



The Exploris School

Governance Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday February 13, 2020 at 3:45 PM EST

Location

<https://zoom.us/j/4850136618>

Agenda

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
I. Opening Items			3:45 PM
A. Record Attendance		Tom Miller	1 m
B. Call the Meeting to Order		Tom Miller	
C. Approve Minutes	Approve Minutes		1 m
Approve minutes for Governance Committee Meeting on January 27, 2020			
II. Governance			3:47 PM
A. Updates on Fall Work	Discuss	Tom Miller	10 m
Grievance Policy Updates: recently we encountered a grievance and identified one issue in the policy as written (training for the board to effectively handle a grievance).			
Board has scheduled training over the next 45 days to meet this goal. Policy needs to be less rigid in terms of the timelines.			
Executive Evaluation: Last meeting we discussed potential questions for the CEO evaluation. We will wait for the third party consulting team to advise the board on next steps.			
Policy Updates:			
B. New Members and Orientation Plan	Discuss	Tom Miller	10 m
We added four board members to begin in February and run a term through January 31, 2023.			
_Jerry Hwang Resume.docx			
_Katherine M Hogan Resume 19.pdf			
_Resume- Alannah Rodriguez.docx			
_SRD_Personal_2019.pdf			
Another candidate, Darrell Kain, was recommended by Jay. I met with him and think he is a strong candidate for Foundation or board come July. George was meeting him next.			

Member	Rolling Off Date
Camesha Jones .	June 30, 2020*
Christine Hutchins	June 30, 2020* (Served previously as PTO Rep)
Theo Kingsberry	June 30, 2021*
Tom Miller	June 30, 2021
Keely Nichols Byars	June 30, 2021
Katie Johnson	June 30, 2021*
George Burnette	June 30, 2021*
Jay Korreck	June 30, 2022*

What should the orientation process include?

C. Policy Discussion and Recommendations (Criminal Backgrounds Update) Discuss 10 m

Our insurance provider, Hanover Insurance recently completed an audit on our school facility and operations. One of the items highlighted in their report was the need for a more thorough background check policy and procedure for volunteers. Their requirements are outlined below.

III. Other Business

IV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting Vote

Cover Sheet

Approve Minutes

Section: I. Opening Items
Item: C. Approve Minutes
Purpose: Approve Minutes
Submitted by:
Related Material: Minutes for Governance Committee Meeting on January 27, 2020



The Exploris School

Minutes

Governance Committee Meeting

Date and Time

Monday January 27, 2020 at 4:00 PM

Location

Middle School Campus

Committee Members Present

M. Gargan, T. Miller (remote)

Committee Members Absent

C. Jones, E. Schollmeyer

Committee Members Arrived Late

T. Miller

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

T. Miller arrived late.

C. Approve Minutes

Tom needs to go back and fix the minutes from the November meeting (first unapproved meeting minutes)

II. Governance

A. Updates on Fall Work

Working through the ED evaluation with the third party and grievance policy.

B. New Members

Maggie asked what would be the unattended consequence of them all on at once.

The consequence being having four members roll off in the middle of the year.

The board needs support in development, facilities and finances. These prospective members meet these skill sets.

The recommendation is that all four come on right now to begin to their term immediately and expire 1/31//23.

C. Policy Discussion and Recommendations (Criminal Backgrounds)

Concern is there is not a formal criminal background check policy for volunteers.

Law states: 115C-218.50. Charter school nonsectarian. (a) A charter school shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations. A charter school shall not be affiliated with a nonpublic sectarian school or a religious institution. (b) A charter school shall not charge tuition or fees except as follows: (1) A charter school may charge any fees that are charged by the local school administrative unit in which the charter school is located.

Recommendation of the committee is to approve a CB check for volunteers for any adult who will oversee the wellbeing of children. This includes field trips and explorations. If there is a fee

Driving to Field Trips: Looking at a policy that demonstrates drivers have drivers insurance (specific liability) and driving record is in question.

Bring a draft by February.

III. Other Business

A. Upcoming Work

Draft the CB policy for volunteers (details for CDL)

Orientation for new members (need a plan) Cori?

Full policy review for the upcoming handbook.

Ensure the policies that are public align to the handbook.

Review of the bylaws.

Complete Governance Assessment for the board

IV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

T. Miller made a motion to Adjourn.

M. Gargan seconded the motion.

Looking to meet 2/13 at 3:30. The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:14 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

T. Miller

Cover Sheet

New Members and Orientation Plan

Section: II. Governance
Item: B. New Members and Orientation Plan
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: BoardOrientationStrategies.pdf
D Kain resume 2020 vet.docx
Orientation Binder.pdf

Board Orientation Strategies

"Tips, tools and resources designed to get your Board into top gear quickly"



**Prepared by:
The Department of Wellness, Culture and Sport**

BOARD ORIENTATION STRATEGIES

Page

I.) What is Board orientation and Why is it important	1
➤ What is Board Orientation	1
➤ Why is Board Orientation Important	1
 II.) Developing an effective Board orientation process	 2
➤ Orientation of new Board Members	2
➤ What to consider and include	2
➤ Developing a Board orientation timetable	3
 III.) Preparing an effective “Quick Reference” Board Handbook	 4
 IV.) Developing a comprehensive Board Manual	 4
1) “Quick Reference” Board Handbook	4
2) General Information	4
3) Board Policies & Procedures	4
4) Financial Management	5
5) Other Information	5

Appendices:

- i) Sample Board Roles & Responsibilities**
- ii) Sample Board Orientation Checklist**
- iii) Board Job Description Template**
- iv) Standard Committee Terms of Reference Template**
- v) Sample Board Orientation Format**
- vi) Definitions**
- vii) Parliamentary Procedures Overview**

Board Orientation Strategies

I.) What is Board orientation and Why is it important?

What is Board Orientation:

Board orientation is a **process** to thoughtfully provide Board members with the precise information they need **on their role** in the organization.

The purpose of Board orientation is to provide important information about the organization and about the Board's roles and responsibilities. It also serves to build a working relationship among Board members that promotes ongoing support and comes to an agreement on how they will carry out their work.

See Appendix i) Sample Board Roles & Responsibilities

It is important to ask the question: **what do the members of the Board need to know in order to do their job as best they can.**

Why is Board Orientation Important:

Board orientation is important and required so that directors Board members can find answers to critical questions:

- What skills and knowledge do each of us bring to the table?
- What do we need to know and learn?
- How will we function as a Board?
- Within what principles will we operate?
- What resources are available?
- How often and where should we meet?
- How will we run our meetings?
- With whom and how will we communicate?
- What administrative systems will we require?
- Will we require outside advice on legal, planning and financial matters?
- What are our legal responsibilities?
- What decision-making and problem-solving techniques will we use?

New Board members need to feel like they're an integral part of the Board as soon as possible. If they don't feel comfortable voicing their opinions, you're all losing valuable input! **Information is what will help everybody feel at ease.**

Board Orientation Strategies

II.) Developing an effective Board orientation process

Orientation of new Board members:

No matter how well-qualified your new Board members are, it will take some time to get them up-to-speed and feeling comfortable as members of your team.

There are steps you can take to move this process along. Conducting an orientation session of the entire Board shortly after the election is essential. It should occur well in advance of the first Board meeting and can be as short as 2 to 4 hours or as long as a two-day special retreat (often in conjunction with a planning session).

It is important to spend time going over background material about the organization and bring them up-to-date on the issues facing the Board. (This is often overlooked and new Board members may be caught off guard.) Also, be sure to allow plenty of time for questions and answers.

Getting Board members comfortable with Board responsibilities and participating in meetings is a key objective. Not only do the new directors start contributing right away during the meetings, they also develop a good working relationship with the veteran Board members.

What to consider and include:

In planning your orientation, keep in mind that the experience levels of Board members will vary greatly. Some will have served on previous Boards – some will have not. Levels of interest and expertise will also differ.

The following are some key aspects to consider as part of the Board orientation:

- Hold a meeting with the Board Chairperson / President, Executive Director, and new Board members. The purpose of the meeting is to set the standard for conduct and achievement required from Board members, as well as to highlight the vision of the organization that the Board is endeavouring to achieve.
- Have new Board members present themselves and their interests – what they hope to offer the Board, and what they hope to gain as Board members.
- Provide some of the history and evolution of the organization and review interim and long term goals.
- Bring members up-to-speed on issues and challenges facing the organization; and, discuss any key trends that could impact and affect the organization.
- Provide Board members with information on organizational policies and procedures.
- Outline roles and responsibilities of staff and contrast those with the roles and responsibilities of the Board. This is an excellent opportunity to address the potentially difficult issues surrounding overlapping or unclear lines of responsibility.
- Consider assigning a mentor - a senior member of the Board is assigned to tutor a new member in the operations of the Board.
- Consider incorporating teambuilding exercises for the Board as part of the orientation process.

Board Orientation Strategies

- Plan a visit and tour of any of the organization's offices and facilities, ideally led by the Executive Director or an experienced Board member.

See Appendix ii) Sample Board Orientation Checklist

Developing a Board orientation timetable

Now, let's look at the orientation process as it proceeds through the following stages:

During The Recruitment Stage (Before Election or Appointment to the Board):

Orientation of Board members should actually begin early in the recruitment process. In the recruitment stage, by means of printed material provided to the prospect as well as a face-to-face meeting, the prospect received an overview of: the organization's vision, mission & goals; programs and services; and other background information. The prospect should also receive a list of expectations of Board members including number of meetings, committee assignments, length of Board term and an idea of the time commitment required. This can be an opportunity to discuss any expectations the prospect may have for being involved on the Board.

See Appendix iii) Board Job Description Template

New Member Orientation (Upon the Election or Appointment to the Board):

After the new member has been brought onto the Board, the Board orientation process continues in the following way:

1. Before the first Board meeting, a meeting should be scheduled between the new Board member and key individuals in the organization. Provide them with a detailed Board Manual.
2. Also during this meeting, discuss options for committee involvement. Refer back to the Board member job description or description of roles and responsibilities presented during the recruitment process. In most cases, committee involvement by Board members is not an option but rather one of the expectations. There should be a solid match between the interests, skills and preferences of the individual Board member and the requirements and challenges of the committee they join.

See Appendix iv) Standard Committee Terms of Reference Template

3. During the Board orientation session or at the new members' first Board meeting, introduce them to all current Board members and staff. Consider assigning a mentor Board member to work with the new Board member at least through the first several months.

Remember, effective orientation for new Board members includes a Board handbook and manual that clearly describes the organization and outlines the responsibilities of Board Members. Of course, nothing can replace an orientation session combined with written materials, to clearly outline the new Board members' role.

See Appendix v) Sample Board Orientation Format

Board Orientation Strategies

III.) Preparing an effective “Quick Reference” Board Handbook

A Board Handbook should be developed and provided to all members of the Board to use as a quick reference on a number of topics.

The content of a “Quick Reference” Board Handbook might include:

- A description of the organizations Vision, Mission and Goals
- Definition of commonly use terms

See Appendix vi) Definitions

- An organizational chart
- A description of programs and services
- A description of the Board’s role
- A "job" or position description for Board Members
- Terms of reference for the Executive Committee (President, Vice-president, Treasurer and Secretary)
- Staff structure and description of major roles
- List of committees (with statement of purpose for each)
- Statement of Board policies. (Make reference to policies provided in Board Manual)
- Paragraph on Directors’ Liability Insurance
- A quick description on meeting procedures (i.e. Using Roberts Rules of Order)

If a formal orientation is done every year with new and old members of the Board, walking them through the content of the handbook is an important part of the Board orientation.

IV.) Developing a comprehensive Board Manual

Below you will find a list of recommended items to include in a comprehensive Board manual. Remember, the manual should be concise and easy to read – a 150-page Board manual will likely not be read! Include sample promotional materials such as brochures or newspaper clippings, without including every article ever written about the organization.

1) “Quick Reference” Board Handbook

- Easy to read as a quick reference on a number of key topics

2) General Information

- A copy of the organization’s Constitution and Bylaws
- Terms of reference for all committees
- The organizations’ most recent Strategic Plan and Operational Plan
- A list of other Board Members and their contact information
- A staff listing with contact information
- Full job description for each staff position

3) Board Policies & Procedures

- Codes of Conduct
- Oath of confidentiality
- Abuse and Harassment Policy

Board Orientation Strategies

- Conflict of Interest Guidelines
- Travel Remuneration Procedures
- Nomination Procedure for new Board members
- Financial Structure and policies related to cheque signing
- Insurance Policy (Directors' Liability Information)
- Risk Management Strategy
- Media / Public Relations Policy

4) Financial Management

- Up to date audited financial statements
- Copy of the current budget
- Copy of the most recent Annual Report
- Most recent income statement

5) Other Information

- Goals for the upcoming year
- Copy of minutes from previous Board meetings
- Parliamentary Procedures Overview

See Appendix vii) Parliamentary Procedures Overview

- Annual schedule or plan or work for the Board (Including dates and locations of meetings)
- A form outlining the Board member's commitment, role and responsibilities which the Board member can sign and return
- Copies of any publications such as brochures and other promotional materials

Encourage new Board members to approach the Board President or any other Board member if they have any questions after reviewing the manual. New Board members may not feel comfortable voicing confusion or asking questions about policies and procedures at the first Board meeting or Board orientation session. However, it is important that they understand their role and responsibilities within the Board.

Be sure to extend a warm welcome message to your new volunteer Board members!

Board Orientation Strategies

Sample Board Roles & Responsibilities

The board is responsible in five key areas:

To establish the organization's mission, vision, and direction

- vision and values
- mission and philosophy
- strategic planning
- programs and services
- evaluation

To ensure the financial health of the organization

- responsible for ensuring there are adequate financial resources for the work of the organization

To ensure the organization has sufficient & appropriate human resources

- responsible for the working conditions in the organization
- responsible for hiring, giving direction to and evaluating the senior staff person
- responsible for ensuring the capability, suitability and vitality of its membership
- responsible for ensuring the existence of a Nominating Committee

To direct organizational operations

- responsible for ensuring that the organization and its directors are in compliance with its legal requirements
- responsible for ensuring that the board works effectively
- oversees organizational structure and agency administration

To ensure effective community relations

- respond to changing needs/pressures in the community
- find new ways to meet needs
- use marketing and public relations

Board Orientation Strategies

Sample Board Orientation Checklist

Here are items to consider in developing an orientation session for new Board members. Much of this information will be covered in the Board Manual, but should be reviewed with new Board members to ensure they are comfortable with the information.

Provide General Information	
➤ History of the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Organizational / Board / Staff structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Copy of constitution & by-laws	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Vision & mission of the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Strategic priorities, goals and objectives	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Summary of the programs and services	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ List of Board members / staff and their contact information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Roles and Responsibilities	
➤ Reviewed Board member's role	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Reviewed Executive's / Officers' role	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Reviewed staff roles	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Reviewed committees and their roles	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Discussed expectations for and of new Board members	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policies and Procedure	
➤ Provided new members with Board policies and procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Reviewed Board policies and procedures with new Board members	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial Management	
➤ Discussed Budget process	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Provide current year's budget	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Provided a copy of up-to-date audited financial statements	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Provided a copy of most recent annual report	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Information	
➤ Provided copies of minutes from previous Board meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Gave a tour of facilities and offices	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Provided brochures and other promotional materials	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ Had new Board members sign required paper work (i.e. Oath of Confidentiality, Memo of Understanding regarding roles and responsibilities etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Board Orientation Strategies

Board Job Description Template

Everyone involved in the organization should have a job description.
The job description should contain the following sections:

Position: What is the job title?

Authority: What authority does the position have?

Responsibility: To whom is the position accountable? What are the broad areas of responsibility?

Term: How are board members elected and for how long? How do board members leave the board?

General Duties: What are the typical duties board members are responsible for?

Evaluation: How will board members effectiveness be assessed?

Review Date: When will this job description be reviewed?

Approval Date: When was this job description last approved?

Qualifications & Skills: What specialized or practical skills are needed to do the job? What human relation skills (e.g. communication, problem solving) are needed?

Benefits: What benefits can a board member expect to receive? (e.g. satisfaction of making a difference in the community; opportunity to work with individuals of diverse backgrounds; development of effective decision-making skills; increased understanding of group dynamics and relationships)

Time & Financial Requirements: What is realistic estimate of the time required as a board member? What will it cost to be a board member?

Board Orientation Strategies

Standard Committee Terms of Reference Template

Committee Name: (gives an identity and thereby identifies its general objectives)

Type: (standing, ad hoc, advisory)

Chairman: (may be skilled in chairing meetings, but may not be a subject matter expert)

Responsible To: (board, unless this is a sub-committee)

Purpose: (be concise: why the committee was formed)

Authority: (limited or active; agent or advisor)

Timeframes, Reporting and Deadlines: (duration, #mtg./month, milestones & report dates, date project is to finish)

Composition: (total number plus number of Board members, community reps, client reps, staff, outside experts, parents, etc.)

Staff Support: (position and actual type(s) of support provided and time required)

Other Resources: (available experts, files from previous committees, workshops, office space, \$\$ from budget)

Communication with Board Through: (usually the chairman of the committee)

Specific Areas of Responsibility: (specific objectives or tasks the committee is expected to achieve during the term or time-period given in the terms of reference)

Approval/Review Date: (the date on which the Board approves ToR, the date by which the committee is to review established ToR and forward recommended adjustments)

Appendix iv) Standard Committee Terms of Reference Template

Board Orientation Strategies

Sample Board Orientation Format

Introduce Everyone

- Elected Chairperson / President
- Executive Officers
- Committee Chairs and Members
- Other Board Members
- Staff
- Guests and Others

Describe the Organization (Vision & Mission!)

- Who we serve
- What we do
- Overview of programs and services

Explain and Discuss

- Meeting attendance requirements--both full board and committee
- Committee assignments and charges
- Board role and relation to administrator/staff

Review Documents Organized in the Board Manual

- “Quick Reference” Board Handbook
- General Information
- Board Policies & Procedures
- Financial Management
- Other Information

Collect Data at the Meeting

- Addresses
- Telephone--home and office
- Fax number
- E-mail address
- Best time to contact
- Best time for meetings

Board Orientation Strategies

Definitions

Board of Directors: A group of individuals elected by the shareholders of a corporation to manage the corporation's business and appoint its officers

Executive/Officers: Appointed by the board of directors and are responsible for the daily operation of the corporation. The titles and duties of each officer are usually listed in the company's bylaws. Common officer titles are president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

Committee: Generally, a formal working group within a larger organisation, often formed by election, often having authority or legitimacy of some specific kind. A committee is small enough to ensure that informal discussion is possible.

Policy: A guiding principle designed to influence decisions, actions, etc. Typically, a policy designates a required process or procedure within an organization. They are often rules of practice and procedure which supplement the constitution and bylaws.

Budget: An itemized summary of estimated or intended expenditures for a given period along with proposals for financing those (Revenues).

Audit: An examination of records or financial accounts to check their accuracy.

Financial Statements: A report providing financial statistics relative to a given part of an organization's operations or status. The two most common financial statements are the income statement and balance sheet.

Income Statement: A business financial statement that lists revenues, expenses, and net income throughout a given period.

Balance Sheet: A "Balance Sheet" is the statement of the financial worth of a business or organization which is divided into three parts: Assets, Liabilities, Equity

Assets: Anything of value that is owned by the company. This can include money that others owe.

Liability: An amount owed to another, not necessarily due to be paid immediately or an obligation to remit money or services at a future date.

Equity: An amount that a business is worth beyond what it owes. Equity is the net worth of a business. It is the original investment plus the accumulation of all profits that have been retained in the company since its conception. To calculate equity, subtract the liabilities from the assets.

Fiduciary: A person or organization who holds, manages and has discretionary authority and control over money belonging to another person or organization

Strategic Planning: The process of determining a company's long-term goals and then identifying the best approach for achieving those goals.

Operation Planning: Operational planning is setting out clearly the implementation of the strategic plan against specific objectives.

Board Orientation Strategies

Parliamentary Procedure Overview

Use this as a quick reference tool when you need to refresh your parliamentary procedure knowledge.

To do this:	Say this:	Interrupt speaker?	Second required?	Is motion debatable?	Is motion amendable?	What vote is required?
<i>Adjourn meeting before business is completed</i>	"I move that we adjourn."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
<i>Recess the meeting</i>	"I move that we recess until"	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
<i>Suspend further consideration of an issue</i>	"I move we table it."	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
<i>End debate</i>	"I move the previous question."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Two-thirds
<i>Study an issue further</i>	"I move we refer this matter to a committee."	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
<i>Introduce business (primary motion)</i>	"I move that"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
<i>Amend a motion</i>	"I move that this motion be amended by"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
<i>Object to procedure or a personal affront</i>	"Point of order."	Yes	No	No	No	No vote, chair decides
<i>Take up a previously tabled matter</i>	"I move we take from the table"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority

Appendix vii) Parliamentary Procedures Overview

Board Orientation Strategies

<i>Consider an issue out of its scheduled order</i>	“I move we suspend the rules and consider”	No	Yes	No	No	Two-thirds
--	---	-----------	------------	-----------	-----------	-------------------

DARRELL KAIN

1058 Indigo Ridge Place, Cary, North Carolina 27519 ☎ 919.521.7006 ✉ darrellkain@gmail.com

QUALIFICATIONS PROFILE

- Built solid partnerships with numerous director-level leaders in companies and foundations
- 10 years of experience leading and coordinating trainings for adult learners; topics have included communication skills, DISC profiles, STEM subjects, and performance tasks
- West Point graduate and former U.S. Army Captain
- Over 10 years of leadership experience managing teams from 10 to 50 employees
- Managed and monitored budgets ranging up to \$1 million and maintained 100% accountability

WORK HISTORY

10/2019 – current **Asst. Development Director**, NC State University, Raleigh NC

Focused on building and sustaining partnerships with industry partners and foundations to lead development efforts for a K-12 teacher fellowship program managed by the Chancellor's office

- Manage \$800K portfolio of gifts and grants with leading employers and funders in North Carolina
- Built innovative partnerships with organizations like Facebook, Biltmore Farms, Eaton, and the Burroughs Wellcome Fund
- Coordinate development efforts for the Kenan Institute Board of Trustees and the Kenan Fellows Program Board of Advisors

4/2017 – 6/2019 **Vice President, Project Lead The Way**, Cary NC

Created partnerships with corporations and foundations to support a national network of 12,000 K-12 schools and led professional development efforts for STEM teachers

- Initiated and managed corporate/foundation relationships with organizations like NASA, Liberty Mutual, Metlife, Syngenta, Cargill, Mazor Robotics, Infosys, and EPA
- Partnered with medical professionals to coordinate teacher visits to the Wake Forest Center of Regenerative Medicine and the Nicholson Robotic Surgery Center
- Acquired gifts ranging from \$10,000 to \$750,000
- Coordinated training sessions for teachers in Orlando, Washington DC, and Raleigh; topics covered robotic surgery, biotechnology, and Microbit programming

4/2016 – 4/2017 **Director of Business Services, NC Dept. of Commerce**, Raleigh NC

Partnered with industry, workforce board staff members, and higher education partners to implement statewide workforce programs

- Created and managed a new \$1 million sector grant (WIOA) program to meet regional talent issues and marketed the program to leaders across the state
- Managed a department of 12 staff members, and directly managed 2 supervisors
- Implemented a communications campaign to increase awareness of Work Opportunity Tax Credits
- Partnered with the Biltmore Estate to lead change management training to the department

10/2013 – 3/2016 **Director, Industry Partnerships, NC New Schools**, Raleigh NC

Led strategic initiatives and programs for work-based learning in partnership with industry and higher education leaders in North Carolina

- Worked with entrepreneurs, NC State College of Design, and Cisco Systems to develop and implement a statewide Innovation Challenge program for high school students

DARRELL KAIN

1058 Indigo Ridge Place, Cary, North Carolina 27519 ☎ 919.521.7006 ✉ darrellkain@gmail.com

- Partnered with companies such as Coca Cola Consolidated, Ingersoll Rand, Duke Energy, Siemens, Syngenta, BASF, and LORD Corporation to provide work-based learning for staff and students
- Helped plan and manage several K-12 professional development conferences with audiences ranging from 500-800 participants

3/2010 – 10/2013 **Program Mgr. Capital Area Workforce Board/EDSI, Raleigh NC**

Created and managed strategic partnerships with businesses and led an innovative program for unemployed clients to find job opportunities and training certifications

- Created “Backpacks to Briefcases” program that helped 90 recent college graduates to transition into the workforce by providing soft skills training and paid internships
- Managed \$2 million of federal funding which paid for staff salaries, community college training classes for job seekers, and workplace learning funds
- Managed a team of 9 staff members who focused on OJT placements which included business outreach and career advising

1/2008 – 3/2010 **Owner, President, Coach Kain, LLC, Raleigh NC**

Provider of custom leadership and change management seminars to organizations across the country.

- Worked with NC State College of Management staff to improve internal communications and teamwork
- Facilitated DISC behavior analysis and training for Novartis Animal Health customers to improve internal communication between departments
- Delivered communications and customer service training to Cary Police Department

9/2004 – 1/2008 **Account Manager, Orion International, Cary NC**

Partnered with global companies to connect them with transitioning military leaders and technicians

- Implemented custom hiring events with companies such as ABB, Pepsi Bottling Group, Frito Lay, Johnson Controls, Valspar Paints, Ingersoll Rand, Georgia Pacific, and Inland Paper
- Planned and implemented hiring events in Orlando, Atlanta, and Raleigh for military veterans.
- Led training sessions for veterans on interviewing and communications skills
- Closed over \$750K in sales over 3 years

6/1992 – 6/1997 **Captain, U.S. Army, Fort Bragg, NC**

Led departments ranging from 15 to 50 staff members as a Communications Officer

- Supported 18th Airborne Corps and UN Task force (Somalia) with tactical communications solutions
- Led training sessions for groups on communications technology and military tactics

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Engineering Management | *Dean's List*
U.S. Military Academy – West Point, 1992

COMMUNITY

Panther Creek HS, Board of Advisors, Chair
HOPE Worldwide – Missions volunteer
Triangle Church – Ministry leader



Step-by-Step to Building a Purposeful Board Member Orientation Binder

1. Identify the purpose and scope of the binder. Is it to walk the new board member through the step-by-step process of board procedures? Is it to introduce them to the school’s mission and purpose, history and policies, rules of appropriate behavior, roles and responsibilities, and procedures pursuant to attendance? Or is it a combination of both?

2. Outline the list of topics and resources to be provided in the binder and determine whether the board wants to write the entire manual or delegate sections of it to knowledgeable members and school leaders. This decision will be based on the complexity of the task as well as the format of the binder and how often the binder will need to be updated to keep pace with organizational growth and the introduction of new technology.

3. Collect existing documents for inclusion in the manual (hard copy or electronic). These will include such items as the hiring policy and process, parliamentary procedures, board member job description, organization’s mission statement, latest annual report, an organizational chart, and perhaps a copy of the latest school newsletter. Below is a recommended list, but not end all, of items that might be included in the board’s binder.

Board Member Binders: A Copy Of...
<p>Critical Documents: School’s current standing (Academics, Finances, Compliance, Charter Terms) Historical One Pager or Marketing Brochure Outcomes Board Calendar Schedule Strategic Goals Current Budget Board member job descriptions Board Bylaws Parliamentary Procedures Cheat Sheet School’s Hiring Process Board member contact information, & committee assignments Strategic Plan Overview One page Summary of School’s Financial Audits (Last 5 years) Summary of Previous Academic Results and Student Enrollment (Last 5 years) Overview of NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey Committees Descriptions, Goals and Responsibilities Fundraising Projects and Goals Upcoming Board Agenda</p>

Laws:

Charter School Law
Open Meeting Law

Key School Policies:

Policy manual (Staff/Students)
Public Records Policy
Conflict of Interest Policy
Nepotism Policy
Grievance Policy and Procedures
Board member expectation policy
Board Member Recruiting Policies
Hiring Policy
Internal Control Policy

Historical Documents:

Charter Application
Charter Agreement
Previous Board Minutes

4. Through annual board evaluations (identifying organization needs) the board should develop a professional development calendar. The last 15 to 30 minutes of each meeting should be focused on board development. The catalyst for such professional development plan could be the annual retreat. We have an online and on-demand program that will carry your board through the year! [Learn more here.](#)

A list of potential professional development topics are listed below.

- a. Roles and responsibilities
 - b. Charter School Law
 - c. Non-profit Strategic planning
 - d. Fiscal planning and management
 - e. Developing effective policies
 - f. Parliamentary Procedures
 - g. Analyzing and Evaluating reports
 - h. Marketing
 - i. Media relations
5. Within the member binder include a sign-off sheet for the board member that includes the job description and expectations of a board member as an annual contract. This will acknowledge that she has received the orientation manual and that they will be responsible for reviewing all of the materials within.
 6. Adopt the policy regarding the development and maintenance of the board member binder.

[Learn more at LBLeaders.com](#)

Cover Sheet

Policy Discussion and Recommendations (Criminal Backgrounds Update)

Section: II. Governance
Item: C. Policy Discussion and Recommendations (Criminal Backgrounds Update)
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: 5110 P Criminal History.Background Checks.pdf
Exploris Personnel Handbook Draft 2020-2021.pdf
Exploris Student Parent Handbook 2020-2021 DRAFT.docx

Exploris Middle School**PERSONNEL****5110**Criminal History / Background ChecksGeneral

It is the policy of the Exploris Middle School not to employ or to continue the employment of classified, professional, or administrative personnel who may be deemed unsuited for service by reason of arrest and/or criminal conviction. While an arrest or conviction of a crime, in and of itself, may not be an automatic bar to employment, if an arrest or conviction relates to suitability of the individual to perform duties in a particular position, such person may be denied employment or in the case of current employees, may face disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Accordingly, a criminal records check will be conducted of applicants and/or newly hired employees, including substitutes. If an applicant is hired prior to the completion of the criminal records check, the employment shall be considered conditional pending a review of the results of the check.

Applicants shall be required to answer completely and accurately questions on their application with regard to previous criminal history. Failure to do so will subject the applicant to not being hired and an employee to being dismissed. Applicants shall consent in writing to an initial criminal record check. Applicants and employees shall consent to post hiring criminal record checks and to providing fingerprints and other identifying information as requested by the school. To the extent permitted by law, failure to consent or provide relevant information will result in rejection of an applicant or separation from employment of an employee.

At a minimum, the following criminal records check shall be conducted:

- a) In the case of applicants or conditional employees who have lived and worked within the state of North Carolina for the five years before the date of application, the administration will conduct a statewide criminal record check.
- b) In the case of applicants or conditional employees who have lived or worked outside of North Carolina during the five years before the date of application, the administration will conduct both federal and state record checks.

The applicant or conditional employee will be rejected for employment if the criminal record check and supporting records reveal a "criminal history," defined as the conviction of a crime, whether a misdemeanor or felony, that indicates the employee

- (1) poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel, or
- (2) has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his or her duties as a public school employee.

Conviction of a crime, as used in this policy, includes the entry of

- (1) a plea of guilty, nolo contendere, no contest or the equivalent; or
- (2) a verdict or finding of guilty in a court of law or military tribunal. The school shall

consult with legal counsel or obtain a certified copy of an applicant's or conditional employee's conviction notice prior to any final employment decision based on the criminal history.

If the school considers criminal history in making a decision adverse to an applicant or conditional employee, the Director shall make written findings with regard to how it used such information.

The school shall provide to the State Board of Education information on where to obtain the record of conviction, including the person's name, criminal case number, and the county of conviction for any convictions of a person who is certificated, certified or licensed by the State Board of Education where the school system discovers the criminal history through an employment criminal history check.

If a criminal record check reveals that an applicant or conditional employee was charged with but not convicted of a crime, whether misdemeanor or felony, that suggests that the employee may not meet the employment standards of the Exploris School Board, the Director may conduct a further investigation into the person's conduct and the circumstances surrounding the charge to determine the person's fitness for employment.

Applicants and current employees shall notify the Director immediately if they are charged with or convicted of a criminal offense (including entering a plea of guilty or nolo contendere) except minor traffic violations. Applicants and current employees who have been charged or convicted with driving while impaired or driving with a revoked license must immediately notify the Director

A criminal records check also may be conducted on an individual, random, ongoing, or rotating basis of current employees (including substitutes), as well as on independent contractors and volunteers whose services involve contact with students. If the school conducts these checks through the North Carolina Department of Justice or through a private service, it must first obtain the individual's consent.

Information obtained through the implementation of this policy shall be kept confidential as provided in the North Carolina General Statutes and regulations. The school shall maintain in paper format only data from a criminal history check conducted through the North Carolina Department of Justice. These records shall be kept in a locked, secure place, separate from the individual's personnel file. Procedures for implementing this policy, including a list of individuals entitled to access criminal history information, may be developed and administered by the Director. The Director shall also create procedures to ensure the confidentiality of all applicants' records.

If the Director conducts criminal record checks that are subject to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, it shall provide employees or applicants with all required notices and disclosures before conducting the record check or taking adverse employment action against the employee or applicant.

Legal Reference: G.S. § 115C-332; 16 NCAC 6C.0313; G.S. § 110-90.2; G.S. § 114-19.2; 15 USC § 1681 et seq.

Policy History:

5110-2

Adopted on: 4/28/97
Revised on: 9/17/13



The Exploris School

Personnel Handbook

2019-2020

Exploris Personnel Handbook

Table of Contents

1 Introduction to Exploris	5-8
1.1 Our Mission	
1.2 Core Values	
2 Basic Work Standards	9-10
2.1 Staff Hours	
2.2 Field Experiences	
2.3 Use of Automobiles	
2.4 Travel and Business Expenses	
2.5 Outside Employment	
2.6 Gifts and Gratuities	
2.7 Inclement Weather	
2.8 Smoking	
2.9 Firearms	
2.10 Media	
2.11 Safety	
2.12 Political Campaigning	
3 Salary plans	11
3.1 Salaries	
3.2 Salary Review	
3.3 Pay Schedule	
3.4 Direct Deposit	
4 Benefits	12-13
4.1 Eligibility	
4.2 Insurance	
Health Insurance	
Dental Insurance	
Vision Insurance	
Life Insurance	
Short -Term/Long-Term Disability	
4.3 Retirement and Training	
401-k Retirement Plan	
Career Development and Training Assistance	
4.4 Child Care	
5 Leave benefits	14-16
5.1 Holidays and School Vacations	
5.2 Paid Time Off, Teaching Staff (10 month)	
5.3 Substitute Procedures	
5.4 Paid Time off, 12 Month Employees	
5.5 Annual Leave	
5.6 Donated Sick Leave	

5.7 Family and Medical Leave	
5.8 Maternity and Paternity Leave	
5.9 Military Leave	
5.10 Jury Duty	
5.11 Volunteer Service Leave	
5.12 Leave Without Pay	
5.13 Advancement of Leave	
6 Family and Medical Leave Policy	17-20
6.1 Eligibility	
6.2 Reasons for Taking Leave	
6.3 Advance Notice, Medical Certification and Other Reports	
6.4 Medical Insurance Coverage	
6.5 Reinstatement	
6.6 Vacation Benefits	
6.7 Workers' Compensation and Disability Leave	
6.8 Application for FMLA Leave	
6.9 Designating the Leave	
7 Employment policies and practices	21-29
7.1 Equal Employment Opportunity	
7.2 Employee Classification	
7.3 Recruitment and Selection	
7.4 Orientation of New Employees	
7.5 Work plan, Training and Staff Development	
7.6 Personnel Records	
7.7 References and Employment Inquiries	
7.8 Disciplinary Action	
7.9 Death in Service	
7.10 Background Check	
7.11 Unlawful Harassment Policy	
7.12 Grievance Policy	
8 Crisis Management Plan for the Prevention of Child Abuse	30-32
8.1 Purpose	
8.2 Scope	
8.3 Responsibility	
8.4 Policy and Procedure	
Introduction	
Safeguards Against Abuse	
Preventative Measures	
Responding to Reports of Abuse	
Responding to the Alleged Victim	
Responding to the Alleged Perpetrator	
9 Substance Abuse Policy	33-35
9.1 Purpose	
9.2 Prohibited Conduct	
9.3 Testing Policy	
9.4 Confirmation Tests	
9.5 Confidentiality	

9.6 Rehabilitation

10 No Contract

36

1 INTRODUCTION TO EXPLORIS

1.1 Our Mission

The Exploris School is a diverse learning community that engages students in a challenging, relevant,

4

relationship-based education. Through experiential, project-based learning we empower students to foster a just and sustainable world.

Exploris opened as one of the first charter schools in North Carolina in 1997. The school was attached to the Exploris Museum, an interactive museum with an international focus, and enrolled 53 sixth grade students from Wake and Johnston counties in its first year. As a Global Education school, its early mission was to help people of all ages learn to respect differences and appreciate similarities. Exploris was heralded as an adolescent-centered, self-directed learning environment that engaged students actively, taking an integrated approach to learning using major themes and projects. From its inception, the school sought to provide a nurturing and respectful atmosphere with high expectations for all learners.

Keeping Exploris' mission at the forefront, Exploris fosters a collaborative, real-world approach to curriculum design and implementation. Using national and state standards as a jumping off point, teachers work together to create a compelling lens that drives the acquisition of content and skills. Teachers seek out university, governmental, and industry partnerships that add to the content-knowledge delivered to students. From these experts, teachers also learn of current, complex issues that help to contextualize student learning and make it relevant for students. By tackling current issues and working with experts to brainstorm solutions, students feel like they have something to offer the world. The work of Exploris students matters today.

Gone are the ringing bells, rows of desks, and fill-in-the blank worksheets. For most of the day, students and teachers are engaged in challenging learning experiences that explore a topic or theme in depth. Their studies call for intellectual inquiry, physical exploration, and community service. On a given day, these explorations may take them outside the school building to do environmental research, conduct interviews in local businesses, or carry out other fieldwork assignments. Students work individually, in small groups, and as a member of their "crew" or class. Together they learn to draw on the strengths of a whole class.

1.2 Our Vision

Empowering learners to improve our world.

1.3 Core Values



Exploris has been serving students in the downtown Raleigh community for over 20 years and is committed to growing our school in size and diversity to expand support and opportunity for all students. Our educational program is built around four core pillars: Global Education, Project Based Learning, Co-Teaching, and Responsive Classroom. The articulation of our core values ground the school in our educational approach and community partnerships.

INNOVATION - In a constantly changing world, the ability to approach challenges in a new way is vital. Exploris teachers and students approach the learning process through divergent thinking, creativity, ideation, and risk-taking.

SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT - Students learn best when they are exposed to meaningful, complex issues that are applicable to their own lives. Teachers engage students in current, relevant issues by solving authentic problems that are being addressed beyond the four walls of the school building. Students realize that they have the power to change how their world works. They know how to navigate public systems, lobby public officials, and present their research and opinions as responsible citizens. Student work is tangibly connected not only to the local community, but to other regions of the world and to past and future events.

RELATIONSHIPS - A nurturing school environment is one where students are encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships and collaborate with their teachers, parents, peers, and community. With a keen understanding of the unique development of the age group which they teach, teachers are intentional about the structures and relationship-building activities that they design. Positive relationships and collaboration results in a tapestry of learners who know they can depend on each other and work together in almost any situation. The end-product is deeper, and Exploris students experience a collective sense of accomplishment and ownership.

REFLECTION - In an ever changing world of new ideas, the importance of reflecting on one's own thinking and the thinking of others cannot be underestimated. Exploris values the creation of time to slow down, to reflect, and to build connections.

CRAFTSMANSHIP - Producing an exemplary product is challenging. It takes attention to detail, grit, perseverance, revision, and tenacity. It takes a growth mindset and a dedication to competing with one's own personal best.

CURIOSITY - True knowledge does not occur without curiosity. Students are empowered to ask questions about the world around them and to explore possible answers.

RESPONSIBILITY - Students will take ownership of their learning and accountability for their actions and behavior. Students will recognize the importance of character, integrity, and honesty.

CONNECTIONS TO NATURE - When students witness the power and elements of the natural world through adventure and stewardship, they begin to view themselves as just one species within a larger system.

Our goal is to have the internal operations of the organization reflect the school's mission, vision, and values. Because you are a part of the The Exploris School family, we ask your partnership in ensuring that the professional experience is positive and rewarding for you and the entire Exploris community.

This handbook sets forth the policies and practices that apply to the staff of The Exploris School. You are encouraged to consult the administrative staff for additional information regarding the policies, practices, and benefits described in this manual.

This manual does not constitute a contract between The Exploris School and its employees.

2 BASIC WORK STANDARDS

2.1 Staff Hours

While Exploris is committed to providing a flexible work schedule that meets the requirements of the position and the employee, the mission of the school is founded upon the engagement of students. The school day for ~~teaching~~ staff begins at ~~7:55 AM~~ and typically ends at 3:45 PM, although after school meetings and events, such as faculty meetings, IEPs, curriculum and showcase nights, school dances, etc., may necessitate a need to stay beyond the 3:45 PM time. Weekly faculty meetings are scheduled on Wednesdays till 5 pm. Staff should plan to work when students are in session, and submit a leave request for time off to attend any off-campus appointments. ~~Office staff hours at both campuses will be 8 am - 4 pm.~~

Commented [1]: 7:45
Trying to keep all staff on same work schedule.

2.2 Field Experiences

The teacher/staff member in charge of an event or field experiences is responsible for ensuring that students are adequately supervised and safe. Teachers/staff members should allow at least two weeks in advance when planning for a field experience. Teacher/staff members are responsible for recruiting adult chaperones to provide assistance. Communication among chaperones is very important and is the responsibility of the teacher/staff member in charge of the event or trip. The teacher/staff member must ensure that all chaperones are familiar with safety procedures in the event of an emergency. Teacher/staff member should bring all emergency contact information, first aid kit, and any required student medication. The teacher/staff member in charge of the field experience should inform the Data and Operations Manager prior to leaving school and provide an estimated time for return along with the roster of attendees. The teacher/staff member should inform the Data and Operations Manager when they return to school.

2.3 Use of Automobiles

When an employee uses his/her privately owned automobile for Exploris business, he/she shall be reimbursed at the annual federal mileage reimbursement rate for privately owned vehicles with prior approval. The employee is responsible for complying with motor vehicle laws and for obtaining adequate insurance coverage of their automobile.

2.4 Travel And Business Expenses

Reasonable expenses incurred by an employee while on business for Exploris such as copying, transportation, parking, meals, and lodging will be reimbursed in accordance with procedures and standards as set forth in The Exploris School's financial policies. All expenses must be pre-approved using an Expense Reimbursement Authorization Form signed by the Associate Director and Executive Director. If a pre-approval is not completed, then the school may not reimburse the employee for their travel and business expenses. In addition, all reimbursement requests must be accompanied by receipts.

2.5 Outside Employment

Employees shall accept no outside employment that presents a conflict of interest with responsibilities at Exploris. The Exploris School's employees must obtain permission from the Executive Director to assume outside employment that is related to their position at Exploris. Employees shall not use sick or personal leave for outside employment. Educational materials created while teaching at Exploris should be used to further support The Exploris School mission and vision and not be utilized for personal gain. Payments and other conditions of outside employment shall be approved in writing by the Executive Director.

2.6 Gifts and Gratuities

Employees who are offered, receive or anticipate that they may receive a gift of any value or favor in conjunction with activities should immediately notify the Executive Director. This shall not apply to or restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens of minimal value offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons in recognition or appreciation of service. Employees may not use their position at Exploris for personal gain or advantage. Employees shall accept no gift or gratuity that presents a conflict of interest with their responsibilities at The Exploris School.

2.7 Inclement Weather

The Exploris School will follow the Wake County Public School System for inclement weather. For any delayed openings or school closures that arise out of situations not related to inclement weather, the school will operate independently. Please check the school website for updates.

Commented [2]: Exploris will notify families using our One Call emergency system of any school closings.

2.8 Smoking

Exploris is a smoke-free and tobacco-free environment. Smoking, use of electronic cigarettes, or vaping is prohibited.

Commented [3]: on school property or at any Exploris School function.

2.9 Firearms

No firearms of any type are allowed on The Exploris School property or at any Exploris School function.

2.10 Media

All inquiries from the media shall be referred to the Executive Director. Teachers should feel free to contact appropriate news outlets in order to promote school happenings; however, this should be done in coordination with the Executive Director.

2.11 Safety

The Exploris School is committed to a safe work environment and adheres to all federal and state safety regulations.

2.12 Political Campaigning

While The Exploris School encourages all employees to be involved in the community, political campaigning by any employee on the school's time and using the school's resources is strictly prohibited. Further, employees may not make statements purporting to represent the views of The Exploris School with regard to political campaigns. Violation of this policy could jeopardize The Exploris School's tax-exempt status.

3 SALARY PLANS

3.1 Salaries

Employee salaries will be determined at the time of employment and, evaluated approximately annually thereafter. The initial salary will be stated in the Employment Confirmation Letter. Teacher salaries are calculated using the 18-19 state salary scale and adding an Exploris supplement based on years of service. See supplement scale below.

Years @ Exploris	Supplement
No License	10%

0-9 years	14%
-----------	-----

10-17 years	16%
-------------	-----

18-24 years	18%
-------------	-----

25+ years	20%
-----------	-----

* 5 Years may be transferred in

3.2 Salary Review

Salary adjustments will be made as appropriate and may be based on one or more of the following criteria: job performance, length of service, and/or position reclassification.

3.3 Pay Schedule

Each employee will be paid on a monthly basis on the last day of each month. If these dates fall on a weekend or a holiday, the payday will be the preceding workday. Employee salaries are paid over a 12 month period from July 1 - June 30th. Returning ten month employees are paid in advance of their contracted start date (August) for the new school year. Advance payments of salary are to be returned to Exploris if an employee fails to return at the start of the new school year. Employees starting in August during their first year will be paid over 11 month pay schedule in year 1 of employment and over a 12 month pay schedule in subsequent years of employment.

3.4 Direct Deposit

All employees are required to use direct deposit for the depositing of their paychecks.

4 BENEFITS

4.1 Eligibility

The Exploris School provides group medical, dental, and vision insurance to employees. All employees regularly scheduled to work 30 hours or more per week are eligible to enroll on the first day of employment with The Exploris School. The Exploris School contributes to the group medical and dental for all eligible employees

Regular full-time employees who work a normal schedule of 30 hours per week or more are eligible for medical benefits. The Exploris School will pay 100% of the medical premium and 25% of the dental premium for the employee.

The employee portion of the medical, dental, and vision monthly premium is handled through monthly payroll deductions. Employee will be provided with the medical, dental and vision costs during open enrollment each year.

Employees that work less than 30 hours and temporary employees, such as substitute teachers, are not eligible for any benefits.

4.2 Insurance Plans

Health Insurance

Please refer to the employee insurance booklet, which can be obtained from the Data and Operations Manager, for a complete description of benefits.

- Exploris pays 100% of the premium for employee only medical coverage for employees that work 30 or more hours per week (100% employed).
- Exploris does not offer medical coverage to an employee that works less than 30 hours a week (less than 75% employed).
- Exploris also offers a Health Savings Account if the employee is enrolled in the HSA qualified health insurance plan. Exploris will contribute \$45 per month to the employee's HSA account. Employees may also contribute to their HSA account up to the contribution limit defined by law.

Dental Insurance

Please refer to the employee insurance booklet, which can be obtained from the Data and Operations Manager, for a complete description of benefits.

- Exploris pays 25% of the premium for employee only dental coverage for employees that work 30 or more hours per week (75% or more employed).
- Exploris does not offer dental coverage to an employee that works less than 30 hours a week (less than 75% employed).

Vision Insurance

Employees that work 30 hours or more a week (75% or more employed) would be eligible for Vision insurance. Exploris does not contribute to the vision premium thus the employee pays 100% of the premium.

Life Insurance

Please refer to the employee insurance booklet, which can be obtained from the Data and Operations Manager, for a complete description of benefits. The Exploris School offers Life Insurance coverage at no cost to employees that work 30 hours or more per week.

Short -Term/Long-Term Disability

Please refer to the employee insurance booklet, which can be obtained from the Data and Operations Manager, for a complete description of benefits. The Exploris School offers Short-term disability and Long-term disability coverage at no cost to employees that work 30 hours or more per week.

4.3 Retirement and Training

401-K Retirement Plan

Employees can contribute up to the United States Federal limits of pre-tax income from payroll deductions into a 401- K retirement plan. Employees may enroll, decrease, increase, or discontinue their contributions on a quarterly basis. The Exploris School will match employee contributions, as organizational resources allow, at a rate determined annually by the Board of Directors. The maximum amount may increase annually. Please refer to The Exploris School's 401K provider for updated information and details on vesting of The Exploris School's contribution.

Commented [4]: to the 401-K plan as allowed by law and plan documents

Exploris matches 50% of employee contributions up to 6% for employees that work 40 or more hours per week (100% employed). Exploris matching contributions maximum is 3% if an employee makes contributions of 6%. Exploris does not offer a match for retirement for employees that are not 100% employed.

Commented [5]: 4%

Commented [6]: of 8%

Commented [7]: finance committee recommendation

Career Development and Training Assistance

As part of an employee's annual progress review (see Section 3), the employee and the Executive Director will review his/her career development needs and the needs of the school. Employees may be eligible for reimbursement of workshop/conference registration, materials, or other incidental fees up to a maximum amount that is predetermined by the Executive Director. Areas of professional learning, training, study, or presentations must be related to an employee's work at The Exploris School as well as the continuous improvement needs of the school. All assistance and leave must be approved in advance by the Executive Director. Reimbursement is contingent upon the availability of organizational resources. Documentation of satisfactory completion must be received in order to be considered for reimbursement.

4.4 Child Care

Before and After School Child Care is provided for children of employees that attend Exploris free of charge for the care of their children while the employee is at school conducting school business. Registration is required. The Data and Operations Manager can provide the registration form to the employee.

5 LEAVE BENEFITS

All leave except leave for holidays is subject to prior written approval by the Associate Director and Executive Director. A Leave Form (appendix) must be completed for any time that the employee is not fulfilling their primary job responsibilities.

5.1 Holidays and School Vacations

The Exploris School's holidays are: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. School will be closed on all holidays and school vacations denoted on the annual school calendar

Commented [8]: consideration for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur

Commented [9]: Veteran's Day,

5.2 Paid Time Off, Teaching Staff (10 or 11 month)

Beginning July 1, 2015, full-time employees that work 40 hours a week will earn up to 1 paid time off day per month over a 10 or 11-month term depending on contract to be utilized for sick days and personal business. Up to 3 of these days per school year may be used for personal business. Teachers should not request paid time off days the day before or after school vacations or during testing periods.

Commented [10]: 10 or 11 month term

Commented [11]: Staff

Employees that work 30-39 hours a week will earn .5 days of paid time off per month, 2 days of which may be converted to personal leave days. Employees that work less than 30 hours a week will earn .3 days of paid time off per month, 1 day of which may be converted to personal leave.

For the purpose of this policy, "sick days" are defined as those days that an employee is unable to work due to a personal illness or the illness of an immediate family member. An immediate family member is defined as a child, parent, domestic partner or spouse. A day is defined as one half of a day or more away from the job site.

For the purpose of this policy "personal days" are defined as a day that an employee does not work, that is not otherwise defined in this policy. ***The employee must request the personal day two weeks prior to the date to be taken off, and the Executive Director must approve or disapprove the request no later than five (5) days before the day to be taken off.***

For any Exploris employee returning for the following school year, up to 5 paid time off days will be carried over into the subsequent 10-month school term for a maximum of 15 paid time off days per year. The employee may still only use up to 3 paid time off days for personal leave.

Commented [12]: Recommendation is to combine sick and PTO, consideration of adding extra days for religious holidays-up to 2? or adding them to school holidays.

If an Exploris employee should terminate employment before the end of the school year end and was paid in advance of their accrual of paid time off days the final paycheck will be adjusted to reflect paid time off days actually earned during their time of employment.

Exploris employees employed prior to July 1, 2015 with accrued sick leave may roll over all sick leave days earned prior to July 1, 2015, and will continue to receive short-term and long-term disability. Once an employee's leave bank gets down to 15 paid time off days, their days will be capped at a maximum of 15 paid time off days per year, only 3 of which may be used for personal leave.

The Executive Director must approve any exceptions to this policy.

5.3 Substitute Procedures

Teachers are responsible for notifying the Executive Director, Associate Director, Data and Operations Manager, and team members as soon as an absence is anticipated. As much notice as possible is appreciated so that accommodations can be made. Administrators should be notified no later than 6:00 am on the date of the absence. Teachers are responsible for providing lesson plans and making the necessary arrangements for a substitute to cover for them in their absence. The Data and Operations Managers will provide all staff with a list of pre-approved substitutes to contact in the event coverage is needed. If an external sub from the pre-approved substitute list is not able to be recruited the teacher must make arrangements with an internal colleague.

5.4 Paid Time Off – 12 month employees

Full-time employees that work throughout the year will earn 1 Paid Time Off day per month worked for a total of 12 Paid Time Off Days to use at their discretion. The Paid Time Off days will count toward the employee work days agreed upon in employee offer letter and position profile. Only 5 days may be carried over into the following school year. Additionally, 12 month employees will earn an additional 1 paid time off day per year for each year of employment at Exploris to be used when school is not in session.

If an Exploris employee should terminate employment before the end of the school year and was paid in advance of their accrual of paid time off days, the final paycheck will be adjusted to reflect paid time off days actually earned during their time of employment.

Employees that work 30-39 hours a week will earn .5 Paid Time Off Day per month worked to be used at their discretion. Employees that work less than 30 hours per week are eligible to earn .3 Paid Time Off days per month. Only 3 days may be carried over into the following school year.

There will be blackout times designated by the Executive Director at the beginning and end of school to allow for collaboration. This will ensure the successful planning, organization, and implementation of school procedures and policies are completed for the opening and closing of the school year.

5.5 Annual Leave and PTO

Exploris employees do not accrue annual leave and are not paid for unused sick or paid time off days if they leave Exploris. Exploris employees employed prior to July 1, 2014, were paid out for their annual leave balance available at that time and paid at their daily rate for the 2013-2014 school year.

5.6 Donated Sick Leave

At any time, employees may donate up to five paid time off days or up to 5 accrued sick leave days per year to a pool, which may be donated to another employee with at least 12 months of service at Exploris. The donated sick leave pool is funded through employee donations, therefore, there is no guarantee of hours. An employee may only access the donated sick leave pool in the event of a catastrophic medical situation that will require the employee to be out for at least 4 weeks to care for themselves or an immediate family member. The requesting employee must submit a certification of catastrophic illness or injury from the member or immediate family member's health care provider. Unused days contributed to the pool would not carry over to the next

calendar year. Any employee wishing to use this pool must have exhausted their sick leave and personal leave and must apply to the Executive Director for approval.

Employees receiving other payments such as worker's compensation, short-term disability, long-term disability, or a paid parental leave are not eligible to receive donations. Donated time can only be approved for employees with prenatal medical issues that require that the employee be on bed rest or hospitalization for more than four weeks prior to the birth of a child. Donated time would not be able to be used for a normal postpartum recovery time, including birth by cesarean section.

5.7 Family and Medical Leave

See accompanying policy statement.

5.8 Maternity and Paternity Leave

For employees not eligible for Family and Medical Leave, The Exploris School provides a maternity/paternity leave benefit, which allows employees to combine sick leave and short-term disability leave. Spouses may take up to five days for paternity leave. Prior position and salary may not remain the same. This applies to all full-time employees and any part-time employees, who have worked at The Exploris School for more than twelve months and work more than twenty hours a week.

5.9 Military Leave

The Exploris School will provide military leave as required by law.

All employees will be protected against loss of income as a result of participation in annual encampment or training duty in the United States Military Reserves or National Guard. In these circumstances, The Exploris School will pay the difference between what the employee earns from the government for military service and what the employee would have earned normally on the job at The Exploris School. This difference will be paid for up to two weeks per calendar year. The Employee must inform his or her supervisor in writing as early as possible.

5.10 Jury Duty

Necessary time off without loss of pay shall be granted to employees called for jury duty. The employee may retain the fee earned from jury duty.

5.11 Volunteer Service Leave

Employees may take up to eight hours per year to volunteer in a school or a service organization of their choice. The Associate Director must be notified in writing at least one week in advance. The employee must provide written documentation from the school or service organization.

5.12 Leave Without Pay

The Exploris School's teachers are considered twelve-month employees for group insurance purposes but are paid for ten months work over a twelve month period. In addition, Exploris grants time-off to all employees on the days and breaks designated by the academic calendar for the particular school year.

5.13 Advancement of Leave

An advance on a future year's leave is not permitted.

6 Family and Medical Leave Policy

6.1 Eligibility

The Exploris School (“the Employer”), in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, permits eligible employees to take up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave in a twelve month period for the birth or placement of a child, or a serious health condition. This policy sets forth employee eligibility and obligations associated with taking a qualifying FMLA leave.

Employees who have worked for the employer for at least twelve months and at least 1,250 hours during the twelve month period immediately prior to the date the leave will commence may take up to twelve workweeks of unpaid leave during any twelve month period.

An eligible employee may also take up to 26 workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness when the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the servicemember. An eligible employee is limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave for any FMLA-qualifying reasons during the single 12-month period.

Employees are entitled to take up to twelve weeks of unpaid FMLA leave in any twelve month period. For purposes of this policy, the twelve-month period on which eligibility for leave shall be based is a period measured backward from the date an employee last used FMLA leave. Therefore, if an employee takes four weeks of FMLA leave on February 1; four weeks of FMLA leave on April 1; and four weeks of FMLA leave on August 1, the employee will not be entitled to any additional FMLA leave until the following February 1. At that time, he or she will be entitled to four weeks of leave. On April 1 he or she will be entitled to another four weeks, and so forth.

Eligible spouses who work for Exploris are limited to a combined total of 12 workweeks of leave in a 12-month period to share for the following FMLA-qualifying reasons:

- The birth of a son or daughter and bonding with the newborn child,
- The placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care, and bonding with the newly-placed child, and
- The care of a parent with a serious health condition.

Eligible spouses who work for the same employer are also limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks in a single 12-month period to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness if each spouse is a parent, spouse, son or daughter, or next of kin of the servicemember (commonly referred to as “military caregiver leave”). This limitation also applies to a combination of military caregiver leave and leave for the other qualifying reasons listed above.

6.2 Reasons For Taking Leave

FMLA protected leave may be taken for any of the following occurrences:

- Birth and/or care of the employee’s newborn child.
- Placement of a child for adoption or foster care.
- Care of the employee’s spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition.

- A serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform any one of the essential functions of his/her job or requires the employee to be absent from work to obtain medical treatment from a qualifying health care provider.

6.3 Advance Notice, Medical Certification And Other Reports

The employee seeking FMLA leave must provide at least thirty days advance written notice when the need for leave is foreseeable. If an employee fails to provide thirty days notice, leave may be denied until thirty days after the date notice is given. If leave must begin in less than thirty days from the date notice is given, the employee must give as much notice as is practicable (one or two business days after learning of the necessity for leave). In cases where the need for leave is unforeseeable, employees must give as much notice as possible under the circumstances. Requests for leave should be submitted to the Executive Director.

Leave taken because of the birth of a child or to care for a newborn child or child placed in the employee's home by adoption or foster care must be taken within the twelve-month period immediately following the child's birth or placement.

Employees who have accrued paid leave time (sick, vacation, personal) are **not** required to substitute such accrued paid leave to cover any period of otherwise unpaid FMLA leave. If, however, an employee elects to do so, once an employee has exhausted his/her bank of accrued paid leave, the duration of the FMLA leave will be unpaid.

The employee must provide a medical certification form completed and signed by the employee's health care provider when the request for leave is due to the employee's own serious health condition or to care for a seriously ill spouse, child or parent. Failure to provide certification of a serious health condition within the appropriate time frame may result in leave being delayed or denied.

The employee must notify the employer every thirty days of his/her status and intent to return to work. Employees on leave longer than thirty days may be required to recertify their serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member by submitting documentation to verify health status. In such circumstances, failure to provide documentation within fifteen calendar days after each thirty day anniversary date will result in the leave losing its FMLA protection.

The employee must provide a medical certification (fitness for duty report from physician) to resume work before returning from leave due to the employee's own serious health condition. Otherwise, the employee may not be permitted to return to work until he or she submits the required certification. Failure to provide a fitness for duty report after the end of the FMLA leave may result in the employee being terminated from employment. The fitness for duty report must list any limitations upon the employee's ability to return to work, as well as the anticipated duration of such limitations.

6.4 Medical Insurance Coverage

If the employee is covered under the employer's group health insurance plan during unpaid leave, the employer will continue to pay its portion of the health insurance premium, and the employee must continue to pay his/her share of the premium to the employer. Failure of the employee to pay his/her share of a premium will result in loss of coverage if the premium is more than thirty days late.

If the employee does not return to work after the expiration of the leave, the employee may be required to reimburse the employer for payment of health insurance premiums paid during the period of unpaid leave, unless the employee does not return to work due to:

- the continuation or onset of a serious health condition either affecting the employee or the employee's family member which would otherwise entitle the employee to leave under the FMLA.
- certain circumstances beyond the employee's control.

6.5 Reinstatement

Upon return from FMLA leave, the employee will be reinstated to the same or equivalent job, with the same pay and benefits, unless the employee has received a written notice that special circumstances apply.

6.6 Vacation Benefits

During unpaid leave, the employee will not accrue vacation or sick leave benefits and will not receive holiday pay.

6.7 Workers' Compensation And Disability Leave

Any employee who takes FMLA leave for a condition which also qualifies for workers' compensation or disability leave will not be entitled to substitute accrued paid leave for the period covered by workers' compensation or disability benefits, but such time will be counted against the employee's twelve week FMLA entitlement. If an employee is certified to return to a light duty position, but chooses not to do so, and instead chooses to remain on FMLA leave, or if such employee's workers' compensation or disability benefits cease for any reason, such employee will then be required to substitute accrued paid leave for the duration of the FMLA leave. If the employee exhausts his accrued paid leave, the remainder of the leave will be unpaid.

6.8 Application For FMLA Leave

Each employee seeking FMLA leave will be provided an application. Applications for leave must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director. Applications must be submitted at least thirty days prior to the leave when the need for leave is foreseeable, or as soon as possible if thirty days notice is not practicable under the circumstances.

6.9 Designating The Leave

An employee will normally be advised whether his or her leave will be counted as FMLA within two business days after making a request for leave. If the employer does not designate the leave as FMLA leave and the employee wants the leave to be counted as FMLA leave because the leave was due to an FMLA-qualifying reason, the **employee** must, within two days after returning to work, notify the employer of his/her desire to have the leave counted as FMLA leave. Failure to notify the employer within two business days after returning to work that leave was taken for an FMLA-qualifying reason will result in such leave losing its FMLA protection. Any such request must be **in writing** and submitted to the Executive Director.

7 Employment Policies and Practices

7.1 Equal Employment Opportunity

Exploris is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, or age. There will be no retaliation or reprisal against any employee for making such a report or for filing any discrimination charge with any federal or local agency.

7.2 Employee Classification

Regular Full-Time:	40 hours/week
Regular Part-Time:	30-39 hours/week 20-29 hours/week 1-19 hours/week
Temporary: possible extension	Will last no longer than six months. May be reviewed for

Note: The Exploris School will determine employee work schedules. Employees shall be required to work as needed.

Each employee will also be classified as either "Non-Exempt" or "Exempt". Classification will be noted in the employee's job description.

Classifications:

Non-Exempt: An employee who is covered under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act must be paid in accordance with the minimum wage rate provisions of the law. Overtime or compensatory time will be paid to non-exempt staff for time worked in excess of 40 hours/wk.

On a daily basis, all non-exempt employees must document their hours worked in a manner required by The Exploris School.

Exempt: An employee exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act.

7.3 Recruitment And Selection

The Exploris School typically advertises positions in-house, on the web site, and through ads in major publications and electronic sources. An applicant must submit a formal cover letter and resume to be considered for any position. Any false or erroneous information intentionally reported to The Exploris School, regardless of when discovered, may be grounds for dismissal.

7.4 Orientation Of New Employees

Each new employee will meet with the administrative staff to review the requirements and responsibilities of the position. Each employee will receive an Employment Confirmation Letter within 30 days of the start date, which will include the start date, benefits and other pertinent information. Each employee will also receive a position profile, which will include general and specific expectations and responsibilities. Each employee shall fill out the necessary personnel paperwork prior to beginning employment with The Exploris School. Each new employee is required to attend the orientation for new staff at the beginning of the school year.

7.5 Work Plan, Training, And Staff Development

The Exploris School is committed to the career development and training of all employees. To the extent that organizational resources allow, The Exploris School may provide reimbursement for professional learning received in connection with employment at The Exploris School and that furthers the Exploris mission. All reimbursement requests must be pre-approved by the Executive Director.

7.6 Personnel Records

All personnel records are confidential and are kept under lock and key by the Executive Director. Only the Executive Director, Data and Operations Manager, or the employee him or herself may have access to that employee's personnel records. Personnel files contain records of performance reviews, promotions, disciplinary actions, leave records, grievances, and training offered or completed by the employee. Each employee may request a review of his or her personnel file at any time. All employee reviews of personnel files will take place in the office of the Executive Director.

Medical and dental records are kept separate from personnel records and are also confidential.

7.7 References And Employment Inquiries

References may be given upon request from the employee or employee's prospective employer. Information will be limited to job specific information (dates of employment, job title, job performance, job responsibilities, and salary). No employee will be given a general letter of reference. All letters of reference must be addressed to a specific employer and a copy of that letter must be placed in the employee's personnel file.

7.8 Disciplinary Action

Grounds for disciplinary action include but are not limited to the following: violation of The Exploris School personnel policy, behavior disruptive to the school climate, culture, and environment, failure to complete assigned responsibilities on a consistent basis, insubordination, theft of monies, illegal acts committed during work time, acts which reflect adversely on The Exploris School's reputation in the community, and inappropriate behavior with students or visitors to The Exploris School.

The Executive Director shall take actions regarding termination, suspension, demotion or classification.

If the Executive Director believes there are grounds for disciplinary action, he/she may impose an immediate suspension with pay for an employee of up to 48 hours while an investigation is conducted.

7.9 Death In Service

In the event of the death of a staff member, the salary earned as of the last day of work, and any other benefits to which the employee was entitled will be paid to the deceased employee's estate, spouse, or named beneficiary.

7.10 Background Check

Because The Exploris School is dedicated to children and to the public interest, all Exploris employees are subject to a criminal background check. Each prospective employee as part of the

application process will provide The Exploris School with his or her addresses for the past 10 years. Any falsification of information for this check will result in disciplinary action, including termination.

7.11 Unlawful Harassment Policy

The Exploris School will not tolerate any unlawful harassment of employees. Types of unlawful harassment covered by this policy include harassment of an individual because of that person's sex, race, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, or any other classification protected by law. Any employee who engages in any form of unlawful harassment will be disciplined. Discipline may include, but is not limited, to transfer, demotion, suspension, or discharge. The Exploris School also forbids retaliation of any type against an employee for reporting any type of unlawful harassment.

The Exploris School also strictly prohibits sexual harassment in any form. The definition of sexual harassment is as follows:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, graphic or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or a condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or a rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has a purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

If an employee feels that he or she has been unlawfully harassed at work, or feels that a fellow employee is being unlawfully harassed, The Exploris School encourages the employee to immediately notify the Executive Director. If possible, such notice should be in writing (signed and dated), stating the date, place, time, nature of harassment, and the name(s) and position(s) of the offending party and any witnesses to the alleged harassment. If the Executive Director is involved in the harassment in any way, or for some other reason the Executive Director cannot be approached, then The Exploris School Board of Directors should be notified.

The Exploris School encourages reports of any such acts when they happen. All reports of unlawful harassment will be investigated promptly. In all cases, the employee who reports unlawful harassment will be advised of the results of the investigation. To the greatest extent possible, The Exploris School will attempt to maintain the confidentiality of any harassment investigation. The disclosure of any information relating to a charge of unlawful harassment will be made only on a need-to-know basis.

The Exploris School requires all employees to fully comply with this policy.

7.12 The Exploris School Grievance Policy

Article I

Introduction and Values

The Exploris School seeks to promote harmony among its employees, faculty, students, and parents and to encourage equitable solutions to problems arising among them. The School believes that most

concerns and differences are best addressed through open and honest communication conducted in an informal, respectful, and civil manner and that effective resolution depends on direct, prompt and constructive dialogue.

The following procedures are adopted to meet these goals.

NOTE See Parent Handbook: Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

Article II

Grievance Committee Structure and Rules

Section 1. Composition of the Grievance Committee – The Grievance Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the Board of Directors, appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors and confirmed by a vote of the full Board. One member of the Grievance Committee shall be designated by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors to serve as the Chairperson of the Committee.

Section 2. Parent Liaison – One member of the Board of Directors shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors and confirmed by a vote of the full Board to serve as Parent Liaison. This individual shall not sit on the Grievance Committee. His or her primary role will be to help parents understand the grievance procedures and to provide process guidance to aggrieved parents. Parents who approach other members of the Board of Directors with grievances will be referred to the Parent Liaison.

Section 3. Training – On an annual basis, all members of the Grievance Committee and the Parent Liaison will receive training provided by an attorney or other qualified individual with regard to confidentiality, impartiality, and other topics relevant to effective execution of their duties.

Section 4. Timelines – Failure of a parent or employee to comply with the procedural timelines listed below may result in denial of a grievance request. Extensions in timelines may be granted if the relevant decision maker determines there is a reasonable need for such extension. Similarly, the timelines for actions to be taken by school personnel or board members may be extended, with notice to the aggrieved party, when there is a reasonable need for extension or extension is in the best interest of an effective process.

Section 5. Forms – The Executive Director or Board may develop one or more grievance forms to facilitate and document the various steps of the grievance process.

Parent Grievance Procedures

Section 6. **The Board recognizes that effective school governance requires that the primary responsibility for issues involving student discipline, curriculum, assessment and promotion and other day-to-day decisions regarding school management lies with the faculty, staff and Executive Director of the School and these individuals are best suited to resolve**

23

conflicts that arise with respect to these issues. The Board has the authority to appoint, employ, and remove the Executive Director, but primary responsibility and authority over faculty, staff and volunteer organizations of the School are vested in the Executive Director. The Board, therefore, will exercise any authority in this policy conservatively and narrowly so as not to usurp the authority granted to the Executive Director.

Section 7. Informal Procedures: A parent should first attempt to resolve any grievance through discussion with the relevant teacher(s) or other involved persons. If the parent's concern is not adequately addressed through an informal discussion with the teacher and/or staff involved, the parent should next attempt to resolve the grievance with the appropriate supervisor, if applicable. If a grievance cannot be resolved in an informal manner, the parent may initiate a formal grievance procedure.

Section 8. Formal Grievance Procedure: In instances where informal means are ineffective or otherwise not feasible, the School offers these more formal grievance procedures. Grievance proceedings and information shall be kept confidential at all levels to the extent possible and permitted by law. A parent grievance is a formal written claim by a parent or group of parents identifying the concern, identifying the individual or group's resolution attempts, and identifying any law, policy, or practice that is implicated by the concern. No one shall retaliate against a parent who files a grievance under this policy (or against a student whose parent files a grievance) in good faith.

(a) **Level One – Supervisor Request and Conference.** A parent may, by written request, seek a formal conference with the relevant supervisor to address an unresolved grievance.

(1) The request shall succinctly describe the specific grievance(s) and related details, and shall identify any specific policy, rule, regulation or law believed to have been violated, and shall provide other relevant information to help the supervisor adequately understand the nature of the grievance.

(2) The request shall be filed within fifteen (15) business days of the most recent incident(s) or last informal attempt to resolve the grievance, provided that such attempt was made within ten (10) business days of the last incident.

(3) Following receipt of the written request, the supervisor shall, whenever possible, conduct a conference with the aggrieved parent(s) within ten (10) days. Within five (5) business days following the conference, the supervisor will state in writing his or her decision with regard to the grievance and a copy will be given to the parent.

(b) **Level Two - Appeal to the Executive Director.** If the grievance is not resolved, the parent(s) may appeal the supervisor's decision in writing to the Executive Director if the Executive Director was not involved in the Level One Conference.

(1) The appeal must be made within five (5) business days following receipt of the supervisor's written Level One response to the grievant. The Executive Director will review the grievance and conduct an informal investigation as necessary.

(2) The Executive Director shall issue a written response to the parent and the Level One supervisor/staff within ten (10) business days following receipt of the written appeal.

(3) Decisions of the Executive Director are final and not subject to further appeal, except in the following instances:

(i) Decisions involving an alleged violation of a contractual right;

(ii) Decisions involving an alleged violation by the School of state or federal law; or

(iii) Decisions based on allegations of conduct by the Executive Director in violation of law or school policy.

(4) The Board of Directors, through its Grievance Committee, retains discretion to determine whether an alleged violation involves a “final” or “appealable” decision by the Executive Director. The Grievance Committee may consider all available evidence in the record established at the time of the decision and any other evidence it deems necessary for consideration. In addition, the Grievance Committee has the authority to grant a discretionary appeal in exceptional circumstances.

(c) Level Three - Appeal to the Board Grievance Committee: Appeal of Rights and Discretionary Appeals. If a parent is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Two, the parent may, within five (5) business days of receiving notice of the decision of the Executive Director, submit a written request to the Grievance Committee Chairperson to appeal the Executive Director’s decision and to request a formal hearing.

(1) Within five (5) business days of receiving the written request for appeal, the Grievance Committee Chairperson shall issue a written notice to the parent and the Executive Director indicating whether the Executive Director’s determination is “final” in nature or whether the Board, in its discretion or by right of appeal, shall grant a hearing. The notice shall also specify, if a hearing is granted, the time it will occur and guidelines by which it will be conducted

(2) When a hearing is granted, a panel of the Grievance Committee consisting of at least three people shall hear the grievance within ten (10) business days of the date the Chairperson’s notice is issued to the parent.

(3) The Grievance Committee panel may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision of the Executive Director. Following the hearing, the parent and Executive Director shall be informed in writing of the panel’s decision within five (5) business days after the hearing, whenever feasible.

(4) The decision of the Grievance Committee panel is final OR the decision of the Grievance Committee panel may be appealed to the full Board of Directors.

Article III

Employee Grievance Procedures

Section 1. Informal Procedures: A faculty or staff member (the “employee”) should first attempt to resolve any concerns through discussion with his or her supervisor and/or other involved persons. If a concern cannot be resolved in such informal manner, the employee may initiate a formal grievance procedure.

Section 2. Formal Grievance Procedure: In instances where informal means are ineffective or otherwise not feasible, the School offers these more formal grievance procedures. Grievance proceedings and information shall be kept confidential at all levels to the extent feasible and permitted by law. An employee grievance is a formal written claim by an employee or group of employees identifying the concern, identifying the individual or group’s resolution attempts, and identifying any law, policy, or practice that is implicated by the concern. No one shall retaliate against an employee who files a grievance under this policy in good faith.

(a) **Level One – Supervisory Request and Conference.** An employee may, by written request, seek a formal conference with his or her immediate supervisor to address an unresolved grievance.

(1) The request shall succinctly describe the specific grievance(s) and related details, and shall identify any specific policy, rule, regulation or law believed to have been violated, and shall provide other relevant information to help the supervisor adequately understand the nature of the grievance.

(2) The grievance shall be filed within fifteen (15) days of the incident(s) or the last informal attempt to resolve the grievance, provided that such attempt was made within ten (10) business days of the last incident.

(3) Following receipt of the written request, the supervisor shall, if feasible, conduct a conference with the aggrieved employee within ten (10) business days of the written report. Within five (5) business days following the conference, the supervisor will state in writing his or her position on the grievance, and a copy will be given to the employee.

(b) **Level Two - Appeal to the Executive Director.** If the grievance is not resolved, the employee may appeal the supervisor’s decision in writing to the Executive Director if the Executive Director was not involved in the Level One Conference.

(1) The appeal must be made within five (5) business days following receipt of the supervisor's written Level One response to the employee. The Executive Director shall issue a written response to the parent and the Level One supervisor/staff within ten (10) business days following receipt of the written appeal.

(2) **Decisions of the Executive Director are final and not subject to further appeal, except in the following instances:**

(i) **Decisions involving an alleged violation of a contractual right;**

- (ii) **Decisions involving an alleged violation by the School of state or federal law;**
- (iii) **Decisions based on allegations of conduct by the Executive Director in violation of law or school policy; or**
- (iv) **Decisions involving suspension without pay or dismissal of the employee.**

(3) The Board retains discretion to determine whether an alleged violation involves a “final” or “appealable” decision by the Executive Director. The Board may consider all available evidence in the record established at the time of the decision and any other evidence it deems necessary for consideration. In addition, the Grievance Committee has the authority to grant a discretionary appeal in exceptional circumstances.

(c) **Level Three - Appeal to the Board: Appeals of Right and Discretionary Appeals.** If an employee is not satisfied with the disposition of his or her grievance at Level Two or is subject to suspension without pay or dismissal by the Executive Director, the employee may, within five (5) business days of receiving notice from the Executive Director, submit a written request to the Grievance Committee Chairperson to appeal the Executive Director’s decision and to request a formal hearing.

(1) Within five (5) business days of receiving the written request for appeal, the Grievance Committee Chairperson shall issue a written notice to the employee and the Executive Director indicating whether the Executive Director’s determination is “final” in nature or whether the Board, in its discretion or by right of appeal, shall grant a hearing. The notice shall also specify, if a hearing is granted, the time it will occur and guidelines by which it will be conducted.

(2) When a hearing is granted, a panel of the Grievance Committee consisting of at least three people shall hear the grievance within ten (10) business days of the date the Chairperson’s notice is issued to the employee.

(3) The Grievance Committee panel may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision of the Executive Director.

(4) The decision of the Grievance Committee panel is final OR the decision of the Grievance Committee panel may be appealed to the full Board of Directors.

8 CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

8.1 Purpose

To establish guidelines for prevention of child abuse and for responding to allegations of child abuse by an employee or volunteer of The Exploris School. Child abuse consists of any behavior that is inappropriate between employees or volunteers and students, including intentional infliction of physical or emotional injury or improper touching, language, or display of pictures.

8.2 Scope

This policy is applicable to all paid and volunteer staff of The Exploris School.

8.3 Responsibility

The Executive Director of The Exploris School is responsible for enforcement of this policy, as well as for training and education of staff and volunteers.

8.4 Policy And Procedure

Introduction

The Exploris School is committed to maintaining an environment free from child abuse. Child abuse is not only unacceptable to The Exploris School, but is also a potential source of liability. The Exploris School offers a safe educational environment for students under its supervision, both on and off its premises.

The following outline provides information on safeguards against abuse and the initial steps to respond to allegations of abuse.

Safeguards Against Abuse

A Crisis Management Plan for the Prevention of Child Abuse has been incorporated into the policies of The Exploris School.

Preventive Measures

- All applicants for employment and volunteer positions will be required to report any prior accusations of or convictions for child abuse.
- Criminal background checks will be conducted on all new employees and volunteers prior to their commencement of work.
- Staff and volunteers will make sure that they are never alone with a child.

Responding to Reports of Abuse

The Exploris School will immediately report any incident of suspected child abuse to the proper authorities as required by law. The State of North Carolina Child Abuse Reporting Law requires that incidents be reported to the Department of Social Services Child Protection Services (638-3175). If there is no answer, call 911.

The Executive Director of The Exploris School will be solely responsible for responding to all media inquiries.

In-depth investigations should be left to individuals who are familiar with the specific procedures of The Exploris School, under the guidance of legal authorities where appropriate and relevant professional assistance. In conducting investigations, staff will follow all the directives of the legal authorities. Unless legal authorities provide different directives, the following procedural steps will apply:

- The safety of the reported victim will be secured as soon as the incident has been reported.
- Any incident must be immediately reported to the Executive Director of The Exploris School, who will report it to the proper authorities as required by law. No staff member may try to handle or resolve the incident without first reporting the incident and receiving directives from the Executive Director of The Exploris School, legal authorities, and appropriate professional assistance.
- There will be immediate documentation of all efforts taken to report and investigate the incident, including a list of witnesses and their statements.
- The parents or family of the alleged victim will be notified, and the notification will be documented.
- After the safety of the alleged victim has been secured, any actions taken will be documented, and the alleged perpetrator will be notified of the allegation.
- Within 48 hours of being notified of the incident, the Executive Director of The Exploris School will meet with the person making the accusation in the absence of the alleged perpetrator. The person making the accusation has the right to have a witness present. The Exploris School's Abuse Policy will be reviewed, and recommendations for help will be offered.
- Within 48 hours of being notified of the incident, the Executive Director of The Exploris School and another staff person assigned by the Executive Director will meet with the alleged perpetrator in the absence of the alleged victim and his or her family. The alleged perpetrator has the right to have a witness present. The Exploris School's Abuse Policy will be reviewed, and recommendations for help will be offered.
- Once professionals have completed the investigation and the alleged perpetrator has been cleared or charged, the Executive Director of The Exploris School will make a decision regarding the specific action to be taken. The Executive Director of The Exploris School will inform the Chairman of the Board of the circumstances and the action taken.
- Should charges involve the Executive Director of The Exploris School, then the Chairman of the Board will be notified immediately.

Responding to the Alleged Victim

29

An appropriate response toward the victim and the victim's family is a critical step in the healing process. Nothing should be done to blame the victim nor to minimize or deny the reported behavior. Every effort must be taken to assure that the victim and the victim's family understand that The Exploris School takes the allegations seriously.

The care and safety of the victim is the first priority. Investigators must avoid taking an adversarial posture.

Responding to the Alleged Perpetrator

A single individual should not try to determine whether the accused is telling the truth. Rather, professional investigators will assist in the investigation and determination of the facts.

Until the investigation has been completed, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any position from which there could be a possibility of behavior similar to the alleged actions.

The Exploris School will treat the alleged perpetrator with dignity. The Executive Director of The Exploris School and the Chairman of the Board will negotiate the future status of the employee or volunteer. A finding that child abuse has occurred will result in the immediate dismissal of the perpetrator. `

9 SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

9.1 Purpose

The purposes of this Substance Abuse Policy ("Policy") are as follows:

- to encourage employees with alcohol and drug problems to seek assistance in overcoming those problems;
- to provide assistance to employees with dependency problems;
- to reduce the risk of injury to person or property; and
- to reduce absenteeism, tardiness, and unacceptable job performance.

9.2 Prohibited Conduct

The following conduct, as well as any other conduct that is at variance with specific requirements of this policy, will result in immediate discipline up to and including discharge:

- Employees shall not consume alcoholic beverages either upon the premises of The Exploris School or in vehicles being used in service to The Exploris School.
- Employees shall not illegally use or possess prescription drugs not prescribed for him or her.
- Employees shall not refuse to submit to an alcohol or drug test when requested by the Executive Director.
- Employees shall not alter or attempt to alter a sample submitted for testing under this policy, nor may employees submit a sample that is not the employee's sample.
- Employees shall immediately notify the Executive Director if they have been either arrested for, or convicted of, any drug or alcohol-related crime.

9.3 Testing Policy

"Cause Testing". Each employee, regardless of his or her job duties, as a condition of continued employment, shall submit to a drug or alcohol test if there is cause to believe that the employee is engaging in prohibited conduct, as that term is defined in this Policy.

- Definition of "Cause". "Cause" includes, but is not limited to, being involved in any occurrence which requires further investigation in The Exploris School's discretion; involvement in an accident; engaging in conduct in violation of company policy; violence; conduct exhibiting less than total consciousness or self-control; difficulty in performing normal physical tasks; exhibiting the odor of alcohol or marijuana; or any unusual appearance or behavior.
- Transportation for "Cause" testing. When an employee is tested based on cause, The Exploris School will transport the employee to the site for the collection of a sample for testing purposes.

9.4 Confirmation Tests

As a part of this Policy, all positive test results will be confirmed by a second test on the same sample before any employment action is taken based on a test result. The following specific procedures apply to testing pursuant to this Policy:

- Drug confirmation tests. An initial drug test will be conducted on all samples. If the initial test is positive, the confirmation test will be conducted using a process called gas chromatography with mass spectrometry ("GC/MS") or an equivalent scientifically accepted

method. All such tests will be conducted by laboratories certified by the National Institute of Drug Abuse or "NIDA".

- **Alcohol confirmation tests.** Initial test will be conducted using a process that identifies the presence of alcohol in saliva. If this test is positive, and the employee appears capable of making a decision, then the employee will be given the option of submitting immediately to either a urine or a blood alcohol confirmation test. Testing a urine sample for alcohol is not as accurate as testing a blood sample; however, The Exploris School will not require employees to submit to the withdrawal of blood. Therefore, an employee who initially tests positive for alcohol will be given the option of submitting either to a blood or a urine confirmation test. The employee will be bound by the confirmation test procedure he or she selects.
- **Medical Review Officer.** The Exploris School's insurance carrier will provide the services of a Medical Review Officer ("MRO") to review all positive confirmation test results and explore with the employee the possibility of a false positive test result. Positive confirmation tests will not be reported to The Exploris School until the employee in question has been given the opportunity to consult with the MRO.
- **Incapacitated employees.** If the employee does not appear to be capable of making an immediate decision concerning the option of submitting to either a urine or a blood alcohol confirmation test, the initial test result will be final and the employee will be suspended pending a determination of employment status.
- **Refusal to submit to a test.** Any employee who refuses to submit to an initial alcohol or drug test or who refuses to submit to a confirmation alcohol or drug test will be subject to immediate discipline, up to and including termination.

9.5 Confidentiality

The results of all drug and alcohol tests will be treated as confidential. Unless an employee gives his or her written consent, The Exploris School will not release the employee's drug or alcohol test records to a subsequent employer.

9.6 Rehabilitation

- **Self-identification.** The Exploris School encourages any employee who has a substance abuse problem to come forward and identify themselves as having a problem. Such an employee will not be immediately terminated, but instead may be required to complete a 30-day unpaid rehabilitation leave of absence. An employee may use sick and vacation leave or short term disability if available for these 30 days. However, an employee will not be eligible for a 30-day rehabilitation period if he requests the opportunity for rehabilitation in response to being asked to submit to a substance abuse test, if the employee has tested positive under this Policy, or if the employee has otherwise violated this Policy.
- **Participation in treatment during rehabilitation.** During the rehabilitation period, the employee will be required to provide The Exploris School with proof of participation in treatment, which will include, at least, regular attendance by the employee at Narcotics Anonymous or Alcoholics Anonymous meetings.
- **Probation following rehabilitation.** If the employee successfully completes the rehabilitation period, he or she will be placed on probation for the balance of his or her employment. The terms of the probation will include submission by the employee to drug or alcohol testing at the request of The Exploris School. Employees who test positive for

drugs or alcohol while on probation will be terminated immediately.

10 NO CONTRACT

This policy does not constitute a contract for employment of a specific duration. All employees of The Exploris School are employed at will, and the employment relationship may be terminated by The Exploris School or by the employee at any time or for any reason. The Exploris School reserves the discretion to rescind or modify this policy, in whole or in part, with or without notice. Other employment policies and procedures remain applicable to employees to the extent that these policies and procedures do not conflict with the substance abuse policy.

Revised August 13, 2012
Revised August 12, 2015
Revised August 18, 2016
Revised August 1, 2017
Revised June 27, 2018
Revised August 1, 2019



The Exploris™ School

Empowering Learners to Improve Our World

2020-2021

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

**The Exploris School
Elementary Campus**

**17 S. Swain Street
Raleigh, NC 27601**

**(919) 715-0333
(919) 715-0916 (fax)**



**The Exploris School
Middle Campus**

**401 Hillsborough Street
Raleigh, NC 27603**

**(919) 715-3690
(919) 715-2042 (fax)**

Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction to Exploris <i>Our Mission</i> <i>Core Values</i>	4-6	Section 6: Code of Student Conduct <i>Expected Behaviors</i> <i>Three Levels of Intervention</i> <i>Levels of Consequences</i> <i>Definitions of Problem Behavior & Consequences</i> <i>Student Rights & Responsibilities</i>	24-43
Section 2: Curriculum & Design <i>Project Based Learning</i> <i>Exploris Hallmarks</i> <i>Field Experiences & Service Learning</i> <i>Overnight Trips</i> <i>Academic Accountability</i> <i>Parent Communication</i>	7-9	Appendices <i>The Exploris School Grievance Policy</i> <i>Acceptable Use Policy for School Technology</i> <i>Handbook/Technology Use</i> <i>Signature Page</i>	<p style="text-align: center;">44-46</p> <p style="text-align: center;">47-48</p> <p style="text-align: center;">49-50</p>
Section 3: Other Differences You'll See	10-11		
Section 4: School Logistics <i>School Hours</i> <i>Food & Snacks</i> <i>Transportation</i> <i>Parking</i> <i>Drop Off/Pick Up Safety</i> <i>Field Experiences/Field Trip</i> <i>Enrollment/Lottery Policy</i> <i>Class Request</i> <i>Protocol for Requesting a Crew Change in Mid-Year</i>	12-17		
Section 5: Student Health & Safety <i>Building Security, Emergency Contacts</i> <i>Inclement Weather</i> <i>Medications, Health Forms, Illness, Concussion, Lice</i> <i>Student Safety, Emotional Health and Well-being</i> <i>Student Supervision, Extended Care</i> <i>Background Checks for Employees</i> <i>Volunteer Expectations and Confidentiality</i> <i>Background Checks for Volunteers</i> <i>Field Experience Chaperones</i> <i>Student Sleeping Accommodations</i>	18-23		

Section 1: Introduction to Exploris School

Our History

Exploris opened as one of the first charter schools in North Carolina in 1997. The school was attached to the Exploris Museum, an interactive museum with an international focus, and enrolled 53 sixth grade students from Wake and Johnston counties in its first year and grew to a sixth through eighth grade middle school. As a Global Education school, its early mission was to help people of all ages learn to respect differences and appreciate the similarities. Exploris was heralded as an adolescent-centered, self-directed learning environment that engaged students actively, taking an integrated approach to learning using major themes and projects. From its inception, the school sought to provide a nurturing and respectful atmosphere with high expectations for all learners. Keeping Exploris's mission at the forefront, the school expanded to include elementary students in grades K - 5.

Exploris fosters a collaborative, real-world approach to curriculum design and implementation. Using national and state standards as a jumping off point, teachers work together to create a compelling lens that drives the acquisition of content and skills. Teachers seek out university, governmental, and industry partnerships that add to the content-knowledge delivered to students. From these experts, teachers also learn of current, complex issues that help to contextualize student learning and make it relevant for students. By tackling current issues and working with experts to brainstorm solutions, students understand that they have something to offer the world. The work of Exploris students matters today.

Gone are the ringing bells, rows of desks, and fill-in-the blank worksheets. For most of the day, students and teachers are engaged in challenging learning experiences that explore a topic or theme in depth. Their studies call for intellectual inquiry, physical exploration, and community service. On any given day, these explorations may take them outside the school-building to do environmental research, conduct interviews in local businesses, or carry out other fieldwork assignments. Students work individually, in small groups, and as a member of their "crew" or class. Together they learn to draw on the strengths of a whole class.

Our Mission

The Exploris School is a diverse learning community that engages students in a challenging, relevant, relationship-based education. Through experiential, project-based learning we empower students to foster a just and sustainable world.

Our Vision

Empowering learners to improve our world.

Core Values



Exploris has been serving students in the downtown Raleigh community for over 20 years and is committed to growing our school in size and diversity to expand support and opportunity for all students. Our educational program is built around four core pillars: Global Education, Project Based Learning, Co-Teaching, and Responsive Classroom. The articulation of our core values ground the school in our educational approach and community partnerships.

***INNOVATION** - In a constantly changing world, the ability to approach challenges in a new way is vital. Exploris teachers and students approach the learning process through divergent thinking, creativity, ideation, and risk-taking.*

***SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT** - Students learn best when they are exposed to meaningful, complex issues that are applicable to their own lives. Teachers engage students in current, relevant issues by solving authentic problems that are being addressed beyond the four walls of the school building. Students realize that they have the power to change how their world works. They know how to navigate public systems, lobby public officials, and present their research and opinions as responsible citizens. Student work is tangibly connected not only to the local community, but to other regions of the world and to past and future events.*

***RELATIONSHIPS** - A nurturing school environment is one where students are encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships and collaborate with their teachers, parents, peers, and community. With a keen understanding of the unique development of the age group which they teach, teachers are intentional about the structures and relationship-building activities that they design. Positive relationships and collaboration results in a tapestry of learners who know they can depend on each other and work together in almost any situation. The end-product is deeper, and Exploris students experience a collective sense of accomplishment and ownership.*

***REFLECTION** - In an ever changing world of new ideas, the importance of reflecting on one's own thinking and the thinking of others cannot be underestimated. Exploris values the creation of time to slow down, to reflect, and to build connections.*

***CRAFTSMANSHIP** - Producing an exemplary product is challenging. It takes attention to detail, grit, perseverance, revision, and tenacity. It takes a growth mindset and a dedication to competing with one's own personal best.*

***CURIOSITY** - True knowledge does not occur without curiosity. Students are empowered to ask questions about the world around them and to explore possible answers.*

RESPONSIBILITY - Students will take ownership of their learning and accountability for their actions and behavior. Students will recognize the importance of character, integrity, and honesty.

CONNECTIONS TO NATURE - When students witness the power and elements of the natural world through adventure and stewardship, they begin to view themselves as just one species within a larger system.

Section 2: Curriculum & Design

Project-Based Learning

The Exploris curriculum is integrated around projects. The world is not compartmentalized into neat little boxes, but instead intertwines various content matter and skills. Science, language and communication, math, and social studies work together to paint a fuller picture of our world and are thus embedded in grade level trimester-long projects, called Expeditions. Expeditions are designed to engage students in grade level standards, community outreach and involvement, extensive collaboration, and a public culminating activity.

Exploris Hallmarks

- *Deep learning of state and national standards through the context of current, complex issues or community needs*
- *Integrated use of computers and other technology to develop research and critical thinking skills*
- *Field Experiences allowing students to learn about and provide service to their community*
- *Adventure and environmental education to challenge students, foster teamwork, and nurture students' understanding of nature; including a culminating Outward Bound experience in the 8th Grade Year*
- *Global Arts (including Art, Connected World/World Cultures, Health & Wellness/Movement, and Music (ES only) to further develop critical thinking, global awareness, empathy, and craftsmanship*
- *Self-reflection through goal setting, student self-assessment, and student-led portfolio conferences*
- *International exchanges of middle school students and staff with students in Hiroshima, Japan and Gefrees, Germany*
- *Dedication to the environment by limiting the amount of student waste and energy produced*

Field Experiences and Service Learning

Field Experiences and Service Learning are essential components of our curriculum design, and students may be off campus frequently throughout the year. We ask that parents sign one blanket field trip form (Medical Release Form) that covers permission for all trips within the Triangle Area. Walking field experiences are part of our routine learning environment. Parents will be notified through their class newsletter or website whenever field experiences that require transportation are planned. Your child must have this form on file to attend. Please return this form and any medication forms by the first day of school. Students arriving late (after class has left campus) or without a Medical Release Form will be placed in the care of another adult (either in another classroom or in the Associate Director's office).

Costs of field experiences will be communicated to families as early as possible in the planning processes. Fees may not be reimbursed if there is a student cancellation. Scholarships are available for students who qualify. Scholarship applications are available from the crew teacher, school counselor, or in the front office.

Overnight Field Experience

Each year, most grades will take an overnight trip. It will last 1-5 days, depending on the grade level. These field experiences are a big part of who we are as a school. They allow our crews to develop positive cultures, stretch students beyond their comfort level, and create opportunities for leadership and adventure. Students who are comfortable taking risks out of the classroom often gain the confidence to take bigger risks in the classroom, building confidence as leaders and collaborators.

Student attendance is NOT optional because the field experiences are part of our education curriculum. *Therefore, you must be willing to let your child participate in these overnight educational experiences. Overnight and field experiences outside of the Triangle area will require a separate permission slip.*

Costs of overnight trips will be communicated to families as early as possible in the planning processes. Fees may not be reimbursed if there is a student cancellation. Scholarships are available for students who qualify. Scholarship applications are available from the crew teacher, school counselor, or in the front office.

Accountability:

An administrative review will be held to discuss the participation eligibility of field experiences for any students that have had significant health or disciplinary issues. Outside organizations may have other restrictions.

Academic Accountability

Exploris strives to create an environment of academic rigor that will prepare students to excel in high school and in the world beyond schooling. Because Exploris utilizes standards-based and portfolio assessments as the primary means of evaluating student performance, it is imperative that all students complete classwork and homework in a timely manner. A comprehensive collection of completed work will be necessary to ensure that students are prepared to compile a portfolio that demonstrates their academic ability.

Portfolio Assessment and Student-Led Conferences

At Exploris, student portfolios are the place where students house evidence of intellectual achievement, academic growth, and responsibility for learning. Students use these portfolios to present their learning at student-led conferences throughout the year. These conferences not only tell you how your child is doing in school, but they help your child take responsibility for her/his own learning.

Conferences provide an occasion for students to reflect on their progress, set goals for future work, and make a public presentation to the most important people in their lives. Students prepare for these conferences by choosing their best work, revising work, writing reflections on their learning, and practicing presentation skills. We expect parents to come with their children for every teacher/parent/student conference in the school year. Teachers analyze the portfolios and other classroom assessments to determine progress toward academic targets which they share in Achievement Reports. Portfolios and student-led conferences are crucial tools for revealing student growth. They help teachers and students notice missing links in a child's learning and also acknowledge and celebrate a child's accomplishments. In the 8th grade students present a cumulative passage portfolio to school staff, family, and community members. This culminating event helps determine a student's readiness for high school.

Achievement Reports

Teachers will provide formal, written Achievement Reports documenting student progress in the major areas of learning and development at the end of each trimester. Instead of evaluating students

using letter grades (A, B, C, D, and F), or using a number scale (1, 2, 3, or 4), we assess our students' work in terms of individual progress towards achieving a standard. You will see words such as "Beginning", "Developing", or "Accomplished". We make these evaluations using rubrics, models, and exemplars based on state standards. Standards for high quality work are discussed, and sometimes created with students, before their work begins and throughout the process.

Standardized Testing

As a public school, Exploris is required to administer all standardized tests mandated by the NC Department of Public Instruction including EOG's for grades 3-8, EOC for Math I, and NC Final Exam for Math II. Exploris considers data gleaned from these tests as one barometer of student learning but does not consider the results of this testing as the primary factor in assessing student growth or achievement. In an effort for students to do their "personal best" on these tests, there will be some specific test review, with an emphasis on activities meant to relieve student test anxiety. There will not be a great emphasis placed on "teaching to the test" prior to administration. In addition to state assessments Exploris administers the MAP, Measure of Academic Progress, three times per year. This is a computerized adaptive test which helps teachers, parents, and administrators improve learning for all students and make informed decisions to promote a child's academic success. The mClass test is administered to assess the development of reading skills.

Parent Communication

Parents are integral partners and should feel comfortable contacting teachers with questions or concerns about their student's learning. Exploris teachers are with students for most of the day and planning instruction for the rest, therefore please allow 48 hours for teachers to reply to emails or phone calls.

Please schedule an appointment in advance to meet with a teacher or an administrator to ensure that they are available to discuss your questions or concerns and give you their undivided attention.

Section 3: Other Differences You'll See

A great deal of thought, research, and practice has gone into designing our school's structure. We haven't always made the same decisions that were made by the schools in our childhoods. Some of what you see at Exploris may look unfamiliar. You may be surprised that certain school pieces are missing. You may notice some unexpected new things. This section should explain some of these surprises.

Our Classroom Space Is Used Flexibly

In an Exploris classroom, work areas are arranged to help students collaborate in both small and large groups. This requires group tables, breakout spaces, and workstations as opposed to rows of individual desks. Students may also use hallways and other spaces outside the classroom for learning.

Our Classrooms Have Ongoing Conversations and Are Full of Movement

Student conversation is the center of much of our learning here. We believe that deep learning takes place when children challenge one another, ask questions, share ideas, and build on one another's knowledge verbally. Throughout the day, students will be getting out of their seats to gather materials, consult with those around them, and gather resources around the room.

Field Experiences are Central to Our Curriculum

Learning extends beyond Exploris's walls; it connects to the world. Students work in the "field" sometimes once or twice a week. The field may be a wetland, a museum, a community garden, a science lab, a courtroom, a national forest, etc. Field experiences are deeply woven into each teacher's curriculum. Attendance is required on all field experiences as much as it is in the classroom.

We Use Primary Sources as Much as Possible

We believe children can learn authentically by using authentic resources. Although they have access to some textbooks, students more often gather information from community experts, industry leaders, nonfiction and fiction trade books, publications, and the Internet. By exploring primary sources, children gain information-gathering skills that they use to independently problem-solve and conduct research in the real world.

Students are Responsible for Their Own Learning

We expect our students to be responsible for their own learning. Our teachers do not pour knowledge into passive students. Rather, they interact, question, prompt, and set up physical and intellectual environments for students. Within this context, we expect students to explore, wonder, hypothesize, create, and discuss their ideas about the world. This is hard work. We want to hear parents' perceptions about their children and their experiences at Exploris. We expect parents to check in with their children's teachers and to be interested in their learning, but we do not expect parents to complete work for students or to manage their child's learning. We want parent feedback about our projects and our culture. We expect every member of the team to actively participate in the learning experience.

Revising Work Is a Habit Here

Students at Exploris normally aren't finished with a piece of work until they do multiple drafts of it. This expectation reaches across grades and disciplines. Improving on work again and again is common practice here. Teachers guide students from draft to draft. Students collaborate to assess the work of their peers. Rubrics set high standards for finished pieces and guide students as they strive to get their work to meet these high standards.

Learning Is Public and Collaborative

Our students' work is often assessed by their peers. Students read their writing out loud, solicit comments, and present project drafts for formal peer critiques. We do public work just like in the real

world. Having an authentic audience keeps us on our toes, supporting quality work with high standards.

Service and Social Emotional Learning Are Part of Our Curriculum

We focus on social emotional learning and service as well as academics. Quality academic work is mirrored by the quality of the ways in which we treat one another, our community, and our environment. Students are encouraged to be compassionate, disciplined, courageous, and responsible. For example, your child's crew may take time during the day to discuss why a crewmember has been mistreated. They may take twenty minutes to pick up litter at a neighborhood park. They may spend an hour a week visiting an aging community member. These types of activities are critical to our mission of engaging students to build a connected, just, and sustainable world.

Students Share Responsibility for our Community Spaces

As part of our desire to create a stronger school culture, students share responsibility for keeping our school clean and presentable. Student crews will be assigned duties during the week to clean tables, chairs, floors, windows, and to take garbage and compost out at the end of their lunch period to get the room ready for the next group of students.

We Are Strict About Safety

Your child's safety is our top priority. Exploris follows safety measures conscientiously and always errs on the conservative side. Every precaution is taken to ensure your child's safety at all times. All of our teachers and staff are experienced and vigilant about high safety standards. Exploris has routine emergency drills and has established an Emergency Procedures Manual and Crisis Intervention Team so that we can effectively address any crisis that may arise.

Students and Teachers Often Dress Casually

Because we are a hands-on school, teachers and students need to dress appropriately for whatever activities are called for on a given day. We are often up to our elbows in goopy materials and the natural world. Appropriate dress for a visit to a museum, for science experiments and messy art projects, and for venturing to the river will vary. Parents are asked to be knowledgeable about activities on a given day by reading the weekly grade-level letters to assure that their children are dressed appropriately for the day.

Our Staff Go by Their First Names

We introduce ourselves to our students with our first names. This is part of our culture, which fosters respect within relationships and not necessarily by titles. Some of our students prefer to put Ms. or Mr. in front of our first names. We respect their desire to do so.

Section 4: School Logistics

School Hours

- **Elementary 8:30 – 3:15**
Students can be dropped off beginning at 8:10 AM. *For students needing supervision prior to that window, a Before School Care Program is available. More information and a fee schedule can be found on the school's website. Students who enter the carpool line after 8:25 will be marked tardy and must report to the office to sign in and be accompanied by an adult. Students that are tardy are subject to consequences as outlined within the Code of Student Conduct.*
- **Middle 8:15 – 3:15**
Students can be dropped off beginning at 7:55. *For students needing supervision prior to that window, a Before School Care Program is available. More information and a fee schedule can be found on the school's website. Students who arrive after 8:15 will be marked tardy must report to the front office to sign in and are subject to consequences as outlined within the Code of Student Conduct.*
- **Before/After Care**
Elementary Before Care: 7:15-8:10; Elementary Aftercare: 3:40-6:00
Middle Before Care: 7:00-7:55; Middle After Care: 3:30-6:00
See the school website for additional details.
- **Please keep in mind that children cannot wait alone outside the school since they will not be supervised. Please register your child for before school if they need to be dropped off early or after school care if they need to stay past dismissal.**

Food and Snacks

Exploris strives to promote a dining experience that includes an aesthetic conducive to enjoying both one's food and the company of others. Because Exploris has no formal lunch program, parents must provide lunch for their children on a daily basis. The PTO coordinates with a third-party lunch vendor to provide families with a nutritious well-balanced option if they desire to order lunch for their child. The school will work with families to provide lunch for those students that qualify for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program and have met the requirements on the economically Disadvantaged Student Form.

Exploris emphasizes the use of fruits, vegetables, or whole grains as the primary snack and water as the primary beverage. Microwaves are not available for student lunches. Please be sure to send a reusable water bottle with your child each day. Nutritious foods fuel your child's work and play; however, sweets do not. Please limit the amount of sweets that you send to the school. Carbonated beverages, gum, and candy are not to be brought onto the school's campuses. Additionally, we ask parents not to bring in or send cupcakes, donuts, or other such treats for student birthdays. This is especially important for the safety of students with food allergies.

Waste-Free Lunch

At Exploris, all food and snack waste that is "packed in" will also be "packed out." As a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Award Winner, Exploris is committed to environmental stewardship. As such, we strive to make waste reduction a priority.

One of the best places to start is with lunch and snack waste. A waste-free lunch program is a process of educating students, parents, and school staff about where our trash ends up and how we, as

individuals, can reduce the amount of trash we generate. Waste-free lunch programs favor the use of reusable food containers, drink containers, utensils, and napkins. They discourage the use of disposable packaging, such as prepackaged foods, plastic bags, juice boxes and pouches, paper napkins, and disposable utensils.

A Waste-Free lunch not only helps to reduce waste at the school, it helps parents to be aware of their child's eating habits while at school. Please make sure to check your child's lunch box each day and talk with your child about his/her food choices.

In general, Exploris has no formal lunch program that is provided by the school. Most of our students bring lunches and snacks from home on a daily basis. Our parents, through our active PTO, has worked to create a solution for parents wishing an alternative to packing daily meals.

Transportation

At Exploris, we have chosen to focus our resources on teacher quality and a safe facility, rather than providing transportation for students on school buses. All parents who can provide transportation to and from school are asked to do so.

*Due to the school's limited parking and queuing lanes, public transportation and **carpooling are strongly encouraged**. Exploris staff and the PTO will gladly help families form carpool groups. Watch for emails and communication on the PTO Blog beginning the week before school starts.*

Parking

ELEMENTARY CAMPUS:

*It is important that families keep in mind that the elementary campus is temporarily located in a residential area that was not intended for heavy traffic. Please be respectful of our neighbors and help us to remain a welcome addition to the neighborhood. Please **DO NOT** block driveways, park facing the wrong direction, or park in a way that prevents the smooth flow of traffic. Please park in the following areas:*

- *Marked parking spaces in the elementary school's parking lot. Do not park along the queuing or driving lanes*
- **ONLY** *along the Northbound traveling (or eastern side facing NEW BERN) on S. Swain St*
- *In the parking lot of **Treasuring Christ Church** on Hargett St. The church staff has been nice enough to offer their lot to parents of Exploris Students. After 3:00 pm parents can also park in the Wake Young Men's Leadership Academy Lot.*

MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUS:

*There is **NO on-site parking** available for parents. Exploris's parking lots are reserved for staff parking **ONLY**. **This includes those picking up for After School Care**. Please be mindful that faculty and staff must be able to enter and leave the parking lots whenever necessary.*

- *Parents must park in the appropriately labeled spaces on the street or in public parking lots.*

Drop Off/Pick Up Safety

Exploris is an urban school in a busy neighborhood with limited parking. To keep everyone safe, to get students into their classrooms on time, and to keep traffic flowing freely, we need to work together.

- *Please use the Drop Off/Pick Up directions (below) for dropping off and picking up students. **Do not pull over on the side of the street to pick up or drop off your child.***
- *In order to have a smooth drop off and pick up procedure, **drivers/passengers may not get out of your car** if you are in the queuing lanes. If you need to get out of your car for any reason, please park in designated areas.*
- **DO NOT USE CELL PHONES** *at any time in the pick-up or drop-off lines. Cell phones distract drivers and lead to accidents. In the interest of safety, please refrain from using your phone.*

- **DRIVE SLOWLY:** Watch for children walking and biking — be extra careful anywhere near the school.
- **ONLY TURN RIGHT out of school lots:** This is a city requirement! As part of the school's approved transportation plan, the city required that only right-hand turns be allowed into and out of the parking lots during peak hours.
- **USE CROSSWALKS:** Please **DO NOT** walk through the car lines! Exploris discourages jaywalking as it is extremely unsafe.
- **BUCKLE UP:** Before pulling away, make sure your children are either safely on the sidewalk or buckled in their seat.
- **NO EARLY DISMISSAL after 2:45.** After 2:45, your child will not be dismissed until the published dismissal times. During that time, all students should be dismissed via the walk-up or carpool lines.

Elementary Drop-Off and Pick-up

Rules for Car Line

Please make sure that all drivers who will be dropping off/picking up your child are aware of these requirements:

- The Elementary School driveway is **one-way**. Please follow the signs indicating where to enter and exit the lot.
- **NEVER turn left** when either entering or leaving the school's property. All vehicles dropping students off in the morning should approach the school from Hargett St, turning right onto S. Swain St., right into the school driveway, and driving around to the school's administrative building entrance. Adults will be in place to greet your students in the morning.
- Whenever possible, we ask for students sitting in the back to exit from the **driver's side**. We know this is very different from what other schools do.
- If entering or exiting from the passenger's side, students should always walk in front of the vehicle that they are exiting or will be entering.
- Do not store backpacks or other belongings in the trunk. Students should not walk behind your vehicle to retrieve items. This is unsafe as other cars are pulling in behind you.
- Vehicles should then exit the school's drive by turning right onto S. Swain St. toward New Bern Ave and then turn right on New Bern Ave.

In an effort to relieve congestion in the elementary carpool line the following dismissal guidelines will be followed. Please carefully review the instructions below:

- Siblings of Middle School Students will not be released until 3:35. **If you have an elementary child who has an Exploris middle school siblings, ignore what is below and coordinate your pick-up to arrive at the elementary at 3:35.**
- All other students will be dismissed as outlined below. **Siblings should report with the youngest child.**
 - **3:15** – Kindergarteners and First Graders (k/1) and any older siblings or carpool riders
 - **3:25** – Second and Third graders (2/3) and any older siblings or carpool riders
 - **3:35** – Fourth and Fifth graders (4/5), any older siblings or carpool riders, and all siblings of middle school students
- It would be helpful to display a paper with the names of the children you are picking up (first and last) typed in a font size that allows the text to take up most of the paper. A staff member will be standing in the lot with a walkie-talkie and will call your child's name to ensure your child is ready for loading.
- If you have a special circumstance and need to pick up a child or children earlier than the

above posted times, please contact the elementary front office.

***All elementary school students not picked up by 3:40 will be taken to After School Care in the school's multipurpose room and a fee will apply.**

Middle School Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Rules for Car Line Drop Off

- *Drop off - All vehicles dropping students off in the morning should turn south onto Harrington St. from Hillsborough St., turn right into the rear parking lot of the school (next to Ugly Monkey) and pull in as far as possible before letting students out.*
- *Please **DO NOT** drop students off along Hillsborough St. or in the lot by the main entrance. All cars should exit the back of the parking lot by turning right onto W. Morgan St.*
- *Do not allow students to store backpacks or other belongings in the trunk. Students should not walk behind your vehicle to retrieve items. This is unsafe as other cars are pulling in behind you.*
- *Students should be prepared to get out of cars in the parking lot quickly and enter the building. No vehicles should be left unattended in the parking lot.*

Middle School Dismissal

- *Pick-up all students between 3:15 and 3:30 PM in the Harrington Street (Ugly Monkey) lot.*
- *Vehicles should turn south onto Harrington Street and turn right into the Harrington lot. Because of the amount of traffic on Hillsborough Street, please **DO NOT approach from Hillsborough traveling east**. We strongly recommend that families traveling east take Peace Street to N. West to N. Harrington. Families traveling from the North, South, or West should travel to W. Edenton and then turn left on N. Harrington Street.*
- *Pull into the lot as far as possible in order to get between 3 and 4 cars into the lot at one time.*
- *All vehicles exiting the Harrington lot should turn right onto W. Morgan Street.*

***All middle school students not picked up by 3:30 will be taken to After School Care, and a fee will apply.**

Field Experience/Field Trip Transportation

*We need parents' help both in transporting children on field trips and in chaperoning trips, but student safety has to remain our primary concern. Parents who agree to drive on field experiences are required to complete the **Vehicle Insurance Declaration and the Volunteer Transportation Assurance Form**, which **was mailed** is **included** in the enrollment packet **on your School Mint account**, and can be found on our website under "forms." Submit these forms annually on your online School Mint account by the school deadline that is published. **Please remember to upload to the front office along with** a copy of your valid N.C. driver's license and insurance card. We ask that parents' cars are in good repair (with a current state inspection) and that parents have a cell phone to communicate with the school in the event of an emergency. You are encouraged to contact your insurance agent and inquire about obtaining additional coverage for transporting children other than your own.*

All students must be properly restrained in cars. North Carolina Law states that a properly used car seat or booster seat is required for children less than age 8 and less than 80 pounds.

- *The law does not specify which type of car seat can be used at any age or weight, only that the seat is used properly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and meets all Federal*

Safety Standards in place when the seat was manufactured.

- *When a child reaches age 8 (regardless of weight) or 80 pounds (regardless of age), a properly fitted seat belt can be used in place of a car seat or booster seat.*
- *Booster seats can only be used with lap and shoulder seat belts. They can NEVER be used with a lap belt only. A child who weighs at least 40 pounds can legally be restrained using only a properly fitted lap belt if there is no lap and shoulder belt available for use with a booster seat, however this is not considered to be the safest option.*
- *The recommendation according to NC law is that all children less than 12-13 years of age should sit in the back of the vehicle.*

*Drivers are expected to know and follow the laws and recommendations for proper restraint of children, use all cautionary measures when driving students to and from field experience, and **refrain from using a cell phone while driving***

Prior to departure, all drivers will be given clear and concise directions. These directions will include:

- *Step-by-step directions from the point of departure to the point of arrival*
- *Same directions in reverse*
- *Map to the point of arrival (if available)*
- *Contact phone number of the destination point if applicable*
- *Contact phone number for the Exploris leader in charge. Likewise, the chaperone should leave his/her cell phone number with the class leader.*

*We ask that volunteer drivers follow the route provided by the teacher and **DO NOT** make impromptu stops at fast-food restaurants or other such detours.*

Enrollment/Lottery Policy

*All students entering K-8th grade and who are residents of North Carolina are invited to apply for enrollment. Kindergarten students must have reached the age of 5 on or before August 31 of the year of enrollment. **It is important to keep in mind that all students who are not currently enrolled must apply for admission, including siblings of currently enrolled students.***

More information on the school's lottery policy, procedures, and preference status can be found on our website under the Admissions tab.

Class Requests

Every year we get many questions about class requests for the following year as students move from one crew to another. Our primary consideration in developing class lists is balance. We look at the students that are moving into or leaving each crew, and attempt to balance it with regard to grade level, gender, ethnicity, economic diversity, academic and behavioral needs, student relationships, etc. This is a collaborative process involving teachers and administrative staff. Often there are many unknowns, especially the new students who will be joining us in August.

In past years our efforts to honor a request have made achieving the right balance more difficult. Multiple requests in a given classroom make the task even more complicated. Families are not aware of all issues as to placement and can't be told for reasons of confidentiality.

Requesting a classroom has several other consequences as well, including:

- *When one family's request is honored, it affects other families at that grade level. To accommodate one request, many students may have to be moved. This is unfair to parents who*

do not make requests.

- *Though class requests are confidential, inevitably teachers may learn of them, which can contribute to poor morale.*
- *Often a group of parents request one classroom due to student friendships. This is impossible to accommodate and may lead to negative feelings among families and toward office staff who develop the class lists. Exploris is fortunate to have incredibly talented and qualified teachers. While one teacher or classroom may seem to better “fit” a student, all of our teachers are fully capable of working with all students. Every year, classroom environments will change. One year a crew may seem ideal; and the next it may not. We all need to work together to encourage and support strong classrooms.*

For the reasons given above, we strongly discourage classroom requests. Most requests will not be granted. If you feel strongly about requesting a classroom, you must submit a letter in the spring before the end of the school year. Please be sure to include your reasoning. You may be placed in the class of your choice for reasons not related to your request.

Protocol for Requesting a Crew Change in Mid-Year

Occasionally, a parent/guardian may want to request a change of crews for his/her child. Such changes are strongly discouraged by Exploris unless there are strong and compelling reasons to do so. In most circumstances there is no room in the other crew to accommodate such a change. If such a change is to be requested, the following protocol must be followed.

First, the parent/guardian must meet with the child’s crew teacher to discuss concerns as to how and why the child’s needs are not being met. Intervention strategies should be discussed and implemented.

After 30 days there will be a follow-up meeting between the parent/guardian and crew teacher to check in on progress. At that time there will be a decision to continue with the interventions, modify the interventions, or begin a more formal process of requesting a change of crew.

If a change of crew is still being requested, the parent, crew teacher and Associate Director will discuss issues and develop a further plan of action to resolve the situation within the current crew assignment. The new plan of action will be closely monitored for a month. If the situation is resolved, no further action will be taken. If the parent is still interested in a change of crew, there will be a meeting with the parent, crew teacher, the prospective crew teacher, and the Associate Director. This meeting would be to discuss the pros and cons of such a move. If this group decides there are enough compelling reasons to move the student, a change of placement will occur.

Section 5: Student Health & Safety

The overall health and safety of our students and staff is our first concern at Exploris. Supervision of students is a primary responsibility of our faculty, and we ask that parents support our efforts to establish and implement safety guidelines. Please report all unsafe conditions immediately to your child's Crew teacher or to the Associate Director.

Building Security

In conjunction with safety goals, Exploris will enforce our security measures during the school day. All exterior doors will be locked and remain so throughout the day. Exterior doors should never be propped open during the school day, and parents and visitors must enter the building and sign in at the main front office. Students may not use staff codes to enter the building. All visitors must ring the bell and enter through the main office. Students are not permitted to open the doors for parents and visitors as this is a safety concern.

Emergency Contacts and Notification

During the course of normal activities for school, emergencies or accidents may occur. In the event of an accident or emergency, the school will contact you and/or your emergency contacts directly or through our One Call Now alert system via phone call, text, and/or email.

How can families assist the school in ensuring each child's safety and well-being?

- *Make sure that the office has your current contact information as well as additional emergency contacts.*
- *Please make sure to let your contacts know that you have done this, because it is imperative that we are able to reach a responsible adult at all times when a student is involved in school activities.*
- *Please notify your child's teachers AND the office if any contact numbers change throughout the year.*

Inclement Weather / School Closings

When there is inclement weather, Exploris will open late or close in line with the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS). Parents are asked to tune in to any of the local network TV stations for the latest school closure information. School closure information will also be available on The Exploris School website and through the school's One Call Now Alert System.

If WCPSS closes for any reason other than inclement weather, Exploris may not follow suit, so parents should always defer to communication provided from The Exploris School.

Medications

Students who need to receive medication (prescription or over-the-counter) during the school day or during a field experiences must have a "Medical Release" form turned in to the office. Prescription medications must be in their original containers with dosage procedures clearly indicated. Medications should be turned in to the front office and may not be kept with the child. The front office has a locked storage location for medication and distribution of medication is tracked on a daily log. The only exception allowed will be for students approved by their doctor to carry their asthma inhalers or epi-pens.

Health Forms

Before the first day of school, all students must submit a North Carolina Health Assessment Form, signed by a physician, that identifies any health issues important for the schools to know about and

certifies that your child has all required immunizations. North Carolina state law requires that documentation of immunization be provided to the school within 30 days of a student's first day of school. Parents who do not wish to have their child immunized based on religious beliefs, or advice from the doctor that immunizations poses a risk to their student's health, must submit their request for a waiver in writing, including their physician's statement. Parents also must complete the Medical and Emergency Release form for each child each year.

Health Plans

Consistent with the State Board of Education Policy GCS-G-006 school personnel shall be made aware of the existence of health problems; including asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, and life threatening allergies (anaphylactic reaction) for the purpose of emergency care as well as daily programing. In these cases a copy of the student's health care plan will need to be provided. This plan is created in conjunction with the family and their designated health care provider.

Illness

If your child contracts a communicable illness, please inform Exploris staff immediately so that we may inform other parents of their child's possible exposure and help parents make informed decisions about their child(ren)'s health.

If your child has a fever, nausea, diarrhea or other adverse symptoms, please keep your child at home to recover for at least 24 hours. We ask that they be free of such symptoms without the aid of medication or fever reducer before they return to school. *If such symptoms develop at school, you will be asked to pick up your child. Before sending your child to school, be sure he or she feels well enough to have a positive, productive day in a manner considerate of the health of others*

Concussion

The Exploris School involves a multidisciplinary team approach to support students suffering with concussion issues. The team at the school level includes appropriate Exploris staff, parents, students, and health care providers- all focusing on student well-being during and after the injury. Clear guidelines and procedures, based on the Gfeller Waller Concussion Awareness Act (GWCA), are outlined in The Exploris School Return to Learn plan.

Lice

If live lice are discovered on a student, the child's parent/legal guardian will be notified that day by telephone. The family is asked to pick up the child as soon as possible, treat the child's hair/scalp for lice, and remove as many nits (eggs) as possible. After treatment, the child may return to school the following day. An Exploris staff member will assist families by rechecking a child's head after proper treatment.

Exploris does not have a "no nit" policy. The American Academy of Pediatrics states that no-nit policies in schools are detrimental, causing lost time in the classroom, inappropriate allocation of the health service team's time for lice screening, and a response to infestations that is out of proportion to the medical significance. Children should not be allowed to miss valuable school time because of head lice.

Head lice should never be associated with poor hygiene, dirty hair, or lack of parental care. Washing hair does not kill head lice, as they can survive underwater for several hours. Anyone, whether their hair is long or short, clean or dirty, can get head lice.

Removing the nits and live lice with a special fine-tooth comb, though time-consuming, is the most effective way to get rid of lice. You can remove any remaining lice and nits manually with your fingernails. They do not wash out.

Student Safety, Emotional Health, and Well-being

At The Exploris School we are committed to working with families, community organizations, and law enforcement agencies to ensure student safety and well-being. In cases where a child's welfare is in question (e.g. suspected physical abuse, self-harm, substance abuse, sexual assault, suicidal ideation etc.) staff will immediately inform a school administrator. In all cases, the priority will be the child's immediate safety and taking actions in alignment with mandatory reporting laws. Once the immediate situation is diffused the school will work with families and local agencies to create an on-going support plan.

Student Supervision

Our faculty provides supervision of students when they are on campus during the normal school day or when they are participating in a school-related field experience. Many of the faculty are trained in basic first-aid techniques and CPR. In addition, teachers are required to carry cell phones to any off-site activity so that they can consult with the appropriate resources needed in the event of an emergency.

In emergency situations, our goal is to provide immediate and appropriate care for the student by:

- *Preventing further harm to the student or other students (which may include moving the student).*
- *Providing comfort care and urgent care in situations involving breathing or bleeding.*
- *Referring immediately to the parent and/or medical professionals. When an accident happens at school that results in serious injury, the school staff will use information from the Medical Release Form to contact parents or the person(s) they have designated. If needed, we will call 911 while we are still trying to reach a parent. We will make every attempt to call parents as soon as possible to involve them in the decision-making process, unless time and urgency are issues. If the injury is minor, the classroom teacher will exercise his/her judgment in making a decision to call the parent. In most cases, parents will be alerted so they will have the option of viewing the injury themselves.*

Extended Care

The only supervision before or after the school's official times are through the fee-based Extended Care Programs. Any students arriving to school earlier than twenty minutes before the start time will be escorted to the Before School Care rooms and parents will be billed accordingly (Please see our website for more details). Any students remaining at school after the end of dismissal will be sent to After School Care and parents will be billed accordingly. We understand that occasionally circumstances arise that make it difficult to arrive at school on time to pick up your children. On these occasions, please notify the office in advance as soon as is possible.

Background Checks for Employees

It is the policy of The Exploris School not to employ or to continue the employment of classified, professional, or administrative personnel who may be deemed unsuited for service by reason of arrest and/or criminal conviction. While an arrest or conviction of a crime, in and of itself, may not be an automatic bar to employment, if an arrest or conviction relates to suitability of the individual to perform duties in a particular position, such person may be denied employment or in the case of current employees, may face disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Accordingly, a criminal records check will be conducted of applicants and/or newly hired employees,

including substitutes. If an applicant is hired prior to the completion of the criminal records check, the employment shall be considered conditional pending a review of the results of the check.

Volunteer Expectations and Confidentiality

Exploris is a cooperative enterprise: our families, teachers, Board, and administrative staff share the responsibilities and rewards of operating our school. Our families experience firsthand the school environment, become advocates for their children, and enrich the school community with their ideas, interests, talents, and resources. There are significant opportunities for involvement: volunteering in our K-5 Explorations classes, middle school electives, helping with off-site fieldwork trips, serving on our PTO Board, supporting the office, chaperoning overnight trips, etc. The Exploris School asks that each family volunteers eight hours each month with ample opportunity to participate. Enrollment at Exploris carries with it an obligation for family involvement in your child's education in order to ensure success.

Parents are always welcome to visit the school and join their child's class, but we ask you to plan your visit with your child's teacher. Planned, organized visits support instruction and help ensure the safety of all students and staff. Please keep in mind that visitors can sometimes distract students and inadvertently disrupt the learning environment. It is difficult for teachers to stop and instruct/prepare for volunteers while they are teaching, and advance notification is required to make the most of your contribution. All parents and volunteers should sign in at the front office before proceeding to the classroom.

The Executive Director may place limits on the frequency or conditions of school visits or communication by parents or other visitors to avoid disruption and to ensure that a positive, safe, and constructive educational environment is maintained for all.

Remember that the teacher's first responsibility during class hours is to teach students; therefore, we ask that you refrain from engaging in conversation about your child's progress when assisting in the classroom or during field experiences. If you would like to discuss your child's individual progress, teachers are happy to set up an appointment to meet with you outside of the normal school day. When you volunteer in school-related events, you will be exposed to sensitive issues involving students and families other than your own, including academic and social/disciplinary challenges. Just as you would like for adults who interact with your child to be sensitive to issues of confidentiality, we ask that you treat information about all students with care.

If you have particular concerns about children that stem from your observations during school activities, please consult that student's classroom teacher. Always refrain from inappropriate interactions with students and other parents that breach these confidentiality guidelines.

As parent volunteers, we ask that you respect the direction and/or guidelines established by the sponsoring teacher in a given activity or the school's Executive Director. Although employees are open to the ideas and feedback of parents who are involved in an activity or outing, it is the school employee who must make a final decision in the event of an emergency or difficult situation.

Please note that we are a drug, alcohol, and tobacco-free campus. This policy applies to staff and parents volunteering or attending any school-sponsored event or trip in which students are present and is essential to our continued participation in federal grant programs.

Background Checks for Volunteers

Exploris supports and encourages volunteers in our schools. Volunteers work in cooperation with the school to help in meeting the needs of children and the school staff. The school's Executive Director holds the sole responsibility for the recruitment, monitoring, and/or dismissal of community and

parent volunteers.

In an effort to further ensure the safety of all, any parent or volunteer that participates in school-related activities and may have an opportunity to be alone with a student as part of that activity will be asked required to complete a Federal and State Background Check at the expense of the volunteer. The school and PTO may be able to provide funds to cover costs of the background check so that it does not deter volunteers from supporting our school community. If two or more non-related adults work together with students, or if Exploris staff continually and directly supervises the volunteer, the Executive Director may determine a Background Check unnecessary.

Field Experience Chaperones

Opportunities do exist for parents/guardians to accompany on field experiences, and in fact, we depend on your help for safe transportation and supervision. If you have signed up to participate as a class chaperone, you will be agreeing to stay with the group, monitor children, and make decisions in the best interest and safety of the children. While we encourage your involvement, parents must keep in mind that the purpose of fieldwork is educational, not recreational, and class trips should not be a substitute for a family outing. Chaperones will be expected to remain with the class at all times and should not remove their child from the group for side trips or to leave early. Chaperones are expected to support teachers' disciplinary and behavior guidelines, to uphold grade level rules, and to treat all children with fair and equal consideration. Siblings or family pets will not be permitted on trips, so that chaperones can be fully attentive to the needs of the students and provide the safety needed. If a trip should lend itself to involvement of siblings, this will be communicated to parents.

All chaperones must follow school rules. On overnight trips, and at all times, chaperones must abstain from using tobacco and alcohol products. Teachers reserve the right to designate an appropriate number of chaperones for their group and to establish rules specific to the activities of the fieldwork. These rules, along with directions and emergency contact numbers, will be communicated to parents in writing in advance of the trip. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in a parent not being allowed to chaperone on future field-work experiences. As is the case with any classroom activity, teachers will make final decisions on chaperones and trip organization.

Student Sleeping Accommodations for Overnights

In order to assure appropriate privacy during an overnight excursion, The Exploris School will take the following precautions:

- 1. Sleeping arrangements will be made that clearly separate male and female students. Exceptions may be made for children who are brother and sister and have an adult family member staying with them. Exceptions may also be made depending upon the programming of partner organizations (i.e. Heifer International groups students co-educationally)*
- 2. No sleeping arrangement can be made that would place only one adult with one or more children unless all are members of the same family.*
- 3. No sleeping arrangement can be made that would place an adult with children of the opposite sex unless they are members of the same family.*

It is expected that all overnight field experiences participants agree to act courteously and responsibly, will comply with all regular Exploris rules and policies, and comply with any additional rules set forth by the grade level team applicable to the overnight trip. Violations of these rules and policies will result in immediate dismissal from the excursion. In the event of a dismissal, parents/guardians are responsible for making transportation arrangements to pick up their child in the field.

6: The Code of Student Conduct

Our Exploris Philosophy

We use a responsive classroom approach that focuses on the strong relationship between academic success and social emotional learning. To be successful in and out of school, students need to learn a set of social and emotional competencies such as relationships, collaboration, responsibility, empathy, and reflection. They also need to learn a set of academic competencies such as academic mindset, perseverance, learning strategies, and academic behaviors.

The purpose of the code of student conduct is four-fold:

- 1. To illustrate expected student behaviors*
- 2. To describe violations of the Student Code of Conduct and associated interventions and consequences that may be enforced*
- 3. To outline student rights, privileges and responsibilities*
- 4. To provide information about how to get help from school personnel*

Equally important to sharing what is expected of students is that Exploris policies and practices support social emotional learning and positive behavior choices. Developing positive and effective student behaviors requires collaborative efforts from school, home, and community organizations and agencies.

Expected Student Behavior

We believe everyone deserves a safe, supportive, and orderly learning environment. We encourage appropriate behaviors by teaching, guiding, directing, and providing opportunities for new learning to occur. We create opportunities for students to practice and succeed in making responsible and effective choices in order to reach their social, emotional, and academic potential and contribute to the school community. Our mission is to empower learners to change the world.

The Code of Student Conduct shall apply to all students at all times on all school grounds, public spaces, vehicles, and field experiences.

I will maintain a positive relationship with myself by:

- Attending school regularly and being on time*
- Following rules and directions of adults*
- Doing my schoolwork and homework with craftsmanship*
- Practicing positive behavior choices*
- Remaining within my designated school area/classroom unless I have permission to leave my assigned area*
- Learning from consequences of my behavior*
- Choosing not to bring tobacco, alcohol, other drugs or weapons to school*
- Dressing in a way that is appropriate for the learning environment*

I will maintain a positive relationship with others by:

- Being understanding of others feelings*
- Using positive words with others (no put downs)*
- Treating others like I want to be treated*

- *Being an upstander for others and not bullying or threatening*
- *Being honest by telling the truth, and taking responsibility*
- *Working with others in a positive and inclusive way*
- *Keeping my hands and body to myself*
- *Use appropriate language at school*
- *Working with others to manage negative behaviors and emotions*
- *Using respectful, positive, and considerate tone of voice and body language when I am speaking to others*
- *Listening when others are speaking*

I maintain a positive relationship with my school environment by:

- *Taking care of things in my school and on school grounds*
- *Not bringing dangerous or distracting things, such as matches, lighters, toys, fireworks, alcohol/tobacco/other drugs, medicine not prescribed for me, etc.*
- *Using school materials or classmate's materials for their intended purpose*
- *Using computers as directed by adults (see acceptable use policy)*
- *Conduct myself in a safe and considerate way that reflects a positive image*
- *Leaving spaces as they were or better: clean up and participate positively in cleaning tasks no defacing, removing, digging, destroying or disturbing the features of private and public spaces*

The Three Levels of Supports

Supports may include (but are not limited to) the examples below

Individualized Supports

Specific interventions for individual students who exhibit a pattern of problematic behaviors. The goal of these interventions may be to diminish problem behaviors and increase the student's social skills and functioning.

Examples:

- Teacher-Created Behavior Chart
- Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
- Multidisciplinary Comprehensive Assessment such as Functional Behavior (FBA)
- Collaboration with, and linkages to, community resources, agencies, parent groups

Targeted Supports

Specific interventions for students for whom universal supports are insufficient. These interventions are part of a continuum of behavioral supports.

Examples:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to Intervention Specialist • Reflection Time: Removal from Class • Check-in, Check-out Support Plan • Social Skills Groups (such as anger management, conflict resolution, peer mediation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social/Emotional Short-Term Counseling Group • Mentoring • Parent Groups • Restorative Circle Groups |
|--|---|

Universal Supports

General curriculum (including core values, morning meeting, crew, etc.) enhanced by acknowledgements of positive behavior and clearly stated expectations.

Examples:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive reinforcement • Crew, Morning Meeting, Core Values, etc. • Bullying Prevention Programming • Redirection • Behavior Reflections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat Change • In-Class Cool Down Time • Verbal Warning • Teacher-Student Conference • Parent-Teacher Conference • Counselor Referral |
|--|---|

Levels of Interventions and Consequences for Violations of the Code of Student Conduct

As with any incident of student behavior, school administrators must exercise informed judgment as to whether a student's actions constitute a violation of the school policies and/or the Code of Student Conduct. The levels, shown on the following page, guide administrators to use progressive interventions to impact student behaviors. The administrator will use their discretion and apply interventions and consequences appropriate to the situation. Restitution for loss or damage will be required in addition to any other prescribed consequences.

*The following chart is intended as a guide to determine appropriate consequences. **Repeated chronic or cumulative offenses may require higher levels of intervention/consequences.** For serious violations, interventions/consequences may begin at a higher level and/or be reported to local law enforcement agencies. Incidents involving suspected harm of a child may be reported to Child Protective Services.*

Levels of Consequence

Level	Disciplinary Option	
1- Teacher managed	<p><i>Warning</i> <i>Letter of apology</i> <i>Loss of privileges</i> <i>Use of Student reflection/problem-solving worksheet</i> <i>Seat change</i> <i>Teacher conference with student</i></p>	<p><i>Mentoring</i> <i>In-class time-out (take a break)</i> <i>Time out in another classroom setting</i> <i>Reinforcement of appropriate behaviors</i> <i>Student email to parent</i> <i>Confiscation of item by teacher</i> <i>Redirection and reteaching expected behaviors</i></p>
2- Teacher Managed	<p>Parent/guardian involvement required <i>Confiscation of item (pick up in office)</i> <i>Supervised time-out outside of classroom</i> <i>Conference with parent/guardian</i> <i>Behavior Contract</i> <i>Teacher and/or administrator conference with student and/or parent</i> <i>Monitored/Limited transitions</i></p>	<p><i>Parent contract</i> <i>Parent or guardian accompany student to school, classes or on field experience</i> <i>Conflict resolution</i> <i>Peer mediation</i> <i>Working Lunch/Lunch Detention</i> <i>Required help hall (before or after school)</i> <i>Community service assignment, as a form or restitution</i></p>
3- Administrator Managed (considered an office referral)	<p>Parent/guardian notification required <i>Suspension (1-5 days)</i> <i>Reteaching expected behaviors</i> <i>Alternative school-based program</i> <i>Restricted Activity or Use of Technology</i> <i>Detention (before/after school or lunch)</i></p>	<p><i>Parent contract</i> <i>Parent or guardian accompany student to school, classes or on field experience</i> <i>Conflict resolution</i> <i>Peer mediation</i> <i>Working Lunch/Lunch Detention</i> <i>Required help hall (before or after school)</i> <i>Community service assignment, as a form or restitution</i></p>
4- Administrator Managed (office referral)	<p>Parent/guardian notification required <i>Suspension (5-10 days)</i> <i>Restricted use of technology</i></p>	<p><i>Restricted activity</i> <i>Modified school day</i></p>
5-Administrator Managed (office referral)	<p>Parent/guardian notification required <i>Extended Suspension (10+ days)</i></p>	
6- Administrator Managed (office referral)	<p><i>Expulsion (to be considered only in the most extreme cases). More serious offenses may result in recommendation for expulsion following due-process procedures. Please note that under charter school law, other North Carolina public schools, including Wake County Public Schools, will not accept students suspended or expelled from The Exploris School for the duration of their suspension or Expulsion.</i></p>	

Definitions for Problem Behavior and Consequences for Student

Offense/Violation
Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (including unauthorized prescription drugs), drug paraphernalia
Level: 3, 4, 5, 6
<p>Definition <i>Alcoholic substances, tobacco, inhalants or other intoxicants, and controlled dangerous substances, including prescription drugs, over the counter medications, look-alikes, and substances represented as controlled substances, and drug paraphernalia.</i></p> <p>Possession <i>The student has on his/her person, or within the student's personal property, or has under the student's actual or constructive control, any of the substances listed in this offense.</i></p> <p>Consumption/Use <i>The student has consumed, ingested, assimilated, inhaled, or injected any of the substances listed in this offense.</i></p> <p>Distribution/Sale <i>A student has disseminated or transferred any of the substances listed in this offense with or without compensation.</i></p> <p>Possession with Intent to Distribute <i>The student has in his/her possession, as previously defined, any of the substances listed in this offense in a quantity or packaging to indicate intent to distribute or transfer to another person/people with or without compensation.</i></p>
Arson/Fire
Level: 3, 4, 5, 6
<p>Definition: <i>Attempting to, aiding in, or setting any fire on school property. This includes unauthorized possession of a flammable liquid or materials with the intent to set fire</i></p>
Assault on a Student
Level: 3, 4, 5, 6
<p>Definition: <i>Causing or attempting to cause serious physical injury to another student. For the purposes of this policy serious physical injury shall refer to any significant or aggravated bodily injury, including but not limited to broken bone(s), loss or chipping of teeth, loss or impairment of vision, loss of consciousness, internal injuries, scarring or other disfigurement, significant bleeding, lacerations resulting in sutures, significant bruising, severe or prolonged pain, any injury requiring hospitalization for any period of time, and/or any injury resulting in medical treatment beyond simple first aid procedures.</i></p>
Assault on School Personnel of Other Adult
Level: 3, 4, 5
<p>Definition: <i>Causing or attempting to cause physical injury to any school employee or other adult.</i></p>

Assault involving weapon/dangerous instrument/substance

Level: 3, 4, 5, 6

Causing or attempting to cause serious physical injury to another student, school personnel or other adult by using a weapon, dangerous instrument, or dangerous substance.

Bomb Threat

Level: 3, 4, 5, 6

Definition:

The making of threats or providing false information concerning the presence of explosive material or devices on school property without cause in writing, in person, or by phone.

Bullying/Harassment

Level: 3, 4, 5

Definition:

Any repeated, systematic pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication on school property; at any school sponsored function that places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. A hostile environment means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Harassing or bullying behavior includes, but is not limited to, acts reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics (additional information regarding this policy can be found in the Student Code of Conduct).

Contamination

Level: 3, 4, 5, 6

Definition:

Putting any substances in another person's food or drink or on their body, which poisons or contaminates that food, drink, or person's body.

Computer Misuse

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4,5,6

Computer Misuse:

Definition:

Any unauthorized or inappropriate use of computers.

Consequences will be determined by an administrator based on the severity of the violation. Typical consequences could be the following:

- *Level 1 – Reteaching, coaching, support with teacher or another staff member*

- Level 2 – Supervised or modified use and/or implementation of a contract
- Level 3 – Suspension of access for 1 week
- Level 4 – Suspension of access for 1 month
- Level 5 – Suspension of access for trimester
- Level 6 - Suspension for the remainder of the school year

Criminal Behavior

Using school system computers to commit a criminal act, such as hacking into servers or altering grades without a teacher’s permission. Law enforcement may be contacted.

Malicious Modification

Purposely damaging school system computer resources, such as forcible removal of the battery or other components. Financial payment may be required to repair and/or replace school equipment.

Mischievous Modification

Unauthorized modifications of school system computers that do not permanently damage system resources, such as loading unlicensed software on a school computer. . Financial payment may be required to repair and/or replace school equipment.

Mischievous Use

Violations of the Acceptable Use Policy (included in the handbook) that do not fall under the above computer misuse categories are at the administrators discretion.

Destruction of Property/ Vandalism

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4

Definition:

Damage, destruction, or defacement of property belonging to the school or others.

Disrespect

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4

Definition:

Inappropriate comments or physical gestures to others.

Disruption to Classroom/School

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4

Definition:

Behavior (including possession of toys) that interferes with instruction, learning, and a safe and orderly environment, which includes, but is not limited to: chronic talking, throwing objects, horseplay, teasing, refusal to remain in seat, selling items without permission, rude noises, etc.

Dress Code Violation

- **1st offense:** Teacher conference with student
- **2nd offense:** Associate Director conference with student
- **3rd offense:** Associate Director meets with student and parent to discuss behavior

Definition:

Clothing should cover the torso, midriff, and backside. It should have straps or sleeves. Clothing, imagery, and accessories that display or promote negative messages are not permitted. These could include drugs, weapons, alcohol, or tobacco-related information, obscenities, put-downs, innuendo, or offensive graphics/words. If a teacher questions the appropriateness of a student’s dress, the student will be referred to an administrator. If the administrator determines that the student is inappropriately dressed, the student

will be given the opportunity to call a parent and have other clothing delivered (additional information regarding this policy can be found in the Student Code of Conduct).

Electronic Devices:

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4

Personal technology devices (including but not limited to smart phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) may be used by students for instructional purposes with the permission and under the supervision of the teachers and in compliance with the Acceptable Use Policy as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct

Failure to Report a Firearm

Level: 3, 4, 5

Any student who has knowledge that another student possesses or intends to bring a firearm on any school campus or to any school activity shall report this information to school or law enforcement authorities immediately

False Fire Alarm

Level: 3, 4, 5

Definition:

Pulling a fire alarm or reporting a fire or other dangerous situation without valid cause.

False Information/Accusations

Level: 1, 2, 3

Definition:

Willfully or maliciously giving false information, record or accusation against school personnel or other students.

Fireworks/Explosives

Level: 3, 4, 5, 6

Definition:

Combustible or explosive substances or combination of substances or articles, including firecrackers, smoke bombs, and flares.

Gambling

Level: 2, 3, 4

Definition:

Wagering money or property

Gang and Gang Related Activity

Level: 3, 4, 5, 6

Exploris believes that gangs and gang-related activities pose a serious safety threat to students and staff members and can significantly disrupt the educational environment.

No student shall participate in any gang-related activities. For purposes of this policy:

- i. A gang is any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal acts, and having a common name or common identifying sign, colors or symbols.
- ii. Gang-related activities are any activities engaged in by a student on behalf of an identified gang; to perpetuate the existence of an identified gang; to effect the common purpose and design of an identified gang; or to represent gang affiliation, loyalty, or solidarity.

Conduct prohibited by this policy includes:

- i. Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, visible tattoos and body markings, or other items, with the intent to convey or promote membership or affiliation in any gang;
- ii. Communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc.), with the intent to convey or promote membership or affiliation in any gang;
- iii. Tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with symbols or slogans intended to convey or promote membership or affiliation in any gang;
- iv. Requiring payment of protection, money or insurance, or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person in connection with gang-related activity;
- v. Inciting other students to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person in connection with gang-related activity;
- vi. Soliciting others for gang membership;
- vii. Committing or conspiring to commit illegal acts in connection with gang-related activity.

Hazing

Level: 3, 4, 5

Definition:

An act that subjects a student to potential harm and is affiliated with initiation into a student organization or team. Hazing may involve an act committed against a student or a situation in which a student is coerced into committing an act.

Inappropriate Language

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Definition:

Using vulgar or abusive spoken or written language or gestures, such as cursing and sexual innuendo.

Inciting or Participating in a School Disturbance

Level: 3, 4, 5

Definition:

Intentionally participating in or recruiting others to cause a disruption to the school atmosphere

Indecent Exposure/Sexual Behavior

Level: 3, 4, 5, 6

Engage in behavior which is indecent, consensual, overly affectionate, or of a sexual nature

Insubordination (Uncooperative Behavior)

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Definition:

Refusing to follow a reasonable request to a specific direction/instruction of an adult through disobedience, defiance, unruliness, or noncompliance which includes, but is not limited to, walking away when an adult is talking to you, talking back to an adult, refusal to work in class, or refusal to report to the office.

Integrity

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4

Engaging in or attempting to engage in cheating, plagiarism, falsification, violation of software copyright laws, or violation of computer access shall be subject to disciplinary action. The following actions are specifically prohibited:

- *Cheating- giving or receiving of any unauthorized assistance on academic work*
- *Plagiarism- copying the language, structure, or idea of another and representing it as one’s own work.*
- *Falsification- verbal or written statement of any untruth.*
- *Violation of software copyright laws- unauthorized duplication of computer software (computer piracy), printed material related to computer software, and/or the use of pirated computer software.*

Leaving an Area and/or Leaving Class

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4

Definition:

Leaving the classroom or other assigned area without permission from the adult in charge.

Matches/Lighter(s)

Level: 2, 3

Definition

Possession of matches or lighter(s) without attempting to use them. Using them falls under fire/arson.

Non-Compliance

Level: 1, 2, 3

Definition:

Student engages in a low or high intensity of failure to comply with adult requests. Individualized consequences may be stated in a behavior contract.

Physical Aggression/ Fighting

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Taking any action or making comments or written messages that might reasonably be expected to result in a fight or physical aggression.

School/Class Attendance

Level: 1, 2, 3

Being tardy to class, skipping class/school, leaving campus without permission, or being in an unauthorized area is prohibited. Out of school suspension should be used as a last resort as a consequence for violation of this rule

Sexual Assault

Level: 4, 5, 6

Definition:

Physical sexual attack on school system staff, or another student.

Sexual Harassment

Level: 3, 4, 5, 6

Definition:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, directed toward others.

Stealing/Theft

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Definition:

Taking, obtaining, or attempting to take property of another person or institution without permission or knowledge of the owner.

Trespassing

Level 3, 4, 5

Definition:

Being on school property without permission, including while suspended or expelled; includes breaking and entering.

Unsafe Actions

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Definition:

Any action that has the potential to cause danger or physical harm to self or others; including but not limited to reckless behavior in a vehicle or on a field experience

Weapons (including look-a-like guns)

Level: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Definition:

A weapon is, by way of illustration and without limitation, one of the following:

Possession and/or use of:

Firearms

A firearm as defined in 18 U.S.C. 921 of the federal code. Examples include handguns, rifles, shotguns, and bombs. Refer to the federal code for the complete definition.

Knife

This shall include, but is not limited to, switchblade knife, hunting knife, star knives, razors (including straight or retractable razor)

Gun (including look-a-like gun)

Any gun of any kind, loaded or unloaded, operable or inoperable, including any object other than a firearm which is a look-a-like of a gun. This shall include, but is not limited to, pellet guns, paintball guns, stun gun, taser, BB gun, flare gun, nail gun, and airsoft gun.

Other Weapons

Any implement which could cause, or is intended to cause bodily harm, other than a firearm, gun or knife. Including but not limited to brass knuckles, box cutters, nunchaku, spiked glove, spiked wristband, any mace derivative, tear gas device, or pepper spray product.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Exploris aims to help students become independent learners, critical thinkers and caring and active citizens in a global society. Our environment at Exploris is designed to support the development of these characteristics. As our young people grow and develop over their years with Exploris, we ask for students', parents' and staff's full involvement and cooperation in supporting an environment conducive to joyful learning and engaging study.

Acceptable Use Policy for School Technology

Students will have the opportunity to use The Exploris School's computer resources, which includes access to the Internet. Student use of technology develops skills in defining, accessing, managing, integrating, evaluating, creating, and communicating information. For computers that are accessed by minors, and in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (federal law enacted December 2000), The Exploris School implemented technology protection measures to block or filter Internet access to pictures and sites that: (a) are obscene, (b) are child pornography, or (c) are harmful to minors. We are committed to providing safe and quality instructional opportunities for all students. The student is responsible for appropriate behavior while using computer resources, including the internet. Teachers monitor student activities while online for appropriateness and instructional relevance.

Students shall:

- Use the provided school network account in an ethical, responsible, and legal manner for school-related tasks only.
- Communicate with others using appropriate language in a courteous and respectful manner.
- Maintain the privacy of their personal information, such as name, address, phone number, account passwords, social security numbers, and respect the privacy of others.
- Use only user accounts and passwords provided by the school.
- Comply with copyright laws and intellectual property rights of others.
- Keep their screen easily visible to adults at all times

Students shall not:

- Seek to override or bypass computer or network security provisions.
- Use any network account for non-school related activities or to create accounts for personal use on websites.
- Conduct unauthorized copying of licensed software; download or copy files without permission; or install personal software on computers.
- Plagiarize online content.
- Read, send, or forward personal email, chat messages, or instant messages.
- Use or import offensive, obscene, libelous, disruptive, or inflammatory language, pictures, or other material on any school computer or network.
- Remove or damage computer components.
- Knowingly access unauthorized computer workstations or software to tamper with or destroy data.
- Use electronic resources for commercial, personal purchasing, or illegal purposes.
- Use electronic resources for personal social media including blogging, social network sites, or to conduct cyber bullying.
- Share user account information or passwords with others.

Directed Internet use

- Requires appropriate adult supervision (i.e., staff members or their adult designees are present to the extent that active monitoring of student access to the Internet occurs).
- Internet use is permitted at all levels and in compliance with the above stated conditions.
- Internet searches will be conducted using The Exploris School approved search engines and sites.

Penalties for Misuse of Technology

Consequences for violations of the Acceptable Use Policy for School Technology are addressed in the Code of Student Conduct (Computer Misuse).

Attendance & Tardies

All students are expected to attend school all days of the established school calendar as approved annually by the Exploris Board of Directors and in compliance with the North Carolina school attendance laws. The entire process of education requires a regular continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study in order to reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for each individual child. It is particularly true in a project-based environment that regular attendance is vital to achieving high academic outcomes given the rich educational discussions, fieldwork, and visiting experts that are a part of the day-to-day experience. Since many classroom activities are collaborative experiences, when one student is absent, the whole group is affected. Students who are frequently absent find it difficult to keep up. Missing a day of school means missing a crew activity that cannot be replicated at home.

If a student is absent from school, parents **must** contact the office by calling or **emailing** attendance@exploris.org and crew teacher stating the child's full name and the reason for the absence, and the presumed return date to school. All absences from school are considered unexcused until a written excuse is received from the parent/guardian.

Excused absences include: illness or injury a death in the family health care appointments court appearances religious observance natural disasters. Students not in attendance at school for the day because of illness or suspension are not eligible to participate in any after school event.

In accordance with North Carolina's compulsory attendance law, G.S. 115C-378 parents will be notified after a student has accumulated 3 unexcused absences. Parents will be notified in writing when a student has accumulated 6 unexcused absences. If a student accumulates 10 unexcused absences, parents will be called to attend a Truancy Hearing.

Likewise, tardiness and early dismissals disrupt the learning process, for both the tardy student and his/her classmates. Please do all that you can to make sure your child is in class to the greatest extent possible. Please schedule family trips, appointments, etc. after school hours or during breaks as identified on the school calendar. Students arriving after the start time are considered tardy and must sign in at the school office. Disciplinary consequences may apply if tardiness is excessive.

If an emergency arises, and a parent needs to check a student out, it is important that (s)he communicates with the child's crew teacher in case an off-campus trip is scheduled for that day. If someone other than a parent or legal guardian is to pick up a child during the school day, the parent/guardian must provide information to the Exploris teachers in writing or on an emergency contact about whom, when, and why that person will be picking up the child. **Except for emergency situations, the office will NOT send messages to students about pick-up, nor are students allowed to have cell phones on during the school day. Please make arrangements ahead of time.**

There will be NO EARLY DISMISSAL after 2:45. After 2:45, your child will not be dismissed until the published dismissal times. During that time, all students should be dismissed via the walk-up or carpool lines.

For more information on the Board's Absentee and Tardy policy, please go to the "Board" page on our school website.

Bullying Policy & Procedure

State Law regarding bullying

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- *An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.*
- *Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.*

Some specific examples of behavior that could be considered bullying include, but are not limited to; teasing, bullying slurs, innuendo, derogatory remarks, name calling, spreading rumors, and circulating written materials or pictures that are either derogatory or insulting to an individual or group.

Reporting Harassing and Bullying Behavior

1. *Any student who believes that he or she has been harassed or bullied in violation of this policy should report such behavior immediately to a teacher, counselor, or administrator.*
2. *A school employee who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student has been subject to any act of harassing or bullying behavior shall report the incident.*
3. *Any person may report an act of harassment or bullying anonymously using the Say Something App. However, disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.*

Investigation of Bullying

Reports of bullying activity will be investigated by staff and the Associate Director. Parents of the participants and victims will be notified. If warranted, formal disciplinary action will be taken by the Associate Director as outlined in the level of consequences.

Corporal Punishment / Physical Restraint

Corporal punishment is defined as action taken by school employees to spank or otherwise physically handle a student in any way to purposely inflict punishment. No corporal punishment will be administered to students by anyone in the school. Physical restraint is reasonable and appropriate physical intervention or force by trained staff may be employed as necessary for the following purposes:

- *To quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to others*
- *To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects upon a student or within the control of a student*
- *For the purpose of self-defense*
- *For the protection of persons or property*
- *Any such acts are not in conflict with the legal definition of child abuse and will not be construed to constitute corporal punishment within the meaning and intention of this policy.*

Dress Code Policy and Procedures

Throughout our world, cultures set standards and norms for dress. Context is one factor that determines the appropriateness of clothing choices. The standard for what's acceptable when attending a sporting event is typically different from what's acceptable in the workplace. What's acceptable at a shopping mall is typically different from what's acceptable at a wedding or in a place of worship. In addition to being a place of learning and work, Exploris serves as a demonstration site for educators from around the world. As such, Exploris's expectations for student dress reflects that context. Students should wear clothing that is well-suited to the school environment.

Learning at Exploris often happens off campus and may involve long walks or experiences in natural environments. As such, shoes and clothing should be chosen carefully so that students are prepared to engage in these experiences. The appropriateness and safety of footwear and clothing for a particular activity will be determined by the child's supervising teacher. If it is determined that a student is not appropriately dressed for the activity, the parent will be contacted for a change of clothing/shoes. If

alternate clothing/shoes are not available, the student may miss out on the activity.

Clothing should cover the torso, midriff, and backside. It should have straps or sleeves. Clothing, imagery, and accessories that display or promote negative messages are not permitted. These could include drugs, weapons, alcohol, or tobacco-related information, obscenities, put-downs, innuendo, or offensive graphics/words. If a teacher questions the appropriateness of a student's dress, the student will be referred to an administrator. If the administrator determines that the student is inappropriately dressed, the student will be given the opportunity to call a parent and have other clothing delivered.

If a staff member determines that a student is in violation of dress code standards for the school environment, the student will be given the opportunity to call a parent and have other clothing delivered. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached the school will provide clothing for the student when possible. Habitual violations will be considered willful disrespect on the part of the student and formal disciplinary action will be taken:

- **1st offense:** Teacher conference with student
- **2nd offense:** Associate Director conference with student
- **3rd offense:** Associate Director meets with student and parent to discuss behavior

Drugs and Alcohol

The possession and use of illicit substances is illegal and harmful. The Exploris School and Board of Directors prohibits the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit substances on school premises or as part of any school activities. Compliance with drug and alcohol laws is mandatory for all parents, students, and staff. Information on drug and alcohol counseling is available to all students upon request from the school counselor. Students who are caught with drugs, alcohol, and vapors are subject to drug testing to ensure the safety of the student. The Exploris School will provide the cost, location and procedures necessary to the parent/guardian for the student to return to school and ensure the safety of the student.

Extended Suspension for Students with Disabilities

When the school system seeks to suspend students with disabilities for more than ten days, the Individual Education Program (IEP)/504 team must meet within ten days of the student's removal from school. The purpose of this meeting is to determine whether or not the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability.

- *If the IEP/504 team determines that the behavior is related to the student's disability, the student is returned to school immediately.*

For students with IEPs:

- *Regardless of whether the conduct is related to the disability, if the incident for which the student is being disciplined involves a dangerous weapon, a controlled dangerous substance, or serious bodily injury, the school system can unilaterally place a special education student in an alternative education setting for up to 45 days.*
- *If the IEP team determines that the conduct is not related to the disability, the student is subject to the regular discipline procedures explained herein. The school system is required to continue to provide the student with a free, appropriate, public education.*

Getting Help With a Problem

School Problems

If a student has a problem related to discipline, security, personal safety or welfare, or vandalism, the student should:

1. *Tell the nearest teacher, adult, or staff member*

2. *Talk with the Associate Director or Counselor right away*
3. *Express feelings. It is natural to feel worried and upset. Talk to someone who will listen and understand perhaps your crew teacher and/or counselor. It is important to talk with a trusted adult*
4. *Ask to talk with the school counselor, who can help students learn ways to deal with problems so that they may feel safer and more comfortable when faced with a similar problem in the future.*
5. *In addition to alerting school personnel, a student should tell his/her parent/guardian about the problem.*

Personal Problems

For help with personal problems which may affect a student's school life or activities:

1. *If possible, discuss the problem with parents/guardians*
2. *If a student and his/her parents/guardians cannot solve the problem. The student may speak with a teacher whom he/she feels comfortable*
3. *The school counselor is trained to offer help with personal problems. The counselor can also lead students/families to other resources that he/she may not be aware of.*
4. *The associate director will also be able to discuss the problem with the student and attempt to work on a solution. If they are unable to do so, they will seek additional assistance and notify the executive Director.*

Student Conflict/Peer Mediation

Students are encouraged to work with one another, teachers, counselors, and administrators to resolve conflicts and prevent hostility. Peer mediation is a student-based, voluntary process for resolving conflict among students kindergarten through 8th grade. The school counselor or Associate Directors can assist with this process. Peer mediation supports safe teaching and learning environments by increasing student responsibility for behavior and decreasing time spent on discipline. In some cases, students may be given the option to meet with mediators provided through Campbell University's Restorative Justice Clinic. The mediators are trained and meet with individual or groups of students in pairs. The goal is to repair relationships and reduce negative peer interactions that interfere with the learning environment.

Items from Home

*Students should only bring appropriate academic-related items to school. Any items (**including cell phones**) that disrupt the learning environment in any way or present a safety hazard will be confiscated according to the following guidelines:*

- **1st offense:** *Teacher will collect and return to the student at the end of the school day on the first occasion (Warning)*
- **2nd offense:** *Item will be held in the office until a parent/guardian can pick them up on the second occasion and their after. (Parent Involvement)*
- **3rd offense:** *Item will be held in the office. Associate Director meets with student and parent to discuss the behavior. (Office Referral)*
- **Additional offenses:** *Item will be held in the office and additional consequences will be applied as outlined in the code of student conduct.*

Unrelated magazines, toys, trading cards, etc. should remain at home.

Cell phones must be turned off when school is in session and during before/aftercare. Cell

phones are not to be used during the school day except when requested by their teacher for educational purposes. Teachers may require students to place cell phones in grade level designated areas.

Non-Discrimination / Non-Harassment of Students and Staff

Exploris does not discriminate and affirms the rights of all students on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability in its education programs/activities. The school also extends all programs and activity possibilities to students based upon their individual interests and potential without discrimination according to handicapping conditions. All students are to be treated with respect and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm, and/or harassment.

Notice of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap or Disability: No person at Exploris will, on the basis of handicap/disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational programs or activities. The Board of Cooperative Educational Services, by virtue of this policy, agrees to comply with the Section 504 regulations issued May 4, 1977, which will cause no discrimination on the basis of handicap in educational programs or activities which the school operates. Any student or employee will have a ready means of resolving any claim of discrimination on the basis of handicap in the educational programs or activities of the school.

To this end, the following policies are in effect:

- *Designation of Responsible Employee: Associate Director(s) and/or school counselor are designated as the school's Section 504 compliance officer, the employee responsible for coordinating school compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and its administrative regulations and with the Americans with Disabilities Act.*
- *Grievance Procedure: In the event that a student or employee believes that there has been a violation of Section 504 of its administrative regulations, he/she will mail or deliver to the compliance officer a written statement setting out the alleged violations in specific terms, describing the incident or activity involved, the individuals involved, and the dates, times and locations involved. If requested, the individual filing the written statement will have the opportunity to discuss the matter personally with the Associate Director at the school. The Associate Director will make such additional investigation as is necessary to determine the complete facts involved and will report to the Executive Director and/or The Exploris School Board his/her findings and recommendations regarding the resolution of the matter.*

Responsibility for Personal Property

All personal property, including personal computers, brought to school is brought at the owner's risk. The Exploris School cannot assume responsibility for any property belonging to students. Distracting or inappropriate objects will be taken from a student and returned at the end of the day. Repeated violations will require a parent conference. Students should not bring large sums of money to school. If it is necessary to bring a large sum of money, that money should be taken to the office.

Right to Confidentiality of Access to Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guarantees to parents/guardians of students under 18 and the eligible student (18 and older) the right to:

- *Inspect and review the educational records of the student within 45 days after the day The Exploris School receives a request for access*
- *Request the school to disclose information in the educational records to persons/agencies outside the school.*

- *Request the amendment of the educational records to ensure that the records are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student.*
- *File with the US Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA.*

Parents/Guardians or eligible students who wish to inspect education records should submit to the Executive Director written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The Executive Director will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

Parents/Guardians or eligible students who wish to amend the education record should write the Executive Director, 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.

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 includes a person employed by the school as an administrator, educator, or support staff member, or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or 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, or therapist. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order 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. The Exploris School will forward such records on request.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Exploris School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

*Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202*

Search and Seizure

To maintain order and discipline in the school and to protect the health, safety and welfare of all students and school personnel, there are times that searches may be deemed necessary. School authorities may search a student's person and/or personal property, cell phone, computer, desk area, storage area, backpack, or parent/guardian automobile whenever a school authority has reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in possession of illegal or unauthorized materials.

Anything found in the course of a search can be used as evidence against the student. The evidence may be:

- 1. Seized and admitted as evidence in any suspension or recommendation for expulsion proceeding*
- 2. Returned to the parent or guardian of the student*
- 3. Destroyed, if it is of no significant value*
- 4. Given to a law enforcement officer if applicable*

School Counselor

The Exploris school counselor serves as a resource to students, staff, and community. The school counselor's duties range from counseling individual students, to working with parents and outside agencies to secure and promote the social and emotional health of our students. Additionally, the school counselor works closely with teachers, instructional support staff, and administrators to help identify and support students that may have unique learning needs.

Confidentiality in Counseling:

When a student indicates that he or she is thinking about hurting himself or herself or other students, school personnel are required to take action to ensure the safety of the student or other students. This action may include sharing of information with the school principal, parents, and other outside agencies.

No statement, oral or written, made by a student seeking counseling for any form of drug abuse may be used as admissible evidence against him/her in any proceedings.

Appendix I

The Exploris School Grievance Policy

Introduction and Values

The Exploris School seeks to promote harmony among its employees, faculty, students, and parents and to encourage equitable solutions to problems arising among them. The School believes that most concerns and differences are best addressed through open and honest communication conducted in an informal, respectful, and civil manner and that effective resolution depends on direct, prompt and constructive dialogue.

The following procedures are adopted to meet these goals.

Grievance Committee Structure and Rules

Composition of the Grievance Committee – The Grievance Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the Board of Directors, appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors and confirmed by a vote of the full Board. One member of the Grievance Committee shall be designated by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors to serve as the Chairperson of the Committee.

Parent Liaison – One member of the Board of Directors shall be appointed by the Chairperson of the Board of Directors and confirmed by a vote of the full Board to serve as Parent Liaison. This individual shall not sit on the Grievance Committee. His or her primary role will be to help parents understand the grievance procedures and to provide process guidance to aggrieved parents. Parents who approach other members of the Board of Directors with grievances will be referred to the Parent Liaison.

Training – On an annual basis, all members of the Grievance Committee and the Parent Liaison will receive training provided by an attorney or other qualified individual with regard to confidentiality, impartiality, and other topics relevant to effective execution of their duties.

Timelines – Failure of a parent or employee to comply with the procedural timelines listed below may result in denial of a grievance request. Extensions in timelines may be granted if the relevant decision maker determines there is a reasonable need for such extension. Similarly, the timelines for actions to be taken by school personnel or board members may be extended, with notice to the aggrieved party, when there is a reasonable need for extension or extension is in the best interest of an effective process.

Forms – The Executive Director or Board may develop one or more grievance forms to facilitate and document the various steps of the grievance process.

Parent Grievance Procedures

The Board recognizes that effective school governance requires that the primary responsibility for issues involving student discipline, curriculum, assessment and promotion and other day-to-day decisions regarding school management lies with the faculty, staff and Executive Director of the School and these individuals are best suited to resolve conflicts that arise with respect to these issues. The Board has the authority to appoint, employ, and remove the Executive Director, but primary responsibility and authority over faculty, staff and volunteer organizations of the School are vested in the Executive Director. The Board, therefore, will exercise any authority in this policy conservatively and narrowly so as not to usurp the authority granted to the Executive Director.

Informal Procedures: A parent should first attempt to resolve any grievance through discussion with the

relevant teacher(s) or other involved persons. If the parent's concern is not adequately addressed through an informal discussion with the teacher and/or staff involved, the parent should next attempt to resolve the grievance with the appropriate supervisor, if applicable. If a grievance cannot be resolved in an informal manner, the parent may initiate a formal grievance procedure.

Formal Grievance Procedure: In instances where informal means are ineffective or otherwise not feasible, the School offers these more formal grievance procedures. Grievance proceedings and information shall be kept confidential at all levels to the extent possible and permitted by law. A parent grievance is a formal written claim by a parent or group of parents identifying the concern, identifying the individual or group's resolution attempts, and identifying any law, policy, or practice that is implicated by the concern. No one shall retaliate against a parent who files a grievance under this policy (or against a student whose parent files a grievance) in good faith.

Level One – Supervisor Request and Conference. A parent may, by written request, seek a formal conference with the relevant supervisor to address an unresolved grievance.

The request shall succinctly describe the specific grievance(s) and related details, and shall identify any specific policy, rule, regulation or law believed to have been violated, and shall provide other relevant information to help the supervisor adequately understand the nature of the grievance.

The request shall be filed within fifteen (15) business days of the most recent incident(s) or last informal attempt to resolve the grievance, provided that such attempt was made within ten (10) business days of the last incident.

Following receipt of the written request, the supervisor shall, whenever possible, conduct a conference with the aggrieved parent(s) within ten (10) days. Within five (5) business days following the conference, the supervisor will state in writing his or her decision with regard to the grievance and a copy will be given to the parent.

Level Two - Appeal to the Executive Director. If the grievance is not resolved, the parent(s) may appeal the supervisor's decision in writing to the Executive Director if the Executive Director was not involved in the Level One Conference.

The appeal must be made within five (5) business days following receipt of the supervisor's written Level One response to the grievant. The Executive Director will review the grievance and conduct an informal investigation as necessary.

The Executive Director shall issue a written response to the parent and the Level One supervisor/staff within ten (10) business days following receipt of the written appeal.

Decisions of the Executive Director are final and not subject to further appeal, except in the following instances:

- Decisions involving an alleged violation of a contractual right;
- Decisions involving an alleged violation by the School of state or federal law; or
- Decisions based on allegations of conduct by the Executive Director in violation of law or school policy.

The Board of Directors, through its Grievance Committee, retains discretion to determine whether an alleged violation involves a "final" or "appealable" decision by the Executive Director. The Grievance Committee may consider all available evidence in the record established at the time of the decision and any other evidence it deems necessary for consideration. In addition, the Grievance Committee has the authority

to grant a discretionary appeal in exceptional circumstances.

Level Three - Appeal to the Board Grievance Committee: Appeal of Rights and Discretionary Appeals. If a parent is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Level Two, the parent may, within five (5) business days of receiving notice of the decision of the Executive Director, submit a written request to the Grievance Committee Chairperson to appeal the Executive Director's decision and to request a formal hearing.

Within five (5) business days of receiving the written request for appeal, the Grievance Committee Chairperson shall issue a written notice to the parent and the Executive Director indicating whether the Executive Director's determination is "final" in nature or whether the Board, in its discretion or by right of appeal, shall grant a hearing. The notice shall also specify, if a hearing is granted, the time it will occur and guidelines by which it will be conducted

When a hearing is granted, a panel of the Grievance Committee consisting of at least three people shall hear the grievance within ten (10) business days of the date the Chairperson's notice is issued to the parent.

The Grievance Committee panel may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision of the Executive Director. Following the hearing, the parent and Executive Director shall be informed in writing of the panel's decision within five (5) business days after the hearing, whenever feasible.

The decision of the Grievance Committee panel is final OR the decision of the Grievance Committee panel may be appealed to the full Board of Directors.

Appendix II

Acceptable Use Policy for School Technology

*We expect students to use all electronic resources (laptops and other handheld devices brought from home, including phones) **for educational purposes only**, as approved by the teachers while on the school's campus. If you choose to bring a personal device to use at school you may be required to install school approved monitoring software, programs, browsers, or extensions for school use. Access is a privilege, not a right. As a technology user, students are expected to act in a considerate and responsible manner. Misuse of the network resources or Internet will result in consequences for the inappropriate behavior, and access may be restricted.*

Students (if able) should read the following rules of network etiquette and then sign the last page of this handbook to show that you understand your responsibilities. **Parents** should read this section aloud to students who are unable to read it themselves.

While using the Exploris network resources, technology, and the Internet on school properties,

- *I will communicate politely. I will treat others with respect. I will not harass or attack others, or use expressions of bigotry, racism, sexism, or other types of hurtful language, pictures, or expressions. I will not send, display, or use profanity, obscenities, sexually explicit, or offensive materials.*
- *I will use my school email account for school work and educational purposes only. I will not use that email address to set up other accounts unless given explicit direction from a teacher to do so.*
- *I will protect privacy and safety by not disclosing private or personal information about myself and/or others on the Internet. I will never falsify my identity.*
- *I will keep my password private and will not attempt to use another person's password.*
- *I will use the network/Internet and other school-given electronic resources for school-related, educational activities as assigned by my teachers. This also means that I will not attempt to use the computer to buy or sell any products, for illegal activity, or for political purposes.*
- *I will not tamper with or change a computer file that isn't mine, copy or download files, or programs, or modify the computer's settings without permission from my teachers.*
- *I will recognize and respect the intellectual property of others by not plagiarizing or using copyrighted materials from the Internet without permission of the author. I will cite the source when appropriate.*
- *I will respect the integrity of the Exploris network system. I will enter authorized systems only. I will never try to circumvent security measures on either Exploris's network or computers at any remote site. I will not tamper with or alter the system in such a way that would disrupt the network.*
- *I will use equipment responsibly. I will not attempt to damage or vandalize the computer hardware, electronic systems, software, or networks.*
- *I will not make, or attempt to make, any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, including the uploading, downloading, or creation of computer viruses.*

Consequences for Unacceptable Use of the School Technology

If I violate any part of this policy, the Associate Director or School Administrator will evaluate the severity and level of the violation and determine the appropriate level of consequence warranted. Consequences will be assigned in accordance with our School Code of Conduct outlined in the student/parent handbook.

Appendix III

Handbook/ Acceptable Use Policy for School Technology Signature Pages

Sign the next page and return to school as soon as possible. Students may not have technology access until this agreement is on file.

While using the Exploris network resources, technology, and the Internet on school properties,

- *I will communicate politely. I will treat others with respect. I will not harass or attack others, or use expressions of bigotry, racism, sexism, or other types of hurtful language, pictures, or expressions. I will not send, display, or use profanity, obscenities, sexually explicit, or offensive materials.*
- *I will use my school email account for school work and educational purposes only. I will not use that email address to set up other accounts unless given explicit direction from a teacher to do so.*
- *I will protect privacy and safety by not disclosing private or personal information about myself and/or others on the Internet. I will never falsify my identity.*
- *I will keep my password private and will not attempt to use another person's password.*
- *I will use the network/Internet and other school-given electronic resources for school-related, educational activities as assigned by my teachers. This also means that I will not attempt to use the computer to buy or sell any products, for illegal activity, or for political purposes.*
- *I will not tamper with or change a computer file that isn't mine, copy or download files, or programs, or modify the computer's settings without permission from my teachers.*
- *I will recognize and respect the intellectual property of others by not plagiarizing or using copyrighted materials from the Internet without permission of the author. I will cite the source when appropriate.*
- *I will respect the integrity of the Exploris network system. I will enter authorized systems only. I will never try to circumvent security measures on either Exploris's network or computers at any remote site. I will not tamper with or alter the system in such a way that would disrupt the network.*
- *I will use equipment responsibly. I will not attempt to damage or vandalize the computer hardware, electronic systems, software, or networks.*
- *I will not make, or attempt to make, any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, including the uploading, downloading, or creation of computer viruses.*

Student's Agreement: *(read aloud by parent if necessary) I understand the Exploris Parent/ Student handbook, including the Acceptable Use Policy for School Technology, included as Appendix II in the Parent/ Student Handbook and agree to follow the procedures and rules it contains.*

Student's Printed Name

Date

Signature

Parent or Guardian's Agreement

As the parent or guardian of the above-named student, I have read the Exploris Parent/ Student Handbook, including the Acceptable Use Policy for School Technology included as Appendix II of the Parent/Student Handbook.

I agree to follow the school's expectations and procedures and support the school in enforcing these expectations with the child named above.

Further, I understand that access to network resources/Internet for students at The Exploris School is provided for educational purposes only. I will abide by the acceptable use policy and stress that my child does the same.

I understand that employees of the school will make every reasonable effort to restrict access to all controversial material on the Internet, but I will not hold them responsible for materials my son or daughter acquires or sees as a result of the use of the Internet from school facilities. I give my permission to The Exploris School to allow my child, named above, to use the network resources/ Internet on computers or devices at the school.

I understand that my child will be assigned an Exploris email account, and a username and password which will be used when accessing the school's network of computers and the Internet.

Parent/Guardian Printed Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date