion permitted by law to interpret, administer, change, modify, or delete the rules, regulations, procedures, and benefits contained in the Handbook at any time, with or without notice. No statement or representation by a supervisor or any other employee, whether oral or written, can supplement or modify this Handbook. Changes can only be made if approved in writing by the Executive Director of Academy of Collaborative Education. I also understand that any delay or failure of ACE to enforce any rule, regulation, or procedure contained in the Handbook will not constitute a waiver of ACE's rights to do so in the future.

I understand that neither this Handbook nor any other communication by a management representative or another employee, whether oral or written, is intended in any way to create a contract of employment. I understand that unless I have a written employment agreement signed by an authorized ACE representative that provides for a specified term of employment, **I am employed at will. This Handbook does not modify my at-will employment status.** If I have a written employment agreement signed by an authorized ACE representative and this Handbook conflicts with the terms of my employment agreement, I understand that the terms of my employment agreement will be controlled.

_____
Employee Signature

_____
Employee's Printed Name

_____/_____/_____
Date

Coversheet

Policy and Procedure Review and Discussion

Section:	V. Discussion of New Business
Item:	C. Policy and Procedure Review and Discussion
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Internetusage&safety.P&P. jcf. 6.25.26.docx (1).pdf Student.Entry.&Arrival.Policy.jcf 4.26.26.docx (1).pdf

Academy of Collaborative Education (ACE)

Internet Usage, Internet Safety, and Acceptable Use Policy

I. PURPOSE

The Academy of Collaborative Education (ACE) recognizes that technology and Internet access are essential educational tools that support instruction, communication, collaboration, and access to information. ACE is committed to ensuring that students and staff use technology safely, responsibly, ethically, and in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws.

This policy establishes guidelines governing the use of ACE technology resources and Internet access while promoting a safe and secure learning environment.

This policy is intended to comply with:

- The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)
- The Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act
- Applicable provisions of the Louisiana Revised Statutes
- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Applicable guidance issued by the Louisiana Department of Education

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to:

- Students
- Employees
- Contractors and consultants
- Volunteers
- Board members
- Visitors granted access to ACE technology resources

The policy applies whenever users access ACE technology resources, whether on school property or remotely.

III. DEFINITIONS

Technology Resources include, but are not limited to:

- Computers
- Chromebooks
- Tablets
- Mobile devices
- Servers
- Wireless networks
- Internet services
- Email systems
- Learning management systems
- Educational applications
- Cloud-based services
- Network infrastructure
- Any personally owned device connected to the ACE network

IV. ACCEPTABLE USE

ACE technology resources shall be used primarily for educational, instructional, therapeutic, administrative, and school-related purposes.

Users are expected to:

1. Use technology in support of educational goals and school operations.
2. Respect the rights, privacy, and dignity of others.
3. Protect passwords and account information.
4. Follow copyright and intellectual property laws.
5. Use school technology responsibly, ethically, and safely.
6. Immediately report security concerns or inappropriate content to school personnel.
7. Follow all applicable school policies while using electronic communications.

Limited personal use by employees may be permitted, provided such use does not interfere with job responsibilities or school operations.

V. PROHIBITED USES

Users shall not:

A. Access Inappropriate Content

Users may not intentionally access, transmit, download, display, or distribute material that is:

- Obscene
- Pornographic
- Harmful to minors
- Sexually explicit
- Violent or excessively graphic
- Hate-based, discriminatory, threatening, or harassing

B. Engage in Cyber Misconduct

Users may not:

- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, or hazing.
- Threaten, intimidate, or demean others electronically.
- Use technology to embarrass or harm another person.
- Impersonate another individual online.
- Create or distribute false or misleading information intended to cause disruption or harm.

C. Participate in Illegal or Unauthorized Activities

Users may not:

- Attempt to gain unauthorized access to systems or networks.
- Circumvent Internet filters, firewalls, or security measures.
- Install unauthorized software or applications.
- Introduce malware, viruses, or malicious code.
- Use another individual's account, password, or credentials.
- Engage in illegal activities online.

D. Conduct Commercial or Political Activities

Users may not use ACE technology resources for:

- Personal financial gain
- Commercial advertising or solicitation
- Political campaigning
- Personal business ventures

VI. INTERNET SAFETY

ACE shall implement reasonable measures to ensure student safety while using technology resources.

Internet safety measures shall address:

1. Access by minors to inappropriate material.
2. Student safety and security while using electronic communications.
3. Prevention of unauthorized access, including hacking and unlawful online activities.
4. Prevention of unauthorized disclosure or dissemination of personal information regarding minors.
5. Restriction of access to materials harmful to minors.

Students shall not disclose personal information online without authorization, including:

- Home addresses
- Telephone numbers
- Personal email addresses
- Birthdates
- Social Security numbers
- Photographs or identifying information

School personnel shall supervise student use of technology whenever feasible.

VII. CHILDREN'S INTERNET PROTECTION ACT (CIPA) COMPLIANCE

In accordance with CIPA, ACE shall utilize technology protection measures to block or filter Internet access to visual depictions that are:

- Obscene;
- Child pornography; or
- Harmful to minors.

Filtering and monitoring shall apply to all school-owned devices and networks used by students.

Authorized administrators may disable filtering for adults engaged in bona fide research or other lawful educational purposes.

ACE reserves the right to monitor all use of school technology resources, including:

- Internet activity
- Email communications
- Files stored on school systems
- Network traffic
- Electronic communications

Users should have no expectation of privacy while using ACE technology resources.

VIII. PROTECTING CHILDREN IN THE 21ST CENTURY ACT COMPLIANCE

ACE shall provide age-appropriate instruction regarding appropriate online behavior.

Instruction shall include:

1. Appropriate online behavior.
2. Safe interaction on social networking websites.
3. Safe participation in chat rooms and electronic communications.
4. Cyberbullying awareness and prevention.
5. Digital citizenship.
6. Online privacy and protection of personal information.
7. Responsible use of technology and social media.

Instruction may occur through classroom instruction, counseling, social skills instruction, therapeutic programming, or other educational activities.

IX. INTERNET AND CELL PHONE SAFETY EDUCATION

In accordance with Louisiana law, ACE shall provide age-appropriate instruction and educational resources regarding Internet and cell phone safety.

Instruction shall include:

- Recognition of online threats to school safety;
- Appropriate procedures for reporting threats made through social media or electronic means;
- Safe and responsible use of social media platforms;
- Protection of personal information online;
- Copyright laws governing written materials, photographs, music, and video;
- Appropriate digital citizenship and online etiquette.

ACE shall provide Internet and cell phone safety information and resources to parents and legal guardians annually.

X. CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, or hazing through electronic means is strictly prohibited.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to:

- Sending threatening or harassing electronic communications;
- Posting harmful, embarrassing, or false information online;
- Impersonating another individual online;
- Sharing private information or images without consent;
- Creating fake accounts for the purpose of harassment;
- Excluding individuals from online groups or activities for the purpose of causing emotional harm.

Incidents of cyberbullying shall be addressed in accordance with the ACE Student Code of Conduct, bullying policy, employee handbook, and applicable Louisiana law.

Students or employees who engage in cyberbullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension, expulsion, termination, and/or referral to law enforcement.

XI. REPORTING ONLINE THREATS

Students, employees, volunteers, parents, and community members are encouraged to report any online communication, social media posting, text message, image, or other electronic content that may reasonably be interpreted as a threat to student or school safety.

Reports shall be made immediately to a school administrator, counselor, behavior support personnel, or law enforcement as appropriate.

ACE shall maintain procedures for documenting, investigating, and responding to reports in accordance with school safety protocols and applicable law.

XII. EMAIL, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

Electronic communications using ACE systems shall be educational or work-related.

Users shall:

- Communicate respectfully and professionally.
- Follow all school conduct expectations.
- Refrain from sending inappropriate messages, images, or files.
- Immediately report threatening or concerning communications.

Unauthorized use of social networking platforms during instructional time may be restricted.

Employees shall comply with all ACE policies regarding electronic communication with students and families.

XIII. DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY

ACE shall comply with all applicable federal and state privacy laws, including FERPA, CIPA, and Louisiana student privacy requirements.

Users shall:

- Protect usernames and passwords.
- Log off devices when not in use.
- Secure confidential student information.
- Access student information only when authorized.
- Refrain from storing confidential student information on unauthorized devices or cloud services.

ACE shall implement reasonable safeguards to protect educational records and electronic data from unauthorized access, disclosure, or misuse.

XIV. CONSEQUENCES FOR MISUSE

Violations of this policy may result in:

Students

- Loss of technology privileges
- Parent notification
- Disciplinary action
- Suspension or expulsion, when appropriate
- Referral to law enforcement

Employees

- Revocation of technology privileges
- Disciplinary action up to and including termination
- Referral to law enforcement

Visitors, Volunteers, Contractors, and Board Members

- Revocation of network access privileges
- Removal from school property when appropriate
- Referral to law enforcement

XV. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

ACE makes no warranties regarding the availability, reliability, or accuracy of Internet services.

ACE shall not be responsible for:

- Loss of data;
- Unauthorized financial obligations incurred by users;
- Damages resulting from use of technology resources; or
- Information obtained through Internet access.

XVI. POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed periodically by the ACE Board of Directors to ensure continued compliance with federal and state laws and evolving technology practices.

Board Review and Approval: _____

ACE Student Entry & Arrival Policy

Purpose

To establish clear, safe, and consistent expectations for student arrival that support a positive transition into the school environment while ensuring student dignity, safety, and access to education.

Policy Statement

The Academy of Collaborative Education (ACE) is committed to ensuring that all students enter the school environment in a manner that promotes safety, readiness to learn, and respect for students, families, and staff. Entry procedures will be implemented consistently by trained staff, with attention to each student's behavioral and emotional readiness upon arrival. Students will be supported through proactive, individualized strategies designed to facilitate a calm and successful transition into the school setting. Staff will prioritize preserving student dignity while maintaining a safe and orderly entry process for all.

General Entry Expectations

1. Student Independence in Entry
    - Students are expected to enter the school building of their own volition.
    - Parents/guardians **may not** physically force, carry, or otherwise compel a student into the building in a manner that involves distress (e.g., kicking, screaming, or resisting).
2. Safe Transfer of Supervision
    - A student will be considered officially "in attendance" once they have:
        - Entered the building voluntarily, and
        - Been received by ACE staff in a regulated or supportable state.

Procedures for Dysregulated or Refusing Students

1. Parent Responsibility at Arrival
    - If a student is unable or unwilling to exit the vehicle or enter the building calmly:
        - The parent/guardian **must remain** with the student.
        - The student **should not** be physically forced onto campus.
2. School Support
    - ACE staff may:
        - Provide visual tools,verbal prompting, or transition support.
        - Engage behavior support personnel (e.g., RBT, BCBA team) as appropriate.

3. Escalation Process
    - If the student remains unable to enter:
        - A behavior team or an administrative member will be contacted to ensure safe, appropriate intervention and to determine next steps in alignment with student needs and school policy.
        - A plan may be developed for that day (e.g., delayed entry, alternative transition strategy).
4. Chronic Entry Refusal
    - If patterns of refusal occur:
        - The school will convene a team meeting (including parents and, if applicable, IEP team members).
        - A formal transition or behavior support plan will be developed.

ACE will provide up to 15 minutes of active support to assist a student in transitioning into the school environment. If the student is unable to enter within this timeframe, a second attempt or delayed entry may be implemented. If the student remains unable to safely or voluntarily enter, the parent/guardian may be required to take the student home. Repeated difficulty with entry will result in a team-based intervention plan.

Students with Disabilities / Individualized Needs

- For students with an IEP, Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), or documented needs:
    - Entry expectations and strategies may be individualized.
    - Any modifications must be determined by the appropriate team (e.g., IEP team).
    - The school will not implement entry practices that conflict with a student's legally required accommodations.

Attendance Implications

- A student who does not successfully transition into the building may be:
    - Marked tardy or absent in accordance with state attendance guidelines.
- Repeated inability to enter may trigger:
    - Attendance review procedures, and/or
    - Intervention planning.

Parent Communication & Collaboration

- ACE will:
    - Communicate expectations clearly to families.
    - Partner with families to build consistent morning routines.
    - Provide strategies and tools when challenges arise.
    - Build a Behavior Support Plan or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) when necessary

Non-Compliance

- Failure to adhere to entry procedures may result in:
  - Required parent conferences
  - Development of intervention plans
  - Further action consistent with school policy and state law

Board Review and Approval: _____

Coversheet

FY27 Student/Parent Handbook Review and Discussion

Section: V. Discussion of New Business
Item: D. FY27 Student/Parent Handbook Review and Discussion
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: FY27.ACE.StudentParentHandbook.6.26.docx.pdf

Student/Parent Handbook
2026-2027

Executive Director: Joellen Freeman

IMPORTANT INFORMATION AT A GLANCE

The Academy of Collaborative Education ("ACE") provides the following information for your convenience. Information is subject to change during the school year. Should a change occur, you will be notified via bulletins sent home with the students or through school newsletters. Should you have any questions regarding this information, please call the school office at 318.327-8223.

Office Hours	8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Phone Number	318.327.8223
School Mailing Address	505 Glenmar Avenue Monroe, LA 71201
Executive Director	Joellen Freeman / jcfreeman@aceforasd.org
Website Address	www.aceforasd.org

Board of Directors

The Board is responsible for meeting the mandates of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Louisiana Department of Education and the overall operation of the charter school.

Board Chair: Anna Grimmett - boardchair@aceforasd.org
Vice Board Chair: Curtis Eberts - viceboardchair@aceforasd.org
Secretary: Holly Allen - secretary@aceforasd.org
Treasurer: Latner McDonald - treasurer@aceforasd.org
Finance Committee Chair: Latner McDonald - financechair@aceforasd.org
Governance Committee Chair: Seth Hall- governance@aceforasd.org
Academic Committee Chair: Matthew Fowlkes - academicchair@aceforasd.org
Facilities Committee Chair: Davy Mize - facilitieschair@aceforasd.org
Parent Volunteer Representative: Davy Mize - pvorep@aceforasd.org
Board Member: Hannah Nguyen - trustee1@aceforasd.org
Board Member: Richard Cannon - trustee2@aceforasd.org

FULL DAY

GRADE	DROP OFF	INSTRUCTION BEGINS	Tardy	PICK UP
K-7th	7:40-7:50	7:50	8:11	2:50 - 3:50

Mission

The mission is to provide a best-in-class integrated academic and therapeutic school model for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (“ASD”).

Vision

The vision of ACE is to provide access to an innovative academic environment that grows learners filled with curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking.

CORE VALUES

- **Passion** is the foundation that leads to a positive environment, celebrating the small and big successes, and working with gusto/enthusiasm.
- **Respect** is genuine listening and being open to others, being punctual and prepared, having kindness in actions and words, and understanding that everyone has a purpose and adds value to our school community.
- **Perseverance** is being dedicated to the success of the whole school, not giving up on yourself or others, and working through challenges.
- **Collaboration** is working together to achieve common goals, share ideas, build on each other’s strengths and solve complex problems, and is the norm at ACE.
- **Excellence** is growing and evolving with a desire to learn, and the ability to adapt and empower others; this is the expectation and the standard for ACE students.

At ACE, we believe…

- In cultivating an environment where all feel safe and respected to express their true selves without judgment.
- In celebrating successes, big and small.
- In communicating in a professional manner for all voices to be heard and valued.
- Collaboration and support are at the heart of our success.
- In persevering through challenges.
- In setting high expectations to change the educational narrative for all.

Enrollment Policy

ACE has established fair and equitable enrollment procedures to be used throughout the school year.

ACE will enroll all eligible students in grades K-6 who submit a timely enrollment application form unless the number of applications exceeds the capacity of the program, class, or grade level.

ACE shall give enrollment preference to students returning to the charter school in the second or any subsequent year of its operation and to siblings of pupils already enrolled in the charter school.

ACE may give enrollment preference to and reserve capacity for pupils who are either children, grandchildren or legal awards of any of the following:

(a) Members of the governing body of the school
(b) Employees of the charter holder
(c) Employees of the school
(d) Directors, officers, partners or board members of the charter holder

Applications will be accepted year-round; however, open enrollment for the following school year will officially start December 1, 2026. At the end of the open enrollment period (January 15, 2027), for any grade level/program for which there are more applications than available spaces, a lottery for the relevant grade or program will be held and will be overseen by the Executive Director, and Director of Operation, to select, at random, the students who will attend the school with no more than 20 students per grade, grades Kindergarten-8th (for the FY28 school year). Students who are not selected through the lottery process will be put on a waitlist. Students will be enrolled based on their position on the waitlist, starting no later than April 9, 2027 if there are no students on the waitlist for that grade. For more information on the enrollment process, please request the enrollment policy from the office.

ACE may refuse to admit any pupil who has been expelled from another educational institution or who is in the process of being expelled from another educational institution.

ACE shall not limit admission based on race, religion, gender, ethnicity, or national origin.

Parents/Guardians are not required to volunteer in order to be admitted, but involvement is highly encouraged to benefit our school community. Please contact your student's teacher or the Parent Volunteer Organization President to find out ways that you can volunteer and support ACE's mission.

STUDENT FEE POLICY

General Statement

ACE is tuition free. Families needing financial assistance are encouraged to communicate with school administration. We are committed to working collaboratively with families to make appropriate arrangements, including fee adjustments, payment plans, or waivers, as needed. Our goal is to ensure that all students are afforded the same opportunities as other students.

The following chart details current student fees. All fees are collected through the ACE website (www.aceforasd.org) via OSP. If for any reason a parent may need help with payment, contact the front office for assistance. Collected fees are used to defray the costs of the referenced supply or special in-classroom activities.

Fee	Amount	Due Date	Purpose
Classroom Supplies	$30.00	August 30th of each school year	Providing classroom materials and resources to ACE students.

Families who would like to request an economic hardship fee waiver should contact the Principal or his/her designee. Waiver Assistance Request Forms will be evaluated based on a family's demonstrated financial need. Assistance requests that are denied may be appealed to the Executive Director. No student will ever be denied participation because of a lack of ability to pay a fee. Students will not be denied any other academic opportunity because of an inability to pay a fee. Furthermore, failure to pay any required fee shall not result in withholding a student's educational record. This fee policy also prohibits the assessment of any fees which are not outlined above.

EDUCATIONAL FOCUS

Attendance Requirements

ACE believes students need to be at school daily to maximize their learning opportunities. Daily student attendance at school maximizes student learning opportunities. It is critical that students and their parents make every effort possible to minimize the number of student absences from school.

Excused Absences

Daily attendance in school is required.[1] Excused absences are absences which are not considered for truancy purposes and must be verified by ACE's supervisor of child welfare and attendance and/or the school principal. These excused absences do not apply in determining whether a student meets the minimum minutes of instruction required to receive credit.

In accordance with Louisiana law, absences considered excused are:

- Extended physical or emotional illness (documented by acceptable excuses and verified by a physician or nurse practitioner licensed in Louisiana);
- Extended hospital stay in which a student is absent as verified by a physician or dentist;
- Extended recuperation from an accident in which a student is absent as verified by a physician, dentist, or nurse practitioner licensed in the state;
- Extended contagious disease within a family in which a student is absent as verified by a physician or dentist licensed in the state;
- Quarantine due to prolonged exposure to or direct contact with a person diagnosed with a contagious, deadly disease, as ordered by state or local health officials;
- Observance of special and recognized holidays of the student's own faith;
- Visitation with a parent who is a member of the United States Armed Forces or the National

[1] Louisiana law requires students to be in attendance a minimum of 60,120 minutes (equivalent to 167 six-hour days) per school year.

Guard of a state and such parent has been called to duty for or is on leave from overseas deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting. Excused absences in this situation shall not exceed five school days per school year;

- Absences verified and approved by ACE's principal or designee as stated below:
  - Prior school system-approved travel for education;
  - Death of an immediate family member (not to exceed one week)
  - Natural catastrophe and/or disaster;
  - Student personal illness or serious illness in the family; or
  - Pregnant and parenting students at a minimum of 10 days after the birth of a child.

For any other extenuating circumstances, the student's parents or legal guardian must make a formal appeal in accordance with the due process procedures established by the School.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences include any absence not meeting the requirements set forth in the above definition of excused absences. This includes any job (including agriculture and domestic services, even in their own homes or for their own parents or tutors) unless it is part of an approved instructional program. Unexcused absences reflect poorly on student achievement, so we strongly encourage students to minimize the number of unexcused absences. ACE is responsible for a minimum number of instructional minutes for both state and IEP requirements. ACE takes this responsibility very seriously, and we count every minute of our school day to ensure that students meet these minutes and receive the maximum benefit possible from school.

The following are some examples of missed school days that will be considered unexcused absences:

- Family trips
- Non-school related activities (sporting events, celebrations, trips)
- Truancy (non-attendance)

Non-urgent appointments should be made after school, or on early dismissal days or school holiday dates. Regularly scheduled medical or therapy appointments during the school day will be considered unexcused absences absent extenuating circumstances or unless otherwise allowed under the provisions regarding Behavioral Health Services for Students found in Bulletin 135—Health and Safety, or in the student's IEP or 504 Plan.

Absences Related to Mental Health

A student may be absent related to the student's mental health for up to three days in any school year, and such absences shall be excused when documentation/verification is submitted to ACE. The student will be given the opportunity to make up for missed work. Upon the return to school following the second day of mental health absence in any school year, the student will be referred to the appropriate school support personnel for guidance in addressing the underlying issue, which may include referral to medical services outside of the school setting.

Excessive Absences and Tardiness

Should a student reach ten (10) absences (excused or unexcused) within a semester, the ACE leadership team will meet with the parent/guardian to align interventions in an effort to support the student in regular attendance. A student's parents/guardians will be notified and asked to participate in this process to review the circumstances that led to the excessive absences.

Lateness to school and to class is disruptive to instruction. A student will be considered tardy to school if the student arrives after the instructional start time. Upon late arrival, the parent/guardian must sign the student in at the front desk.

Tardy includes but is not limited to a student leaving or checking out of school unexcused prior to regularly scheduled dismissal time at the end of the school day but does not include reporting late to class when transferring from one class to another during the school day.

A student shall be considered "habitually absent or tardy" either condition continues to exist after all reasonable efforts by a principal or other appropriate authority have failed to correct the condition after the fifth unexcused absence or fifth unexcused occurrence of being tardy within any month or if a pattern of five absences a month is established or as otherwise provided by law.

In accordance with applicable law, any student who is a juvenile and who is considered habitually absent or tardy (as defined above) shall be reported by supervisors of child welfare and attendance to the Monroe City Police Truancy Department as a truant child, pursuant to the provisions of chapter 2 of title VII of the Louisiana Children's Code relative to families in need of services.

Illness Policy

If your student appears to be ill in the morning before school, please keep your student at home.
In general, students will be sent home from school if:

- If the student has a temperature of 100.4 degrees or more
- If the student is experiencing vomiting or diarrhea
- If the student has symptoms of a suspected communicable illness or condition.

Return to School Policy after Illness

If you student is sent home from school, please keep in mind the student not return to school until the student:

- has maintained a 98.6 degree (normal) temperature for 24 hours without being given fever reducing medication (such as Tylenol, Motrin, etc).
- Has had no vomiting and/or diarrhea for 24 hours from the last bout of either
- Student should be able to participate comfortably in daily school activities without signs or symptoms of illness.
- If a doctor provides specific return-to-school instructions, those should be followed.

If parents, guardians, or emergency contacts are called to pick up a student due to illness at school, it is expected that your student will be picked up as requested within one (1) hour of notification. ACE will use the emergency contact information that it has on file for parents. Please contact ACE's administrative assistant should you need to update this information at any point.

Chronic Illness Policy

When a student is identified as potentially requiring a plan to address significant absences associated with a chronic health condition, a Medical Certification Form shall be sent to the parents and returned to ACE within (30) school days. Please contact the school administrative assistant, at 318.327.8223 for a Medical Certification Form to be signed by a physician and kept on file in our office.

Signing out Early

We strongly discourage parents/guardians from signing students out early for appointments, therapies or other engagements which can be scheduled on the weekly half-day Wednesday, during school breaks or after school hours.

Students who must leave school early for unavoidable purposes must have their parent/guardian contact the school, and the parent/guardian must sign their child out at the front desk. Parents/guardians must remain in the lobby area until the child is escorted to the lobby from the classroom by a staff member. A parent/guardian must authorize in writing all additional family members or others who can sign their child out of the school.

Also, to avoid classroom disruptions, **students will not be released for dismissal 30 minutes prior to regular dismissal time except on an emergency basis.** This is to ensure that staff members have time to complete all academic lessons and proceed to staff posts to ensure that students can safely be dismissed to the car pick up line. Please help us keep all students safe by not routinely picking up your child early from school.

Students who must sign out for outside therapy purposes on a regular basis, must provide a letter of medical necessity from the student's medical physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner that must include frequency the school should expect the student to be checked out of school. Parents will be responsible for classwork missed during instructional minutes when checked out of school.

Identification for picking up a student

All adults authorized to pick up your child or receive your child from staff, must be listed on the authorized contact list.

- If someone who is not listed on the authorized pick up form must come into the office and show identification in order to pick up your child for that day. You MUST call the office with the details of the person who you are authorizing to pick up your child that day.

- If you have a new person picking up your child or receiving your child from the transportation staff, please ensure that we have written update authorization allowing us to release your child and that person has their license with them when receiving your child.
- If someone is coming to pick your child up during the school day, please ask them to bring identification into the office so that they can verify the name with the authorized pick up list or you will need to call the office with the detailed information to pick up your child.

Parent Communication

ACE makes every effort to communicate proactively using different modalities for families that may include informational out dials for automated notifications for communication in the event of crisis, as well as school information, email, texts and direct phone calls. We also provide scheduled parent-teacher conferences up to four times per school year in an effort to maintain transparency, team collaboration and integrity during the academic/IEP progress.

For any classroom concerns, the classroom teacher should be your point of contact. For any concerns not resolved through your child's classroom teacher, please reach out to the Principal, Karen Roberson at 318.327.8223 or at kroberson@aceforasd.org.

Way to effectively communicate with your child's teacher or service provider include:

- Email - please call the school if you need a specific teachers or service provider email address or find the teachers' email address in the ACE Staff Directory on the school's website.
- Phone - please feel free to leave a message with the office (318.327.8223) for your child's teacher, BCBA, SLP, OT, or PT. Staff members are requested to return calls within 24 hours. **Phone calls will not be transferred to the classroom during instructional hours.**
- Remind App - this will be set up with the teacher at the beginning of the year or when your student is enrolled.
- Communication Book/Daily Folder - ACE's Communication Book and Daily Folder is provided to communicate between families and the classroom.

Communication between school and home should remain respectful and collaborative. Inappropriate or unprofessional communication will not be condoned. ACE utilizes the following methods to communicate with parents and families for activity and event notifications:

- ACE website: www.aceforasd.org
- Monthly Calendars
- Remind App
- Communication Book
- Email

Bus Stop Expectations

- A student's parent, guardian or designee is required to accompany their child to the bus stop for pick-up and drop-off each day. Parents/guardians are required to be present at the assigned bus stop 10 minutes before and after the designated pick up or drop off time to account for unexpected traffic conditions.
- If a parent, guardian or designee fails to meet a student, the student will not be allowed to exit the bus and will be transported back to their school until a family member is reached.
- Repeated incidents of child abandonment at the bus stop will result in the family losing their bus riding privileges for a probationary time.
- If a child is placed on probationary bus suspension, it is the parent's or other authorized person's responsibility to ensure the child has transportation from school at the regular dismissal time.
- Absences due to lack of transportation will not be excused.
- If incidence of Bus Abandonment continues, the parent may be referred to an outside social services agency for intervention.
- Students riding buses will observe the route schedule published. Under no circumstances shall a parent/guardian make arrangements with a driver and vice/versa with regard to a change in the published stop.
- Riding the bus is an extension of the school and classroom. Behavior expectations while in the school building carry over while riding the bus to and from school. Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly and safe manner.

Conflict of Interest

ACE Staff are not permitted to accept any position (e.g. babysitting, home therapy, habilitation, respite, etc.) outside of the ACE organization with a current student. This is considered a conflict of interest to work with a current student outside of the school for any other organization or private funding. This is to protect the privacy of all students and maintain the professional relationship between school personnel and families.

This policy protects the employee from being placed in an uncomfortable situation and possible ethical dilemma. It is very important to ensure proper and appropriate boundaries for the protection of the student, families, and staff members.

Grade Reporting

Interim reports and report cards will be distributed as follows:

Grades K		
90% - 100%	A	Fully Attained, 75 - 100% independently
80% - 89%	B	Mostly Attained, 50 - 75% with assistance
70% - 79%	C	Partially Attained, 25 - 50% with assistance
60% - 69%	D	Minimally Attained, less than 25%
59% - Below	F	Unable to participate / no response
Grades 1 - 5		
90% - 100%	A	Fully Attained, 75 - 100% independently
80% - 89%	B	Mostly Attained, 50 - 75% with assistance
70% - 79%	C	Partially Attained, 25 - 50% with assistance
60% - 69%	D	Minimally Attained, less than 25%
59% or below	F	Unable to participate / no response

Homework Policy

Homework may be assigned to students across all grade levels, tailored to each student's specific needs and capabilities. It should serve as a continuation of classroom activities, fostering independent learning and skill development. Collaboration between home and school is crucial in guiding students toward knowledge discovery and self-sufficiency. Since growth and learning are individual processes, the time required to complete homework will vary from student to student and project to project, increasing as they progress through school.

If a child struggles with an assignment due to lack of understanding, parents are encouraged to review the directions and offer assistance as needed. If the difficulty persists, a note can be attached to the assignment for the teacher's attention. Homework not only reinforces learned skills but also provides insight into students' comprehension of previously taught concepts. If multiple students encounter challenges with a particular concept, adjustments may be made in the classroom instruction. Parents are urged to communicate with teachers if their child consistently struggles to complete homework within the allotted time. Modifications to homework tasks can be arranged with teacher involvement, often with a simple note on the homework paper sufficing.

Allergies

ACE is a **Peanut Free and Seafood Free** environment. No peanut products or seafoods are permitted on campus. Please do not send students to school with **any peanut or seafood** related products. In addition, all students must have an updated Student Allergy List on file each year listing all diagnosed allergies. Families are encouraged to inform the School Nurse of additional allergies if changes occur throughout the year, so that additional precautions can be taken in specific classrooms as well as common areas. ACE reserves the right to request medical documentation to verify listed allergies.

Lice/Nit

If a student is found with active, adult head lice or nits, parents/guardians will be contacted and the student will be sent home for treatment. The parent/guardian may be given information about the treatment of head lice and encouraged to begin treatment of the student immediately and to check all members of the family. The parent/guardian also shall be informed that the student shall be checked by the School Nurse upon return to school and allowed to remain in school if no active head lice/nits are detected.

Upon the student's return to school, if it is determined that the student remains infected with head lice/nits, the school shall contact the student's parent/guardian to discuss additional treatment. As needed, additional resources may be provided and/or referral to the local health department, health care provider, or other agencies.

When it is determined that one or more students in a class or school are infested with head lice/nits, the Principal will notify parent/guardians of students in the class or school and provide them with information about the detection and treatment of head lice/nits.

Staff shall maintain the privacy of students identified as having head lice/nits.

Visitor Procedures

ACE welcomes and encourages visitors into the school and understands there are a variety of reasons to visit our school. To comply with safety and emergency management procedures, it is important for ACE to know exactly who is on the school campus at all times. ACE requires all visitors arriving and departing, during school hours, to utilize the visitor's log indicating visitor's name, signature, date, time and purpose of the visit.

- Visitors do not have "automatic entry" rights. All visitors will report to the office before proceeding to a particular area of the school.
- All visitors will be required to complete details in the school's visitor's log indicating name, signature, purpose of visit, time in/time out, and date.
- All visitors will receive a visitor name tag prior to proceeding into the main school area.
- Due to the nature of the students served at ACE, interruptions and distractions in the classroom must be kept to a minimum for all students in the room.

- Observation visits must be pre-approved by a member of the administrative team and will be limited to one 30-minute visit, per appointment once a quarter, for a maximum of (4) tour visits per school year. We ask that all families wait (6) six weeks into the school year before scheduling visits and observations to give students and staff time to adapt to their new school routines without disruptions. Please contact Principal Karen Roberson to make arrangements for observations at least (1) one week in advance of the intended visit.
    - Visitor identification is required
    - A signed Release of Information form will also be required to sign if a person other than the parent/guardian is observing.
    - Visitors will also be required to sign a confidentiality agreement form.
- An ACE staff member will accompany the visitor to the observation area.
    - Observations take place outside of the classroom in order to reduce distractions or disruptions.
    - Teachers and therapists are not able to take instructional time to discuss class events, procedures, or student matters at the time of observations. If there are questions, please arrange a time before or after school to speak with the teacher or therapist.
- All visitors must sign out at the front desk when leaving the school facility.
- No more than 2 visitors are allowed to visit a classroom at a time for observations.
- ACE requests that siblings or small children are not brought along during scheduled visitations.

School administrators, or persons acting in their absence, are authorized to refuse entry to the school to persons who do not have legitimate business at the school or do not have proper signed documentation. Any unauthorized person or persons engaging in unacceptable conduct will be asked to leave the school grounds.

Parent Observation Protocol

All observing parties must comply with the following conditions:

- The sole purpose of a classroom visit by a parent/guardian is to observe their student and the instructional program being presented within the allotted time frame (**no more than 30 minutes)**.
- Observations are limited to **four times per year, once a quarter following the first six weeks of school.**
- At no time should a parent's motive for or focus of a classroom visit be to observe another student in the classroom. If the Principal has knowledge that the focus of a parent's visit is to observe another student, the Principal reserves the right to deny a requested visit or to end a visit that is in progress.
- Parents/Guardians are expected to enter the observation area escorted by an ACE staff member. The expectation is that the observation is conducted with no distraction or disruption to teaching or to the classroom environment.
- Parents/Guardians wishing to discuss their student's behavior after the observation should schedule a separate conference with the teacher, Program Director or Principal via email or phone call.

- No audio or video taping of the classroom is permitted at any time without prior written approval of the Principal or Executive Director. Electronic devices which could be used to video or audio record should not be visible during the visit.
- The Principal or administrative designee will be in the observation area at the time of the observation.

School Paperwork/Payment Deadlines

ACE operates under the supervision of several different regulatory bodies at both the state and federal level that impact every procedure from IEP's to instructional minutes to expenditures and reporting requirements. As a result, we are frequently audited and some reports have tight deadlines.

We will provide three opportunities for you to respond to requests for information (e.g. records, RSVP's for meeting/events, etc.) via form letter addressed in an envelope to the parent, hand-delivered or sent via postal service, email, and/or phone (text or phone call). After those three opportunities, you and/or your child's ability to participate in the meeting/event or activity may not be guaranteed.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Grievance Procedures

It is the Academy's policy to ensure that students and/or parents/guardians with a grievance relating to the Academy, its administration, and/or other employees shall, except otherwise set forth below, use a procedure which may resolve grievances as quickly and as fairly as possible.

The grievance procedure, as set forth below, is clearly outlined and distributed to all families and staff in the Family/Employee Handbook.

Process	Guidance
Stage 1	
If a parent/guardian or a student has a grievance you should discuss it informally with the teacher, administrator, or staff member directly involved in the matter. We hope that the majority of concerns will be resolved at this stage.	*Informal discussions should resolve the vast majority of grievances.* *NOTE: Grievance or information involving an ongoing or imminent threat to a student's well-being should skip this stage and be immediately directed to the Principal.*
Stage 2	
If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved, the parent/guardian or student may raise the matter, in writing, with the Principal, who must give a response within five working days. This response may take the form of a letter and/or follow-up meeting with the family and any employee(s) involved in the matter. This	*The Principal is the acting supervisor over all school employees.*

meeting will be led by the Principal.	
Stage 3	
If the matter is still not satisfactorily resolved, the parent/guardian or student may raise the matter to the Executive Director's office by addressing the matter in writing to the Executive Director, who must give a response within ten working days. This response may take the form of a letter and/or follow-up meeting.	*The Executive Director's office oversees the Principal.*
Stage 4	
If the matter is not resolved to your satisfaction, and the parent/guardian or student wishes to pursue this matter further, the individual should put the grievance in writing to the President of the Governing Board of Directors. The President will formally respond by setting a meeting or taking another course of action within 30 days. If the Board as a whole is convened to address the grievance, all applicable public open meeting laws will be followed, including prior notice and the right of the employee(s) directly involved in the matter to request an open meeting or an executive session for the hearing. The Board's decision is final.	*Stages 1, 2 and 3 must be completed before the action is brought to the Governing Board of Directors. A response by the Board may include a dismissal of the grievance, a formal reprimand of the school employee(s), or Principal, and/or a directive for staff to develop an additional policy recommendation for Board consideration.*

Telephone Use

Students are not allowed to use the office telephone unless it is an emergency and such use has been approved by administration. Calls originating from the school will be strictly supervised. **No student will be called to the office to receive personal phone calls.** An administrator will deliver emergency messages to the student. An emergency is an illness or death in the family. Transportation changes, changes in scheduled appointments, etc. are not considered to be emergencies. Cell phones must be kept off and in bags outside the classroom. No flower or balloon messages will be delivered to students at school.

Up-to-Date Contact Information

We must be able to contact you (or your designated substitute) during the day. Parents/guardians are required to notify the school office whenever there is a change in home, work, or cell phone numbers or other emergency contact information. That includes changes to a student's medical history or any other condition that affects students participating in school programs.

DRESS CODE

General Statement

ACE believes a uniform dress code is an important part of a safe, orderly school environment where the focus is on student learning. A higher standard or dress encourages greater respect for individual students and others and results in a higher standard of behavior. Our dress code guidelines indicate appropriate school dress for normal school days. **The Administrative Team at ACE reserves the right to interpret appropriate school attire.** Students are expected to follow these guidelines.

Every student in attendance **must** wear a school uniform and may be purchased from the school store online at www.aceforasd.org.

Shirts:

- Red short sleeve and long sleeve polo shirts with ACE logo printed in the left upper quadrant are required Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays - These can only be purchased through the ACE Store online.
- Red ACE t-shirt for **Fridays and Field Trips -** These can only be purchased through the ACE Store online.
- Shirts must be tucked into pants (front and back).
- Long or short-sleeved t-shirts may be worn under the school polo, but only in school colors, which are red, navy, or gray.

These are the only shirts permitted to be worn in school.
Students NOT wearing a uniform polo or henley shirt with the ACE logo will not be permitted to attend school. This is a safety concern for our students and staff. Failure to wear the school uniform with the logo will result in disciplinary action - notice of concern, parent conference, etc. **Parents/Guardians may also contact ACE to receive an economic hardship form (Assistance form) for the cost of required uniforms, which will be granted on a case-by-case basis and only in rare circumstances.**

Slacks/Shorts/Skorts

- Khaki or navy slacks, shorts, or skorts are permitted
- Slacks and shorts with belt loops, a belt (black or brown) must be worn and shirt must be tucked into the front and back of pants
- Shorts must be knee length
- Skorts must have biker shorts connected or worn separately underneath
- Skorts must be fingertip length above the knee
- No blue jeans unless notified for designated event days
- NO sweatpants, jumpers, skirts, leggins, biker shorts (unless under a skort) or athletic shorts are permitted

Acceptable colors for slacks/shorts/skorts are as indicated above, khaki or navy. All uniform slacks/shorts/skorts must be worn with a belt through the belt loops, worn at the natural waist, be in good repair and be of appropriate size. Overly large, overly long, tight fitting and short shorts are not acceptable. Shorts and skorts must be knee length, **no** cargo pants or capri slacks are permitted. **NO** jeans of any color or style. Belts must be brown or black, and cannot have any designs or studs. Skorts but not skirts are permitted. Jumpers are not acceptable, as they cover the logo on the polo.

Jackets/Sweatshirts

- Red light-weight jersey full zip jacket with ACE logo in the upper left quadrant
- Red sweatshirt with ACE logo in the upper left quadrant
- For colder weather, please allow your student to wear a heavy coat (of any kind) with uniform jacket or sweatshirt underneath for inside the classroom.

Backpacks

For safety reasons, ALL backpacks must be clear. At the beginning of the year, each student will receive a colored identification tag that will be zipped tied to their backpack. This will ensure all backpacks are kept in their designated area and are identified to each student.

Hair

Natural or protective hairstyles or hairstyles historically associated with race, such as afros, dreadlocks, twists, locs, braids, cornrow braids, Bantu knots, curls and hair styled to protect hair texture or for cultural significance, are permitted. Unless falling under the aforementioned protections, hair should be neat and clean, and **no hats**, bandanas, or headbands may be worn.

Shoes

Students must wear closed shoes at all times, no “mules”, slippers or “slides”. No heavy military type boots, shoes with metal tips or steel toes may be worn. Tennis shoes are preferred with Velcro or conventional laces. Crocs are permitted, but not preferred for safety reasons. Crock straps must be worn around the heel. **Heelys are strictly prohibited.**

Socks

Crew or tennis length may be worn. Fishnet stockings or other inappropriate leg wear is not acceptable.

Please send an extra set of clothes in your child’s book bag each day in the event that your child’s outfit becomes soiled or dirty. This may be a plain polo shirt and pants, but it must be red (top) or khaki (pants). If your child was given a change of clothes from school, please wash and return these items the following day.

In General

Students may wear one pair of stud style earrings or small hoops. Medium and large hoops are not permitted because of safety reasons. No other body piercing or cartilage piercing is permitted. At no

time are students permitted to wear anything offensive, immodest, or deemed inappropriate by the administration. No gang attire, "Gothic" look attire, dog collars, spiked jewelry, etc. or any other accessories deemed inappropriate by the administration are permitted. Only a watch, bracelet, thin necklace, if tucked inside the collar, may be worn.

HEALTH

Accidents

In the event of an accident, a trained staff member will administer initial treatment of minor injuries. The student's emergency contact will be notified by phone whenever treatment is administered. In the event of a more serious accident, the EMTs will be called and dispatched. The emergency contact will be notified immediately.

Emergency Cards

Emergency cards must be completed for every student. Up-to-date information allows the office to contact parents/guardians in the event of an emergency. Therefore, it is extremely important to notify the school immediately if there is a change in address or telephone number(s) at home and/or work. For similar reasons, ACE also needs current addresses and telephone numbers of child-care providers and the person to contact in case of an emergency.

Parents/guardians are required to notify the school office whenever there is a change in home, work, or cell phone numbers or other emergency contact information. This includes changes to a student's medical history or any other condition that affects the student's participation in school programs.

Medication

1. Prescription medication may only be administered by the School Nurse upon the receipt of a Medication Administration Form completed and signed by the student's medical provider and legal parent/guardian. The front office or School Nurse will have a copy of the form for parents to take to the medical provider. .
2. Medication **must be in the original prescription bottle.** Your pharmacist may give you a second, labeled bottle for medication administration during school hours.
3. Medication should be given directly to the School Nurse, by parent/guardian.
4. **Students may not have prescription or over the counter medication in bookbag, lunch box, or in their possession of any fashion. All medication, regardless of prescribed or over the counter, follows the rules of the medication policy for the safety and wellfare of all students. Violation of this policy may result in a child's suspension from school.**
5. It is the responsibility of the parent to make sure there is enough medication held by the School Nurse. **Parents are responsible for ensuring medication does not run out at school.**

Immunizations

The Louisiana Immunization Requirements for Students (R.S. 17:170) requires all elementary school students to have an up-to-date immunization record on file for school attendance. Review bulletin 1508

for more information regarding required immunizations. If your child is exempt from immunizations due to medical or religious/philosophical reasons, a signed immunization exemption form must be on file in accordance with the Louisiana Department of Education. STATEMENT OF EXEMPTION FROM IMMUNIZATIONS

All records must be on file PRIOR TO A STUDENT ATTENDING SCHOOL PLEASE NOTE: The state mandates that a child without an immunization record on file will not be allowed to attend classes until the school receives the immunization record or exemption form.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Child Abuse

ACE maintains strict adherence to the Louisiana laws and statutes governing the reporting of suspected child abuse. All individuals required to report suspected child abuse are protected by state law from criminal liability.

Child Find

ACE will identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities within their population who are in need of special education and related services, regardless of the severity of their disability. In its identification process ACE will include children who are suspected of being a child with a disability and in need of special education, even though a student is:

- Advancing from grade to grade
- Highly mobile, including a migrant student

ACE will inform the general public and parents within its population of the responsibility for special education services for students aged three (3) through twenty-one (21) years of age, and how those services may be accessed including information regarding early intervention services for children aged birth through two (2) years of age. Services for an eligible student with a disability shall extend through the conclusion of the instructional year during which the student attains the age of twenty-two (22). ACE will require all staff members to review the written procedures related to child identification and referral on an annual basis, and maintain documentation of the staff review. Identification screening for possible disabilities shall be completed according to and in compliance with LA Bulletin 1508.

Annual Notification of Rights under FERPA for Schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days after the day ACE receives a written request for access.

   Parent/Guardian or eligible students who wish to inspect their child’s or their own educational records should submit to the Principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to

inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

   Parents/Guardians or eligible students who wish to ask ACE to amend an educational record should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the school will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

   One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, virtual school representative, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. .

   Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the ACE to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administered FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202

See the list below of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent:

- FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent/guardian or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents /Guardians or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1)).

- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of post-secondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2)).

- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or state and local educational authorities, such as the state educational agency in the parent or eligible student's state (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35.

- In connection with an audit or evaluation of federal- or state-supported education programs or for the enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35). In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4)).

- To state and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a state statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5)).

- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6)).

- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7)).

- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8)).

- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9)).

- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a) (10).

- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a) (11)).

Disciplinary Policies and Procedures

ACE follows disciplinary policies and procedures as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education ACT (IDEA).

Students who attend ACE may not bring to school or have in their possession any item that may be classified as a weapon (examples: guns, knives, matches, lighters, etc.). A student who brings such items to ACE may be required to participate in daily searches of person or personal possessions thereafter to ensure the safety of the student and others. Possession of these items may be considered grounds for recommendation of suspension.

Assaultive behavior by students (use of a weapon or object used as a weapon or battery against a staff person or another student) will not be tolerated at ACE. The parents, caregivers, or guardians will be notified immediately in the event assaultive behavior occurs. A recommendation may be made for suspension, a Manifestation Determination meeting, or a review of placement.

Suspension of Programming

A student's attendance at ACE may be suspended on the following basis:

1. Clinical necessity, i.e., a student demonstrates a psychiatric or medical instability or condition that compromises effective education. An intervention and/or alternative placement may be considered by an IEP team consisting of parent/guardians and school professionals.

2. Educational necessity, i.e., a student requires educational programs or services that currently cannot be provided satisfactorily in an ACE program. An alternative placement may be considered by parents/guardians and school professionals.

Administrative suspension of programming may occur based upon a decision by the principal and/or executive director. If the decision to suspend a student is made, then an IEP meeting may be held if needed. An administrative suspension may be effective immediately, or upon determination of need by administrative review, to determine a course of action through clinical intervention, change of placement or programmatic modification. Parents will be notified via phone and email of any suspension of programming for their respective student.

Cause for Suspension:

- Serious threats or acts of violence towards others (students or staff members)
- Repeated severe disruption that threatens the learning or safety of others
- Physical aggression resulting in the harm of student(s) or staff member(s)
- Bullying, harassment, or intimidation that violates school policies
- Possession of illegal weapons, illegal substances, or dangerous items.
- Possession of prescription or over the counter medications

In rare cases, a student may be subject to a long-term suspension or expulsion. Policy and Procedure for a Manifestation Determination Meeting must be held for any student with an Individualized Education Plan in accordance with IDEA. A student's family may elect to appeal a decision to impose a long-term suspension or expulsion to the School Disciplinary Committee and may elect to appeal a decision to the Board of Directors. The family may make a final appeal to the Board of Directors. The family may bring counsel with them if they so desire. In all events of expulsion, the Principal and Executive Director of ACE will work in conjunction with the family to find the best possible alternative educational setting.

Crisis Prevention

ACE employs the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) to minimize and extinguish maladaptive behaviors. ABA is used as a daily protocol to help students manage their behaviors in a positive and proactive way. If a student escalates into a crisis, becoming a danger to himself or others, CPI is a training program staff members receive certification to **Nonviolent Crisis Intervention®** This method helps school staff prevent, de-escalate, and safely manage challenging or aggressive behavior. The focus is on early intervention, using calm communication and supportive strategies before a situation becomes a crisis.

If physical restraint ever has to be used, CPI trained staff do so safely and **only** as a last resort, always protecting the dignity and safety of the student. RS 17:416.21

Bullying Policy

ACE is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing education environment for all its students and encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relationships among members of the school community LDOE Bullying Report.

Bullying, harassment, cyber-bullying, and/or hazing toward any member of the school community is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Bullying is when a student causes another student to feel less safe, fearful, or like they are unable to participate in school. Bullying often involves an imbalance of power and can include physical, verbal, or psychological actions against a student. Bullying can also happen through communications, including social media. Bullying can negatively impact the victim, as well as bystanders.

Bullying is a pattern of:

- written, electronic or verbal communication that threatens harm.
- obscene gestures, taunting, or malicious teasing
- persistent shunning or excluding a student.
- physical harm, such as hitting, pushing, or damaging personal property.

Harassment occurs when the speech or actions are so severe, pervasive, or targeted towards a particular person or group of people that it hinders the ability to get an education or receive educational benefits, significantly harms his/ her well-being, physically harms or places him/her in reasonable fear

of physical harm, substantially interferes with his/ her rights, or intimidates the student because of his/her identity or protected class (race, nationality, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion).

Cyber-bullying is the transmission of any electronic text, visual, written, or oral communication with the malicious and willful intent to coerce, abuse, torment, or intimidate a person. This action can be in the form of phone calls, text messages, photos, videos, or even social media posts. Simply put, it is the act of “bullying” with the use of an electronic device.

Sexting is the sending of sexually explicit digital images, videos, text messages, or emails, usually by cell phone or computer.

Hazing is any intentional, knowing, or reckless act that is directed against another person when both of the following apply:

> (1) The person knew or should have known that the act endangers the physical health or safety of the other person or induces the student to endanger his/her own mental or physical health or safety or causes severe emotional distress.
>
> (2) The act was associated with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, participating in,

Reporting Bullying, Harassment, and Other Prohibited Behaviors

If you are the student or parent/guardian and need to report a case of bullying, harassment, or other prohibited behaviors, you can complete this Bullying Report Form and submit it to the appropriate principal or executive director no later than two days after the bullying incident. Any verbal report should be made on the same day as the bullying incident is witnessed or otherwise learned about.

All property reported complaints about bullying and prohibited behavior shall be kept confidential and promptly investigated the next business day during which school is in session.

- Upon receipt of the bullying report, the principal/executive director shall initiate an investigation into the incident. The investigation shall include an interview of the reporter, the victim, the alleged bully, and any witnesses and shall include copies or photographs of any evidence. Documented interviews of the victim, alleged offender and witnesses will be conducted privately, separately, and confidentially after notifying the parent/guardian of the bullying allegation. The investigation must be completed no later than ten (10) school days after the date the written report of the incident is submitted to the appropriate school official.

- ACE shall notify the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of the involved students before conducting any interview related to a bullying investigation. The parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must be given the opportunity to attend the interview with the student as part of the investigation.

- After the investigation is complete, the principal/executive director will compose a written document containing the findings of the investigation. The document will be maintained by the school. The principal/executive director shall notify the complainant of the findings. If the discipline code has been violated, appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken. In such an event that disciplinary action is taken, the findings of the investigation and disciplinary action will be placed in the perpetrator’s student record. Victims and offenders may be referred for counseling if needed.

- Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation concerning prohibited behaviors will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally making false reports will result in disciplinary action.

- If the school and/or superintendent does not take timely and effective action to address the incident, the student or parent/guardian may report the incident to the ACE Board of Directors. The ACE Board of Directors will promptly investigate any properly reported bullying the next business day. If the ACE Board of Directors does not take timely and effective action, a parent/student/ or school employee may report the bullying to the Louisiana Department of Education.

Disciplinary procedures for pupils who have admitted or been found to have committed incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, include but not limited to:

- Time out of class (Alternate Learning Location)
- Lunch/recess detention
- Community Service (inside school)
- Additional staff supervision
- Peer mediation groups
- Suspension

Title IX Policy and Procedures

In order to maintain a safe, civil, and supportive learning environment, all forms of sexual harassment and discrimination on the basis of sex are prohibited. This policy covers all ACE students and applies to ACE students' and employees' behaviors while on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided equipment or transportation, or at any official school bus stop in accordance with federal law.

ACE's Title IX Coordinator is:

Joellen Freeman, Executive Director
505 Glenmar Drive
Monroe, LA 71201
318.450.7669 | jcfreeman@aceforasd.org

The Title IX Coordinator is designated and authorized to coordinate ACE's compliance with Title IX.

Definitions

"Complainant" is an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

"Respondent" is an individual who is reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

"Sexual harassment" is conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. A school employee conditioning an aid, benefit, or service of an education program or activity on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the education program or activity; or
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in state and federal law.

Under certain circumstances, sexual harassment of a student may constitute sexual abuse as defined under state law. In such situations, ACE will comply with applicable law and school policies regarding the reporting of suspected abuse to appropriate authorities.

Behaviors that constitute sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to:

1. Sexually suggestive remarks;
2. Verbal harassment or abuse;
3. Sexually suggestive pictures;
4. Sexually suggestive gesturing;
5. Harassing or sexually suggestive or offensive messages that are written or electronic;
6. Subtle or direct propositions for sexual favors; and
7. Touching of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment may be directed against a particular person or persons, or a group, whether of the opposite sex or the same sex.

Title IX Procedures

Reporting an Incident of Sexual Harassment or Retaliation

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, in person, by mail, by telephone, or by email to the Title IX Coordinator at any time regardless of whether the person is the alleged victim of the conduct. ACE students who believe they have been subject to or observed conduct that violates this policy must report that information to the Title IX Coordinator. Sexual harassment/discrimination complaints will be handled using the grievance procedures set forth below.

A report under this policy will need to include the nature of the alleged violation, names of persons responsible for the alleged violation (when known) and any other relevant background information.

Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible, and no retaliation will be allowed to occur as a result of good faith reporting of sexual harassment.

Initial Contact with Complainant

Upon receiving an initial report of alleged sexual harassment, whether through a report, a formal complaint (defined below), or an actual knowledge report from an ACE student, the Title IX Coordinator shall promptly and confidentially contact the Complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the Complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the Complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain the process for filing a formal complaint, if applicable.

Supportive Measures

The Title IX Coordinator shall offer supportive measures to both the Complainant and the alleged Respondent, either before or after filing a formal complaint or following a report where no complaint has been filed. The supportive measures are non-disciplinary, non-punitive, individualized services. They shall be designed to restore or preserve equal access to the ACE's educational program and activities without unreasonably burdening the other party and offered without charge. Supportive measures may include counseling, class modifications or schedule changes, and/or increased monitoring and supervision as the Title IX Coordinator deems appropriate.

Emergency Removal

The school may remove a respondent from the school's education program or activity on an emergency basis after it conduct an individualized safety and risk analysis and determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal. If emergency removal is deemed appropriate, the person the school is removing will be provided with notice and an opportunity to challenge the basis of his/her/their removal.

Initial Assessment

Once a complaint or notice of any allegation of sexual harassment is received, the Title IX Coordinator will make an initial assessment of the reported information and respond to any immediate health or safety concerns raised by the report, including promptly contacting the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures and the process for filing a formal complaint.

Grievance Process

While the time frame to resolve a reported incident may vary from case to case, depending on the specific facts and circumstances, it is expected that in most cases complaints will be resolved within 120 days, not including appeals. If the process takes longer than 120 days, both the complainant and respondent will be notified in writing.

The respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct. The school uses the preponderance of the evidence standard in investigations of complaints alleging sexual harassment and any related violations. This means that the investigation determines whether the allegations are more likely than not true.

Formal Complaints

If a formal complaint (a written complaint signed by the Complainant or Title IX Coordinator, alleging sexual harassment and requesting an investigation) is filed, the Title IX Coordinator or an assigned investigator with training in Title IX investigations will investigate the allegations unless they are summarily dismissed per below. The investigation will evaluate all available evidence and may include witness interviews, review of relevant documents, and consultation with other staff members, as necessary. The Title IX Coordinator or investigator must be free from conflicts of interest or bias.

Upon a determination that the Respondent engaged in prohibited behavior (pursuant to the procedures set forth below), ACE may:

- Offer the Complainant any remedies that will restore or preserve the Complainant's access to ACE's educational program and activities, including any support measures. These remedies may be kept confidential to the extent deemed necessary by ACE.
- Impose any disciplinary sanctions on a Respondent student, including participation in counseling services; revocation of privileges related to extra-curricular programs, including sports; no-contact orders; schedule changes; short-term suspension; or expulsion.

This Policy prohibits the Complainant, the Respondent, and any witnesses from knowingly making a false statement or providing false evidence in connection with a Title IX investigation. ACE may take disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct against individuals who make such false statements.

Written Notice of Formal Complaint

Upon receipt or issuance of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator will provide written notice to the Complainant and the Respondent of the allegations of a formal complaint and the grievance process, including any informal resolution process. The notice of the allegations must include the following:

- Sufficient detail to allow the Respondent to prepare a response, including a description of the alleged conduct, the date and location of the conduct, and the names of the Complainant and other involved parties, if any.
- A statement that the Respondent is presumed not to be responsible for the conduct and that responsibility will be determined at the conclusion of the process.
- A notice of the Complainant's and Respondent's rights to have an attorney or non-attorney advisor.
- The right of Complainant and Respondent to inspect and review any evidence.
- The prohibition on providing false statements or evidence in connection with the investigation of the complaint.

If additional allegations arise during an investigation and will be investigated, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator will provide written notice of those additional allegations to the Complainant and Respondent.

Summary Dismissal

If the Title IX Coordinator or investigator determines that the allegations in a formal complaint do not meet the definition of "sexual harassment" under the applicable Title IX regulations, did not occur in ACE's educational program or activity, or did not occur in the United States, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator shall summarily dismiss the formal complaint. The Title IX Coordinator or investigator may

dismiss a formal complaint if the Complainant requests withdrawal of the complaint, the Respondent withdraws from ACE or terminates their employment with ACE, or specific circumstances prevent ACE from gathering appropriate evidence to determine the allegations. Upon dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations contained in a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator will promptly and simultaneously provide written notice of the dismissal notice of the dismissal and the reason(s) for the dismissal to the Complainant and Respondent. If a complaint is summarily dismissed, ACE may nevertheless take whatever additional disciplinary action it deems appropriate against the Respondent under its Student Code of Conduct.

Submission of Evidence to Title IX Coordinator or Investigator

Both the Complainant and the Respondent will have a reasonable opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence to the Title IX Coordinator or investigator, provided, however, that such evidence must be submitted within 21 calendar days of the date on which written notice of the formal complaint is provided to the Complainant and Respondent. The Title IX Coordinator or investigator will meet with each party and give at least 24 hours advance written notice of the date, time, location, and purpose of the meeting.

Before the Title IX Coordinator or investigator prepares the final investigation report, the Complainant, the Respondent, and their advisors (if any) will be provided an equal opportunity to review all evidence directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint. If possible, the evidence will be provided to the parties in an electronic format and manner that does not permit copying or downloading of the evidence. The evidence provided must include any evidence that the Title IX Coordinator or investigator does not intend to rely upon and any exculpatory or inculpatory evidence from any source. Within ten calendar days of the date they were provided with access to the evidence, the parties may prepare and submit to the Title IX Coordinator or investigator must consider before preparing a final, written investigation report. Following the expiration date on which the parties may respond to the evidence, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator will promptly prepare and issue a written investigation report that fairly summarizes the relevant evidence discovered during the investigation.

ACE will not restrict either party's ability to discuss the allegations and gather evidence related to the allegations of a formal complaint.

Determination of Responsibility

ACE will not hold a live hearing to determine responsibility for any violations of this policy. The written investigation report and any responses submitted by the Complainant and/or Respondent will be provided to ACE's Executive Director (the "Decision Maker"), who will determine responsibility, unless the Decision Maker has a conflict of interest, in which case an alternative Decision Maker will be appointed. The Decision Maker will provide each party with an opportunity to submit written, relevant questions for any party or witness within five calendar days of the date the Decision Maker is provided with a copy of the final written investigation report and any responses to the report. If written questions are submitted to the Decision Maker, the Decision Maker will promptly provide the questions to the

appropriate party so that the party can answer the questions. Answers to the questions must be provided to the Decision Maker within five calendar days of the date they are provided to a party. The Decision Maker will promptly provide each party with the answers to the questions and allow additional, limited follow-up questions in writing from both the complainant and Respondent within three calendar days. If written follow-up questions are submitted to the Decision Maker, the Decision Maker will promptly provide the questions to the appropriate party so that the party can answer the questions. Any answers to those additional questions must be submitted to the Decision Maker within three calendar days of the date they are provided to a party. The Decision Maker will promptly respond to both parties' additional questions. Any questions regarding a Complainant's prior sexual behavior or sexual predisposition will be deemed irrelevant unless they are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the alleged misconduct or are offered to prove consent.

No sooner than ten calendar days after receiving the investigation report but no later than 45 calendar days after receiving the investigation report, the Decision Maker will issue a written determination (the "Determination") that includes:

- A statement of the allegations;
- A description of the procedures used to investigate the allegations;
- The findings of fact;
- A determination of responsibility for each allegation;
- Any sanctions that will be imposed on the Respondent for violations;
- Whether remedies to restore or preserve the Complainant's and/or other equal access to ACE's educational program or activities will be provided, and
- A description of the right to an appeal, how to request an appeal, and the permitted bases for appeal.

The deadline for the Decision Maker to issue the Determination may be extended for good cause at the Decision Maker's sole discretion.

The Determination must be based upon a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., whether it is more likely than not that the violation occurred). The Complainant and the Respondent will be notified of the Determination concurrently.

Students who violate Title IX will be referred for potential disciplinary action. Employees found to have violated Title IX will be subject to employment actions, including discipline or termination of employment.

Timing of Resolution of Formal Complaints

ACE will attempt to resolve all formal complaints alleging a violation of this policy within 120 days, not including any time for an appeal of the Determination. However, ACE may modify this presumptive deadline and any related deadlines for grievance procedures as required by the circumstances of the report and equity to the parties, so long as the matter is resolved in a timely manner. The Title IX Coordinator or investigator will not wait for the conclusion of a law enforcement investigation or criminal

proceeding to begin the Title IX investigation. However, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator may consider such investigations, or extensions of the deadlines will be explained in writing to both parties.

Appeals

Either the Complainant or the Respondent may appeal from (a) the Determination regarding a formal complaint, (b) ACE's handling of a report, or (c) the dismissal of a formal complaint by submitting a notice of appeal that includes the bases of the appeal to the Decision Maker within ten calendar days of the date of the Determination. Written notice of the appeal will be provided to both parties by ACE. Either party may file a written response in support of or challenging the Determination and the basis for the appeal within five calendar days of the date on which written notice of the appeal was provided to all parties. An appeal may be filed on the following bases only:

- A procedural irregularity affected the outcome of the matter,
- There is newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter and that was not available at the time the Determination was made and/or
- The Title IX Coordinator, the investigator, or the Decision Maker had a conflict of interest or bias that affected the outcome of the matter.

The Executive Director or School Governing Board will decide the appeal on written submissions from the parties only. No hearing will be held for an appeal.

The Executive Director or School Governing Board will simultaneously provide the parties with a written decision regarding the appeal, which will describe the result of the appeal and the rationale for the decision.

Informal Resolution

Allegations may be resolved informally only if a formal complaint is filed and only if the complaint does not allege that an ACE employee harassed a student. Both parties to a formal complaint must voluntarily agree, in writing, to participate in a potential informal resolution. As a part of the informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator or investigator may conduct interviews and other fact-finding. Available informal resolution methods include arbitration, mediation, and restorative justice procedures. Either party may withdraw for an informal resolution at any time before agreeing to a resolution and resume the grievance process. Once the parties agree to an informal resolution, it becomes binding. The Title IX Coordinator or the investigator has the discretion to decline informal resolution for some complaints, including complaints of sexual violence, and instead require their formal investigation.

Retaliation

Title IX prohibits retaliation for reporting or participating in an investigation of a report regarding sex discrimination or harassment. No person shall be retaliated against by ACE in any way or subjected to discharge, suspension, discipline, harassment, or any form of discrimination for participating in any proceeding under this policy. In addition, it shall be a violation of this policy for any person to retaliate against another individual to interfere with that individual's Title IX rights or because an individual has

participated or refused to participate in proceedings under this policy. Individuals may be subject to actions under this policy and/or under the Student Code of Conduct for retaliation in violation of this policy.

PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW

Under the No Child Left Behind ACT of 2001, parents have the right to know the professional qualification of the instructors who teach their children. Resumes outlining educational background and experience for all teachers are maintained with Human Resources at Academy of Collaborative Education. If you wish to view a teacher's background information, please contact the office for the form to request information.

Approved: 7.16.25
ACE Board of Directors

Approved: 7.14.25
Governance Committee

Coversheet

Announcement of FY2027 Board Committees + Committee Meeting Schedule

Section: VII. FY2027 Committee Formation + Planning
Item: A. Announcement of FY2027 Board Committees + Committee Meeting Schedule
Purpose: FYI
Submitted by:
Related Material: ACE_Board_Retreat_CommitteeWork.docx

ACADEMY OF COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION

FY2027 Board Committee Formation

Academic Year 2026–2027

About Board Committees

ACE's board committees are the working engine of our governance. Each committee is responsible for a defined area of board oversight and, collectively, they ensure that the full board can govern thoughtfully, efficiently, and in alignment with our mission to serve students with autism spectrum disorder and related disabilities.

Committees meet bi-monthly, prepare information and recommendations for the full board, and drive the board's annual work plan. Committee chairs are responsible for leading meetings, ensuring follow-through on action items, and reporting to the full board at regular board meetings.

This document outlines the FY2027 committee structure, including rosters, proposed meeting schedules, and a goal-setting framework for each committee to complete at the Board Retreat on June 27, 2026.

Full Board Meeting Schedule (for reference)
Wednesday, August 19, 2026 — 3:30–4:30 PM
Wednesday, October 21, 2026 — 3:30–4:30 PM
Wednesday, December 16, 2026 — 3:30–4:30 PM
Wednesday, February 17, 2027 — 3:30–4:30 PM
Wednesday, April 21, 2027 — 3:30–4:30 PM
Wednesday, June 16, 2027 — 3:30–4:30 PM

Committee Rosters & Meeting Schedules

The following committees are established for FY2027. Each committee's chair, members, and proposed meeting schedule are listed below. Meeting dates should be confirmed and finalized during the Board Retreat.

Governance Committee

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair	Seth [proposed]
Member	Holly Allen
Member	Anna Grimmett

PROPOSED MEETING DATES
Wednesdays | 3:30–4:30 PM

Wednesday, August 5, 2026
Wednesday, October 7, 2026
Wednesday, December 2, 2026
Wednesday, February 3, 2027
Wednesday, April 7, 2027
Wednesday, June 2, 2027

Finance Committee

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair	Latner [chair]
Member	Hannah
Member	Anna Grimmett

PROPOSED MEETING DATES
Wednesdays | 2:00–3:00 PM

Wednesday, July 8, 2026
Wednesday, September 9, 2026
Wednesday, November 11, 2026
Wednesday, January 13, 2027
Wednesday, March 10, 2027
Wednesday, May 12, 2027

Facilities & Development Committee

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair	Davy [chair]
Member	Curtis Eberts [proposed Vice Chair]
Member	Richard

PROPOSED MEETING DATES
Thursdays | 4:00–5:00 PM

Thursday, July 16, 2026
Thursday, September 17, 2026
Thursday, November 19, 2026
Thursday, January 21, 2027
Thursday, March 18, 2027
Thursday, May 20, 2027

Academic Excellence Committee

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair	Matthew [chair]
Member	Carmen

PROPOSED MEETING DATES
Wednesdays | 3:00–4:00 PM

Wednesday, July 1, 2026
Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Wednesday, November 4, 2026
Wednesday, January 6, 2027
Wednesday, March 3, 2027
Wednesday, May 5, 2027

Friends of ACE Committee

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair	Matthew [chair]
Member	Richard
Note	*A third member is needed — Matthew may have a suggestion.*

PROPOSED MEETING DATES

Meeting dates TBD

To be determined by committee

SY2026–2027 Committee Goal-Setting

Each committee is asked to establish 2–3 goals for SY2026–2027 during the Board Retreat on June 27. These goals will guide the committee's work throughout the year and be reported to the full board. Strong committee goals are:

- Specific — clearly describe what the committee will accomplish
- Measurable — include a way to know when the goal has been achieved
- Mission-connected — tied to ACE's purpose of serving students and families
- Realistic — achievable within the committee's scope and the board's capacity
- Time-bound — have a target date or milestone within SY2026–2027

Use the prompts and planning table below for each committee. Committee chairs should bring completed goals back to the full board for review.

Governance Committee

Chair: Seth [proposed]

Goal 1: *What is the most important thing this committee will accomplish this year?*

Goal 2: *What will we monitor or improve within our area of oversight?*

Goal 3: *What is one way this committee will strengthen board effectiveness or school outcomes? (optional)*

Goal Summary Table

Goal	How We'll Measure Success	Target Date	Lead

Goal	How We'll Measure Success	Target Date	Lead

Finance Committee

Chair: Latner [chair]

Goal 1: *What is the most important thing this committee will accomplish this year?*

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Goal 3: *What is one way this committee will strengthen board effectiveness or school outcomes? (optional)*

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Facilities & Development Committee

Chair: Davy [chair]

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Preparation: Review any pre-read materials distributed before each meeting. Come ready to discuss, ask questions, and make decisions.

Action Items: Follow through on commitments made during committee meetings in a timely manner. Report back to the chair if you encounter obstacles.

Board Reporting: Committee chairs will summarize committee work and bring any recommendations to the full board at each regular board meeting.

Communication: Use BoardOnTrack for meeting materials, agendas, and minutes. Contact the Executive Director or Board Chair with questions between meetings.

Questions? Contact Executive Director Joellen Freeman at jcfreeman@aceforasd.org or Board Chair Anna Grimmett.

Coversheet

Committee Goals + Meeting Schedule Creation

Section: VII. FY2027 Committee Formation + Planning
Item: B. Committee Goals + Meeting Schedule Creation
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: ACE_Board_Retreat_CommitteeWork.docx

ACADEMY OF COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION

FY2027 Board Committee Formation

Academic Year 2026–2027

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