

**Employee Handbook**

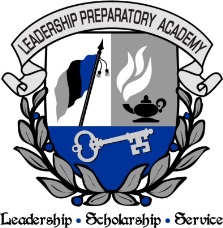
**2019 - 2020**

**Leadership Preparatory Academy**

Employee Handbook

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Dear Employee:

This handbook provides information on employment services, benefits, certification, compensation and classification, leaves of absence, attendance, and personnel records. Nothing in this handbook nor in the Leadership Preparatory Academy’s (“LPA”) policy manual shall be deemed to constitute an expressed or implied contract of employment.

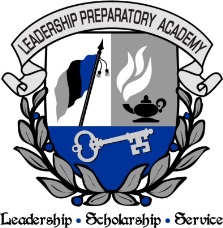
This handbook and any policies, procedures, and benefits to which it refers may be modified, altered, or discontinued at any time by the LPA’S Governing Board at the discretion of the Board. No handbook can include or anticipate every issue, question, or concern that may arise; therefore, employees are encouraged to check LPA’s webpage and complete listing of policies for any updates to personnel information, forms, procedures, and practices. This handbook is not intended to replace the policies established by the DeKalb County Board of Education (“Board”) nor the LPA Governance Board nor the LPA administration. Employees have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with, and abide by, the complete policies and procedures of the Board, carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern and with professional behavior.

All employees are responsible for understanding the contents of this handbook, as well as all policies and administrative regulations of the LPA.

Sincerely,

Lonnie Hall, Chief Executive Officer

Dr. Tonya M. Williams, Chief Academic Officer and Chief Learning Officer



**OUR VISION**

The vision of the LPA is to become the highest performing charter school in the nation.

**OUR MISSION**

The mission of the LPA is to develop scholars through a rigorous academic program that engages all stake holders by maximizing our students’ potential to lead in the 21st century.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT**

It is the policy of LPA not to discriminate based on gender, age, race, color, disability, religion, or national origin in any educational program or other program, activity, or service or admissions to facilities operated by LPA or in the employment practices of LPA. It is the express policy of LPA to comply with all appropriate laws and regulations relating to discrimination now in effect or hereafter enacted including Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, and all accompanying regulations.

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**OBJECTIVE STRAND: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

Goal 1: ***LPA will meet all targets required by the CCRPI and Beating the Odds goals, as defined by State of Georgia requirements and the State’s waiver for No Child Left Behind. This goal will be subject to any amendment, waiver or reauthorization thereof during the term of the charter.***

Measure 1: During each year of the charter term, LPA will meet or exceed all State Performance Targets and all other statewide accountability measures as established by the Georgia Department of Education for all content areas of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System.

Measure 2: During each year of the charter term, using the baseline data/test scores of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System from the 2014-2015 school year, LPA will increase the percentage of students who exceed the standards in each content area of the assessment by 2%.

Goal 2: ***LPA will demonstrate student proficiency and improvement on national norm referenced assessments.***

Measure 1: From baseline data gathered from norm referenced tests administered during the 2014-2015 school year, LPA will increase the percentage of students who score at or above the 50th percentile by 2% each year of this charter term.

Goal 3: ***In each year of this charter term, 100% of the students in grades K-8 will complete an electronic Leadership Portfolio that will document satisfactory completion of at least 80% of the objectives of the Leadership Curriculum for their specific grade level. In each year of the current charter, students will improve their satisfactory completion rate by at least 3%, or until they have demonstrated mastery of the objectives (i.e., reached a rate of 90% or more).***

Measure 1: In each year of the current charter term 100% of students will complete personal inventories of interests, skills, and leadership potential.

Measure 2: In each year of the current charter term, at least 85% of students will participate in at least one leadership activity at school, at home, or in the community each semester. By the final year of this charter term, at least 97% of students will have participated in at least one leadership activity at school, at home, or in the community.

Measure 3: In each year of the current charter term,100% of students will partner with parents and teachers to set individual learning goals for each core curricular area as documented in their Individualized Learning Plan: ELA/reading, mathematics, social studies, and science.

Goal 4: ***LPA will implement programs and procedures that will lead to state STEM Certification by year 4 of the second renewal term of the charter.***

Measure 1: Teachers employed at LPA will participate in ongoing STEM professional development. Evidence of implementation will be reflected in classroom instruction and lesson plans.

Measure 2: 100% of LPA students will participate in STEM enrichment activities during the school day and in STEM related activities outside of the school day. Students will provide evidence of their participation in STEM-related extra-curricular activities on their Individual Learning Plan.

**OBJECTIVE STRAND: FINANCIAL RESPONSIBLITY**

Goal 5: ***LPA shall be economically sustainable.***

Measure 1: Each year, LPA will operate in a fiscally sound manner as measured by an annual audit conducted by an external auditing firm.

Measure 2: The actual and proposed budgets developed at LPA will demonstrate an effective allocation of all resources.

Measure 3: The five year cash flow projection sheets will demonstrate that LPA consistently maintains adequate reserves.

Measure 4: LPA will meet Generally Accepted Accounting Practices as demonstrated by internal and external, annual audit reports.

**OBJECTIVE STRAND:** **GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP**

Goal 6: ***LPA shall ensure that all Governing Board Members receive effective training.***

Measure1: All Governing Board Members will participate in at least 20 hours of training annually.

Measure 2: All Governing Board Members will sign a Code of Ethics at the beginning of each academic year.

Measure 3. All Governing Board Members will sign a Conflict of Interest Statement.

**OBJECTIVE STRAND: PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT**

Goal 7: ***LPA promotes a positive school experience that engages students, parents and teachers.***

Measure 1: Each year, at least 80% of the students will indicate that they are at least “satisfied” with the overall school experience as measured by an annual survey.

Measure 2: Each year, at least 80% of parents will indicate that they are at least “satisfied” with the overall quality of their child’s education as measured by an annual survey.

**OBJECTIVE STRAND: RECRUIT AND RETAIN TOP TALENT**

Goal 8: ***LPA will actively engage in “Best Practices” that insure retention of top talent.***

Measure 1: Each year, at least 80% of the teachers will indicate that they are at least “satisfied” with the overall quality of their job as measured by an annual survey.

Measure 2: Teachers employed at LPA will have at least one endorsement in Reading or Mathematics.

Measure 3: 90% of the teachers employed at LPA will obtain Gifted Certification by the end of the third year of the renewal charter term.

**OBJECTIVE STRAND: FOSTER A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT WITH FACILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

Goal 9: ***LPA will develop methods to ensure a safe and orderly, learning environment.***

Measure 1: Develop a school-wide discipline plan based on DeKalb County’s Student Code of Conduct and supported by the LPA Policies on Attendance, Conduct, Discipline, Dress and Attire, Electronic Devices, Safety and Security, and Visitation. Collectively, this is termed the School Philosophy and Student Code Handbook.

Measure 2: Maintain and expand security measures that promote a safe environment.

Measure 3: Explore alternative sites for school expansion and disaster recovery options.

Measure 4: Distribute the **School Philosophy and Student Code Handbook** to all incoming and returning students annually.

**ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The Georgia Drug-Free Public Work Force Act of 1990 applies to Leadership Preparatory Academy. The Governance Board of LPA declares that the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of controlled substances, marijuana and other dangerous drugs in an unlawful manner or being at work under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances, marijuana or other dangerous or illegal/unlawful drugs is a serious threat to the public health, safety and welfare. With this in mind, the Board declares that its work force must be absolutely free of any person who would knowingly manufacture, distribute, sell or possess a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous or illegal/unlawful drug in an unlawful manner. This prohibition specifically includes, but is not limited to, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or alcohol in the employee's workplace. This prohibition also includes, but is not limited to, an employee being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while on duty. As a condition of employment, each employee must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify their immediate supervisor within three (3) business days after any arrest on any drug related criminal charge and further notify their immediate supervisor within three (3) business days of any conviction, plea of nolo contendere, or a plea under the First Offender Act of the State of Georgia or any similar state or federal law of a drug-related offense. The Governance Board shall not consider for employment, any applicant who has been convicted, pled nolo contendere, or a pled under the First Offender Act of the State of Georgia or any similar state or federal law for the first time of any drug offense as described above *for a three month period* from the date of conviction, plea of nolo contendere, or a plea under the First Offender Act of the State of Georgia or any similar state or federal law nor shall the Governance Board consider any applicant for employment who has been convicted, pled nolo contendere, or a pled under the First Offender Act of the State of Georgia or any similar state or federal law for the second time of any drug offense as described above *for a five year period* from the most recent date of conviction.

**AT-WILL EMPLOYMET**

Georgia recognizes At-Will Employment; that is, an employee is hired at-will and employment can be terminated at the will of either party, for any reason or no reason at all. Employment-at-will means that, in general, an employer may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, or for no reason, unless an agreement or law exists to the contrary. Employees who do not receive an employment contract are considered “at-will.” Thus, unless issued a Governance Board-approved employment contract, all LPA employees may be terminated at the will of the employer. Employees who are issued Board–approved contracts ***do not*** have At-Will Employment.

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is an essential part of the periodic evaluation of job performance, and employees are required to be at work, and on time. Employees who will be late to work or absent should personally notify their supervisor in advance or as quickly as possible so that their responsibilities can be covered appropriately. Absences for reasons that are not approved by the Governing Board of LPA may be considered job abandonment. Employee absences without approval for three or more days will be considered voluntary resignations.

Daily attendance and punctuality are performance expectations for all employees and are included in each job description as a primary responsibility. In the event that absence is necessary, employees are responsible for insuring verifiable contact with their supervisor prior to the start of the workday. The specific “call in” protocol will be provided in writing to all employees by the Chief Learning Officer (CLO). Employees are expected to call in for each day of absence unless they are otherwise notified by their supervisor, or unless they are placed on an approved leave of absence. Employees who are excessively absent are subject to disciplinary action up to and including the recommendation to terminate employment. Employees must sign in and sign out each day using the electronic time clock. If an employee, leaves campus *prior to the end of the work day*, s/he must sign in and out using the electronic time clock. Failure to sign in and sign out can result in your pay being docked according to the employer’s judgement and such decision by the employer is not subject to appeal.

**Absence Without Accumulated Leave**

Employees absent without accumulated leave will have a full day’s pay deducted from their salaries for each such absence. The formula for determining a day’s pay is as follows: • Ten month employees: annual salary divided by 190; • Eleven month employees: annual salary divided by 210; and • Twelve month employees: annual salary divided by 248.

***Administrative or Directed Leave***

During investigations or other specified situations, LPA may direct that an employee remain off work. This administratively required leave will be paid at the employee’s regular rate of pay. State law must be followed concerning administrative leave for certificated employees.

***Benefits Deductions During a Leave of Absence*** While an employee receives Sick Leave pay, benefits deductions continue to be charged against the emoloyee’s pay check. If the employee uses all available Sick Leave before the end of the FMLA period or if the employee is receiving payments from Workers Compensation, s/he may choose whether to continue paying for benefits deductions directly to the Payroll Office each month or to allow benefits coverage to lapse for the remainder of the leave of absence. In the event coverage lapses, deductions and coverage cannot begin again until the full month after the employee returns to work. Some benefits may have a “waiver of premium” so the employee is not required to pay the deduction after an extended period of disability.

***Bereavement Leave***

Georgia law allows school district employees to use accrued, unused Sick Leave as Bereavement Leave to receive pay for up to five days away from work due to the death of an immediate family member or a relative living at the same address. LPA adopts and follows this rule. Employees may use up to one day of sick leave per year to be away from work due to the death of someone outside the immediate family.

***Critical Days***

Personal leave will not be granted for any reason neither the day before nor the day after a holiday, Pre-planning, Post-Planning, Professional Learning Day or for any portion of either of the excuded days. The CLO/CAO or the CEO may declare any specific time frame as “critical days” and personal leave will not be granted or applied during thise designated days. If you are absent for personal reasons on any of those days, your pay will be docked. Leave will not be approved for neither the first two weeks of school, nor the last two weeks of school.

***Excessive Absences***

Absences and/or tardies in excess of eight (8) days in the same school year will be monitored by the CLO excluding absences approved by FMLA and absences approved for the following leave types; annual leave, educational leave, jury duty/legal leave, military/government service leave, professional learning leave and worker’s compensation leave. Absences in excess of eight (8) days in the same school year are likely to adversely impact employees’ work performance and job evaluation. As a form or corrective action, LPA will individually counsel and document problems with attendance, and issues with punctuality may result in an unsatisfactory evaluation, the nonrenewal of the employment contract, reductions in pay in instances of exhausted leave, and/or termination of employment.

***Extended Leave of Absence***

When the following conditions are met, an employee on an approved leave of absence may, at the discretion of the employee, remain on an Extended Leave of Absence:

a. The employee has remaining sick leave available at the end of the FMLA period; and

b. The Leave is for personal medical reasons and the employee remains disabled beyond the FMLA period. In this case, the employee may remain on Extended Leave, without impact on their pay, until all available Sick Leave is exhausted. Employees whose absence is covered by Workers’ Compensation and who are unable to return to work at the end of the FMLA period are also considered to be on Extended Leave.

***Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA***)

On the occasion when LPA has more than 50 or more employees, the FMLA applies.Employees are eligible for a leave of absence under the FMLA once they have worked for the school for twelve months and a total of 1250 work hours. Leave under the FMLA can be approved for up to 12 weeks in a rolling 12-month period for the following reasons:

a. For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care, or childbirth;

b. To care for the employee’s child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care; entitlement to leave for a birth or placement of a child expires at the end of the 12 month period beginning on the date of the birth or placement;

c. To care for the employee’s spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition;

d. For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his/her job; and

e. For a qualifying exigency leave arising out of the fact that the eligible employee’s spouse, child, or parent is a covered military member on active duty or called to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation.

***Hardship Leave***

Hardship requests may be made by employees who have the accumulated sick leave when the need to attend to a family member’s illness continues for more than 5 consecutive days, or when bereavement leave of more than 5 days is necessary. Appropriate and sufficient medical documentation must accompany the Leave Request related to a family illness. Documentation of the reason(s) for Extended Bereavement Leave must be provided for those requests. Employees can be approved for a maximum total of 45 days of sick leave use for absence due to the illness of a family member or a total of 20 days for bereavement. Deductions from leave balances will be made under these circumstances to the extent that they exhaust the leave category. Subsequently, any excessive leave will be debited from the employee’s payroll upon return to work.

***Jury and Witness Duty***

Employees will receive regular pay when absent due to a jury duty summons. Employees who are subpoenaed as a witness and who have no direct personal interest in the legal proceedings will be allowed to be absent and will receive regular pay. Appropriate court documentation is required.

***Leave of Absence Without Pay***

All requests for a leave of absence without pay must be approved. Any employee who takes a leave of absence, for any reason, without approval from the CEO will be placed on leave without pay. If the employee fails to respond to the notification and/or to return to work, the employee may be recommended to the LPA Governing Board for termination from the LPA employment for abandonment of his/her assigned position.

***Leaving Campus***

If there is a need to leave campus, you may do so during your lunch period. You are not permitted to leave during your planning time. Planning time is allocated during the school day in order for you to collaborate with other team members, plan for activities related to improving the instructional program, developing lesson plans, parent conferences, etc. If you leave campus during your designated lunch period, you must clock out and clock back in upon your return using the biometric system.

***Military Caregiver Leave of Absence***

An eligible employee is entitled to 26 workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a family member with a serious injury or illness related to certain types of military service. The family member must be a covered service member. The employee must be the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or “next of kin” of the covered service member. Adequate documentation is required.

***Military Leave***

Employees who are a member of the National Guard or Reserves may be granted up to 18 days of paid leave each federal fiscal year for training or active duty. Documentation of the duty and dates of service must be provided in advance. Each employee must have the appropriate leave balance.

***Other Medical Leave***

Employees who deliver a baby during the first twelve months of employment will be allowed to take a leave of absence for the period of doctor ordered disability after delivery (normally six to eight weeks).

***Personal Leave***

Georgia law allows school district employees to use up to three days of accrued, unused Sick Leave each school year to receive pay during absences due to personal reasons. LPA adopts and will follow this rule. Personal Leave will not be approved for Critical Days as designated by the CLO at the beginning, at the end, and for certain other critical days of each school year. The CLO will provide, in writing, the specific protocol to request the use of Personal Leave days.

***Professional Leave***

Employees who attend a conference, seminar or workshop at the direction of the school are considered to be absent for professional development purposes. This Professional Leave is not deducted from any of the employee’s leave accounts as it is considered work time.

***Return to Work***

Employees are expected to return to work at the end of the FMLA period or the Extended Leave period with a full release to perform all duties. The employee will return to the same position and work location as prior to the leave of absence in most circumstances. If the employee is unable to return to work, s/he may resign and maintain eligibility for re-employment in the future. Employees who are unable to return to work at the end of the approved leave of absence will be required to resign and are eligible for employment when they are cleared to work by the physician.

***Sick Leave***

Sick Leave is provided under Georgia law so employees can receive pay during absences related to medical issues for the employee or an immediate family member, as well as for certain other absences. Sick Leave is accrued at 1 ¼ days per working month, provided that *at least half the scheduled work days* of the month are worked. The maximum accrual is 120 days of sick leave for 190 day employees. Employees are not paid for unused sick leave when they are separate from employment.

***Transfer of Sick Leave***

This policy establishes guidelines and procedures for transferring sick leave to members who experience a continuing disability due to illness or injury.

***Eligibility Criteria for Receiving Sick Leave from the Sick Leave Bank***

In order to receive sick leave donated by another LPA employee, all of the following criteria must be met. The recipient must:

* + Have used all of their own accumulated sick leave, annual leave, compensatory time, and any other eligible leave amount for each separate serious illness or recurring diagnosed illness or accident;
  + Have a continuing disability resulting from a serious personal illness or injury and be unable to work; and
  + Not be receiving any other form of compensation including long term disability benefits, short term disability or worker's compensation benefits.

Before an employee is eligible to receive donated leave, his or her physician must provide current certification that the employee has a disability resulting from serious personal illness or injury and is unable to work.

Upon receipt of such medical certification, the employee is eligible to receive up to 20 days of leave in any school year, for which he/she would otherwise be without pay including holidays.

Eligibility for additional increments of 10 working days may be based on a *current and contemporaneous* medical certification of the continuing disability.

The maximum amount that may be transferred to an employee is limited to 90 days for which the employee would otherwise not be paid as stated above.

Transfer of sick leave to an employee may not be denied if all eligibility criteria are met. The dollar amount (value) of the leave being donated is equivalent to what the recipient employee’s daily rate.

***Policies and Guidelines, which shall be used prior to any donated leave.***

**Criteria for Donating Leave**

In order to donate sick leave to a member of the Sick Leave Bank, an employee must have a current minimum balance greater than 10 sick leave days based on his/her accrual rate, after the donation.

An employee may donate more than one time to a single individual.

***Procedural Guidelines***

In order to facilitate sick leave transfer between employees, the following procedures should be followed:

The donating employee (donor) must email the CLO stating the name of the recipient and the amount of leave being donated.

*The HR Manager, will verify the following:*

* The donor and the recipient are eligible members of the Sick Leave Bank;
* The donating employee has sufficient sick leave to cover the donation; and
* The amount will not result in the donor's remaining balance falling below 10 days;

*Once the verifications have been made,*

* The Sick Leave Bank Donation Form will be approved by the HR Manager and the CEO.
* The email will be placed in both the donor and the recipient's personnel files, and the original will be retained by the office responsible for processing leave.
* Donor forms will be date and time stamped in the order received.

This will determine the order in which sick leave will be deducted from the donors' sick leave balances where there are multiple donors for a single individual. The recipient's supervisor will be notified of the amount of leave that has been donated.

* Before the initial transfer of leave is completed, the office processing leave will verify that the recipient has provided current certification from his/her health care provider that he/she continues to be unable to work for the period of time donated.
* A current, contemporaneous medical form may be required prior to the transfer of sick leave for every subsequent 10 days of donated leave.Prior to deducting subsequent leave from a donor, the HR office will verify that the donor has sufficient leave to cover the amount originally donated and also maintains the balance required after the donation.
* If less than the required amount is available, the leave donation request is denied.
* Payment of the donated leave will be based on the recipient's established rate of pay. No compensation will be paid to the donor.

***Time for Voting***

Polls in Georgia are open from 7:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m., and often advance voting is allowed before the day of elections. Therefore, it is unlikely that time away from work would be necessary for an employee to vote. Employees should consult their supervisor to arrange for time off when necessary.

***Vacation***

Employees who work a 12-month schedule accrue vacation hours to cover their pay for scheduled absences. Unused vacation hours can be accumulated, up to a total of six times the annual accrual. Employees, who resign, retire or move to a non-eligible position will be paid for accumulated but unused vacation hours.

A full-time administrative member employed on a twelve (12) month or fiscal year basis shall be entitled to vacation/annual leave earned at the rate two days (16 hours) per month. All working days during the fiscal year shall be counted; absences during academic calendar breaks shall be recorded as vacation; and all vacation days shall be recorded on institutional leave records. The maximum accrual and the accrual rate of vacation/annual leave for an administrative officer will be based upon his/her contractual work commitment. Vacation/annual leave shall be accrued based on the initial employment date of an employee. A new hire must be employed on or before the fifteenth of a month to qualify for accrual of vacation/annual leave for that month. Vacation/annual leave may be taken with supervisor’s approval. Requests for leave should be submitted with as much advance notice as possible, except for unforeseen emergencies. Vacation/annual leave shall be taken at times mutually acceptable to the employee and his/her supervisor.

Employees may accrue the following days based on their years of experience:

* + Less than ten years of creditable experience 1.25 days per pay period
  + Ten to twenty years of creditable experience 2.0 days per pay period
  + Twenty or more years of creditable experience 2.5 days per pay period

Annual duty employees may elect to convert their annual leave to sick leave or be paid for up to 20 days of any unused vacation leave during the month of December. All unused, accrued vacation/annual leave, not to exceed 180 days, shall be paid to an employee upon his/her termination from employment. An employee who terminates on or after the fifteenth of a month shall accrue vacation/annual leave for that month. The payment for accrued vacation leave for a terminated employee will be paid the next month *after* the last payroll check is issued. It may become necessary for employees to be paid for vacation lieu of continuing to accrue vacation/annual leave beyond the 180 days maximum accrual at the election of the employer..

***Disputes Regarding Leave Balances***

An employee who believes his/her leave balances contain an error must submit a written request for review to the CAO within one month of the pay period in question.

**BENEFITS**

A comprehensive benefits package is offered to full-time employees. Coverage will be effective on the first of the month following thirty (30) days of service and an insurance premium will be deducted the month prior to the effective date of coverage.

Annual Open Enrollment: Each employee must re-enroll in the flexible benefits program annually. You will lose your benefits for the following calendar year if you fail to complete open enrollment. Watch the posting on Wiggio in August, September and October for instructions on how to enroll. Benefits are a large part of the total compensation package for LPA employees. In order to meet the changing needs of our employees, we are continuously reviewing and updating these benefits and their features.

Open Enrollment (OE) is the period each year when employees may enroll or change options or coverage, subject to the conditions described in the plan. The OE period, unless otherwise announced, occurs mid -October through mid-November of each calendar year. Coverage changes, or new enrollments, become effective the following January 1. Temporary employees (regular substitutes and miscellaneous employees) or employees who work less than 25 hours per week are not eligible for benefits.

Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) teachers, administrators, supervisors, clerical employees, paraprofessionals, and various administrative office staff are eligible members of the Teachers Retirement System (TRS). Benefits become available after 30 years of service, regardless of age, at 25 years of service with early retirement adjustments, or at age 60, after ten years of service. Employees who have 10 years of TRS service are eligible to apply for disability retirement benefits if permanently disabled, as well as survivor’s benefits that are paid to a beneficiary. TRS retirement benefits are funded by a combination of employee and employer contributions. Current contribution rates and additional information about TRS are available at www.trsga.com.

The LPA Governance Board provides professional liability insurance for its employees, which may provide for legal expenses and damages that may arise from suits brought against employees for incidents that occur while they are carrying out assigned duties of their roles and responsibilities of theschool.

Workers’ Compensation Employees may be entitled to Workers’ Compensation benefits if injured on the job. The injury must arise out of, and in the course of, employment. The injured employee must provide notice of the injury immediately, but no later than 10 days after the accident, to the employer, the employer’s representative, or the employee’s immediate supervisor. Failure to do so may result in the loss of benefits. The injured employee may select a medical care provider from the list of approved/selected providers posted in the building by the Governance Board. Only those providers listed are authorized to render reimbursable medical care for a work-related injury.

*HEALTH BENEFIT PLANS*

LPA offers health plans that include major medical and pharmacy benefits. See the separate document from Joey Costa and Associates about health plans.

**STATE PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION (Georgia Breeze) -FLEXIBLE BENEFIT PLANS**

The LPA offers the following optional benefit plans:

* Dental
* Vision
* Legal Insurance
* Employee Optional Group Term Life and AD&D Insurance
* Spouse and Children Term Life Insurance
* Dependent Care Spending Accounts
* Health Care Spending Accounts
* Short-Term Disability - Replaces up to 60% of salary
* Long-Term Care Insurance
* Specified Illness Insurance

***COBRA***

If an employee or their dependents become ineligible for coverage under the LPA’s medical, dental, or vision program, the employee may be eligible to extend coverage under the federal COBRA program. This allows the employee and/or

dependents to continue receiving insurance coverage through the employee’s self-paid premiums.

**CELL PHONE USE**

Teachers may bring their cellular phone in the classroom. However, it is required that the cellular phone be turned off when students are present, during instruction, or when on duty, or at other work lrelated engagements so that incoming calls cannot be received. The cellular phone may only be used in emergencies where the life or health of a student or staff member is in eminent danger, before, during, after school, and during planning time for official business only.

**CERTIFICATION**

It is the responsibility of all certified employees to obtain and maintain valid in-field Georgia certification. Employees may contact the Professional Standards Commission or the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) for certification forms and requirements. Teachers must be “highly qualified” to teach in the assigned subject area(s) as required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Assistance Act of 1965. All paraprofessionals must hold a Paraprofessional Certificate issued by the Georgia PSC. Certification requirements may be found at the Georgia PSC website, www.gapsc.com.

**CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING**

As you are aware, Georgia law deems school employees or volunteers to be mandated reporters (.http://oca.georgia.gov/mandated-reporter) If you have reason to believe that a child has suffered: (1) physical, non-accidental injury or injuries by a parent or caretaker, (2) neglect or exploitation by a parent or caretaker, (3) sexual abuse, or (4) sexual exploitation, please follow the protocol below to ensure that the appropriate authorities are notified. It has been developed to guide those persons who have been deemed mandated reporters in exercising this duty within the school structure.

*If a child or other individual tells you about a situation that seems like it might require reporting, please take the following steps:*

1. Find the CLO or, if not available, the CAO or other school administrator (“Responsible Administrator”), and make a verbal report of the alleged incident of abuse/neglect in person (no written notes, e-mail, or text messages). Unless requested by the Responsible Administrator, do not provide written documentation to other personnel, even the child’s classroom teacher.
2. If a Responsible Administrator is unavailable, call one of them on the phone (but do not text message information to them). If the student is with you, please have them sit in the CEO’s office so that they are supervised, and so that you have privacy to make your call. If the CEO is not available, please have the student sit with the (in descending order): Academic Coach, Counselor, School Nurse, and Administrative Assistant.
3. If you choose, you may make a note in your personal record of the date, time and brief nature of the alleged incident of abuse/neglect reported to the Responsible Administrator. Your personal record does not include school records. This is solely for your benefit, to keep track of when the alleged incident of abuse/neglect was reported and to whom it was reported. This information is not to be shared.
4. A staff member who makes a report to the Responsible Administrator is deemed to have fully complied with the law.
5. The responsibility for following up with the student, other staff members, family members, etc., DOES NOT lie with you. **Please DO NOT conduct your own investigation.**
6. If asked about the situation later, the Responsible Administrator will provide no details regarding the incident other than to confirm that they are aware of the situation. There are matters of confidentiality and privacy in any alleged incident of abuse/neglect. This is for the protection of everyone involved, including the person who initially reported the incident.
7. Please be aware of the fact that there is likely pertinent information to which you are not privy regarding the situation. Please DO NOT make assumptions nor offer scenarios.
8. Making a verbal report of alleged abuse/neglect to the Responsible Administrator as outlined above is a CONFIDENTIAL matter and should be treated as such. If other personnel need to be informed regarding the situation or follow up needs to be made with other staff members, the Responsible Administrator will do so.
9. It is important that all mandated reporters involved in services to children who are alleged to be abused/neglected follow this protocol. This protocol has been established so that appropriate, sensitive needed services are provided in the best way possible.
10. Failure to comply with this protocol is actionable and penalties may range from a verbal warning to a written warning to non-renewal of contract or even termination.

**CODE OF ETHICS**

All LPA certified staff are required to comply with the Code of Ethics for Educators (GA PSC Rule 505-6-.01). The Code of Ethics can be found at http://www.gapsc.com/Rules/Current/Ethics/505-6-.01.pdf

The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Professional Standards Commission has adopted standards that represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. The code defines unethical conduct justifying disciplinary sanction and provides guidance for protecting the health, safety, and general welfare of students and educators, and assuring the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession.

(2) Definitions

(a) “Certificate” refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the Professional Standards Commission.

(b) “Educator” is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who holds a certificate issued by the Professional Standards Commission and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, “educator” also refers to paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.

(c) “Student” is any individual enrolled in the state’s public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual under the age of 18. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct for Educators, the enrollment period for a graduating student ends on August 31 of the year of graduation.

(d) “Complaint” is any written and signed statement from a local board, the state board, or one or more individual residents of this state filed with the Professional Standards Commission alleging that an educator has breached one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators. A “complaint” will be deemed a request to investigate.

(e) “Revocation” is the invalidation of any certificate held by the educator.

(f) “ Denial” is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate.

(g) “Suspension” is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period of time specified by the Professional Standards Commission.

(h) “Reprimand” admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The reprimand cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(i) “Warning” warns the certificate holder that his or her conduct is unethical. The warning cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.

(j) “Monitoring” is the quarterly appraisal of the educator’s conduct by the Professional Standards Commission through contact with the educator and his or her employer. As a condition of monitoring, an educator may be required to submit a criminal background check (GCIC). The Commission specifies the length of the monitoring period.

(k) “No Probable Cause” is a determination by the Professional Standards Commission that, after a preliminary investigation, either no further action need be taken or no cause exists to recommend disciplinary action.

***Standard 1: Legal Compliance*** - An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude; of any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale, or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 16; or of any other sexual offense as provided for in Code Section 16-6-1 through 16-6- 17, 16-6-20, 16-6-22.2, or 16-12-100; or any other laws applicable to the profession. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of nolo contendere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.

***Standard 2: Conduct with Students*** - An educator shall always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;

2. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;

3. Committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;

4. Engaging in or permitting harassment of or misconduct toward a student that would violate a state or federal law;

5. Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student;

6. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student; or

7. Failing to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by students who are under the educator’s supervision (including but not limited to at the educator’s residence or any other private setting).

***Standard 3: Alcohol or Drugs*** - An educator shall refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and

2. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcohol. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign Language trips, etc.).

***Standard 4: Honesty*** - An educator shall exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

1. Professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;

2. Information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;

3. Information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;

4. Reasons for absences or leaves;

5. Information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation; and 6. Information submitted in the course of professional practice.

**Standard 5: Public Funds and Property** - An educator entrusted with public funds and property shall honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Misusing public or school-related funds;

2. Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;

3. Submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);

4. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and

5. Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee. **Standard 6: Remunerative Conduct** - An educator shall maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee;

2. Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;

3. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee; and

4. Coaching, instructing, promoting athletic camps, summer leagues, etc. that involves students in an educator’s school system and from whom the educator receives remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee. These types of activities must be in compliance with all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.

**Standard 7: Confidential Information** - An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and state school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law;

2. Sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;

3. Violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items, etc.; and

4. Violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

**Standard 8: Abandonment of Contract** - An educator shall fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or education agency for the duration of the contract. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer, and

2. Willfully refusing to perform the services required by a contract.

**Standard 9: Required Reports** - An educator shall file reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse (O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5), or any other required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Failure to report all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission;

2. Failure to make a required report of a violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner; and

3. Failure to make a required report of any violation of state or federal law soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to: murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, any sexual offense, any sexual exploitation of a minor, any offense involving a controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.

**Standard 10: Professional Conduct** - An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the teaching profession. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to any conduct that impairs and/or diminishes the certificate holder’s ability to function professionally in his or her employment position, or behavior or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students.

**Standard 11: Testing** - An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Committing any act that breaches Test Security; and

2. Compromising the integrity of the assessment.

**CONDUCTING PERSONAL BUSINESS**

The established hours of duty may not be used for conducting personal business. Violators will be addressed accordingly.

**CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF WORK**

Student and employee files, records, documentation and other information are private and confidential. Disclosure of such information is limited by applicable federal and state laws.

**CONTRACTS/LETTERS OF OFFER**

Contracts for certified employees and other Board-approved personnel are issued for no more than one school year. For new, certified employees, a temporary contract for up to 20 days is issued pending the results from the criminal background check. A contract of employment is made by and between an employee and the LPA Governance Board of Leadership Preparatory Academy. Employment contracts of teachers and other Board-approved personnel shall be in writing, and such contracts shall be signed by such personnel on their own behalf and by the CEO, or his designee, on behalf of the LPA Governance Board. An employee who is fulfilling a full year contract for the current year will be notified by May 15 if a contract for the ensuing year will not be offered. An employee who holds a contract for less than one full year will not necessarily be offered a full contract for the ensuing year.

**COMPLAINT/GREIVANCE PROCEDURES**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a way for the LPA Governance Board and its employees to reach solutions to problems, disputes, or controversies that may occur and to provide a mechanism for employees or applicants to complain about unlawful discrimination or harassment. It is the intent of this policy to provide in a clear and concise way for the solution of complaints at the lowest possible administrative level, as fairly, and as expeditiously as possible. This policy may also be used specifically as a procedure by employees who allege discrimination or harassment based on age, gender, race, color, religion, national origin, or disability. In the case of alleged discrimination based on age, gender, race, color, religion, national origin, or disability, employees may complain directly to the CAO or their designee who will make a prompt investigation. This complaint and grievance procedure is applicable to any claim by any employee of the LPA who is affected in his/her employment relationship by an alleged violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of statutes, policies, rules, regulations, or written agreements of this school or with which the is required to comply. ***Exclusions*** - Unless the complaint is based on unlawful discrimination, this procedure shall not apply to:

* Performance ratings contained in personnel evaluation and professional development plans;
* Job performance;
* Termination, non-renewal, demotion, suspension, or reprimand of any employee; and/or
* The revocation, suspension, or denial of certificates of any employee. An employee, who chooses to appeal under O.C.G.A. §20-2-1160, shall be barred from pursuing the same complaint under this policy.

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| Personnel at LPA (LPA) shall have the right to present and resolve complaints relating to matters affecting employment at the lowest organizational level possible. The LPA Governance Board encourages all employees to resolve their complaints informally in a spirit of collegiality where possible. The following is presented as procedure where such efforts do not succeed, or where for any other reason, the employee desires to pursue this procedure. [Act of the General Assembly of 1992, O.C.G.A. 20-2-989.5 et seq.]   |  |  | | --- | --- | | SECTION 1-C.  DEFINITIONS.   1. "Level One Administrator" means the CLO of LPA with respect to teachers assigned to that school, and the immediate supervisor of the complaining party.  With respect to the certified Administrators supervised by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the "Level One Administrator" shall be the (CEO) who is deemed the immediate supervisor of the complaining party.  In any case not covered by this paragraph, the "Level One Administrator" shall be the supervisory certificated person designated by the LPA Governance Board or in the absence thereof, by the CEO to hear the complaint. 2. "Head/Lead administrator" of LPA means the Chief Executive Officer. 3. "Complaint" means any claim or grievance by a certificated employee of LPA which is filed pursuant to this policy and which comes within the scope of the policy on complaints and grievances. 4. "Notification" means delivery in person to the party entitled to notification, or deposited in the United States Mail, certified mail, return receipt requested, to the last known address of the party entitled to notification or by email to the last known address of the party entitled to notification. 5. “LPA Board” means the Board of Directors also known as the Governance Board of LPA Charter School. 6. “Superintendent” means the Superintendent of the DeKalb County School District. 7. “School Board” means the Board of Education of the DeKalb County Schools 8. \“Complainant” means any certified employee of LPA who files a Complaint pursuant to this policy. 9. A document is “filed” when it is physically received in the CEO’s office via U.S. Mail, e-mail, facsimile, or hand-delivery. 10. “Notice” may be accomplished by certified mail, e-mail, facsimile, or hand delivery.  If the written Complaint Form does not include an address, notice to the Complainant is accomplished by certified mail to the Complainant’s last known physical address submitted to the CEO. If the notice is sent by certified mail, it is deemed delivered upon proof of its deposit with the United States Postal Service; such notice must be adequately addressed and must contain adequate postage. 11. “Notice of Summary Dismissal Letter” may be accomplished by certified mail or hand delivery and will follow the procedures as set forth by the DeKalb County Schools Administration. Summary of Dismissal Procedures pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-989.8.    SECTION 2-C.  SCOPE OF COMPLAINT; EXCLUSIONS.   1. Scope.  Unless excluded by paragraph (b) hereof, this complaint and grievance procedure is applicable to any claim by any professional certificated by the Professional Standards Commission who is affected in his or her employment relationship by an alleged violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of statutes, policies rules, regulations, or written agreements of this school or with which the school is required to comply. 2. Exclusions.  The following shall not be subject to complaint pursuant to the provision of this policy: 3. Personnel evaluation job performance ratings and professional development plans pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-210; 4. The termination, nonrenewal, demotion, suspension, or reprimand of any employee pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-940, et seq; 5. The revocation, suspension, or denial of certification of any employee pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-790, et seq; 6. A matter that has already been presented directly to the DeKalb County School Board pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-1160; and 7. A sexual harassment or hostile work environment complaint that may be submitted pursuant to DeKalb County School Board Policy GAEB.   SECTION 3-C.  FORM, TIMELINES, FAILURE TO MEET TIMELINES, RESOLUTION.   1. The Complaint must be in writing and shall include the following components:  * A statement confirming the intent of the Complainant to utilize this Complaint procedure. * The mailing address and email address of the complainant to which notices and all other documents may be delivered * A reference to or a description of the statute, policy, rule, regulation, or written agreement that is alleged to have been violated, misapplied, or misinterpreted. * A brief statement of the facts on which complaint is based that explains how such statute, policy, rule, regulation or written agreement was violated, misapplied, or misinterpreted. * A statement of the relief desired.  1. The total time frame should not exceed sixty (60) calendar days from the date the Complaint is filed to the date a copy of the Governance Board’s decision is delivered to the Complainant, unless time limits have been mutually waived by the parties through a written agreement. 2. Any complaint not processed within the timetable required in this procedure shall be forwarded to the next level designated. 3. The time restraints contained herein may be extended by mutual, written agreement of the Complainant and the administrator or the CEO and/or the Governance Board. The extension, by agreement, of any time limit will automatically extend the overall sixty (60) day time limit or by an additional (60) days.   INFORMAL CONFERENCE TO RESOLVE  To expedite the resolution of Complaints at the lowest possible level, employees are encouraged, to first file a Request for an Informal Conference to Resolve (“ICR”) with his/her immediate supervisor, prior to requesting a Level One Hearing.   1. Employee should make an appointment with immediate supervisor to discuss the nature of the complaint and state the relief desired. 2. Employee must reference or describe the nature of the complaint, the statute, rule regulation, policy, or agreement that is alleged to have been violated misapplied or misinterpreted. 3. The employee may also submit notes in writing if they feel it is relevant and appropriate. 4. Supervisor will provide responses during the informal conference if appropriate and/or if known. 5. If they are not known and if more information is need to be researched; Administrator must provide a date certain (not to exceed 10 working days) to get response to the employee. 6. Administrator must schedule a meeting with employee and give response to employee; must also memorialize the informal conference and retain the memorandum in the immediate supervisor’s office files.   **Level One Hearing**   1. At the conclusion of the ICR, the employee must give written notice to his/her immediate supervisor of the acceptance of or challenge to the resolution of his/her complaint/grievance. Further, the employee must provide this written notice within five (5) calendar days from the time his/her supervisor presented the employee with their decision. 2. If the employee disagrees with the decision of their immediate supervisor, the process moves to a Level One Hearing whereupon the Complainant has five (5) working days to file a complaint in writing with the CEO of LPA, [this is now a total of ten (10) days from the appeal of the decision on the complaint as presented.] 3. The employee must include the following in the Notice of a Complaint to the CEO: 4. Employee must state in writing the nature of the complaint and the fact that they have gone through the ICR process and the outcome. 5. Employee must include the original Request for an Informal Conference to Resolve (“ICR”) and a copy of the resolution presented by the administrator. 6. Employee must state why they believed the outcome was not correct. 7. Employee must state the desired outcome and why. 8. Employee must bring forth additional evidence and/or witnesses if essential or necessary and any other pertinent information identified and required by the CEO. 9. CEO must sign and date the Notice presented by the employee as showing received. 10. Employee must bring forth any other pertinent information identified and required by the CEO. 11. The CEO has ten (10) working days to research and provide response to the complaint in writing. 12. The CEO can send the employee back to the immediate supervisor for a response within the ten (10) day period for further consideration. 13. Any response to the employee must be in writing identifying the reason for said decision and must be submitted within the same ten (10) day period as indicated in item (i) above, and an acknowledged copy will be filed in the employee’s HR file. Employee must sign and date the notice letter from the CEO. 14. At the conclusion of the Level 1 Hearing, the employee must give written notice to the CEO, of the acceptance of or challenge to the resolution of his/her complaint/grievance. Further, the employee must provide this written notice within five (5) calendar days from the time the CEO presented the employee with their decision. 15. If the employee decides to move to a **Level Two Hearing**, they have five (5) working days to file a complaint in writing with the CEO of LPA. This must be accomplished by sending a Notice of Appeal to the Chair of the LPA Governance Board. 16. Any complaint not processed within the timetable required in this procedure must be forwarded to the next level   **Level Two Hearing - Appeal from Level One**  The employee has decided to Appeal the decision of the CEO of LPA and desires to move to a Level Two Hearing.   1. The Notice of Appeal required in order to move the **Level Two Hearing -** Appeal from Level One must include the following:    * 1. All of the documentation required of the Level One Hearing, including all notices.      2. Must state the nature of the complaint      3. Must confirm they have been through the Informal conference process and the Level One Process; must state the outcomes of the previous process and why.      4. Must submit the reason they want to move to Level Two Hearing.      5. Must state the outcome they are looking for and why.    1. Within five (5) working days of the Level One decision, The employee must submit the following in a Notice addressed to the Chairperson of the Leadership Preparatory Governance Board of Directors (Governance Board): 2. The Notice can be submitted one of two ways-    1. Hand delivered to the CEO’s office where the Complainant must ensure that receipt is acknowledge and dated and a copy of such is received by the Complainant; or    2. Notice is placed in U.S. mail, addressed to the CEO at the school post office box, and sent by Certified Mail with restricted delivery. 3. The Chairperson will do the following:    1. Acknowledge receipt of Notice within ten (10) working days of receipt of the Notice by mail or from the CEO.    2. Select a sub-committee of the Governance Board of Directors (up to 3) who will hear the complaint.    3. Include the Time, Date, Place of said Level Two Hearing in response to the employee and also list any evidence or materials the employee should bring with or submit prior to the meeting. This Hearing Notice must be postmarked, hand delivered or emailed within 10 working days of the Chair’s receipt of the Notice of Appeal. 4. Employee must, acknowledge and deliver receipt of the Chair’s Response and Meeting Schedule within five working days of receipt of such Notice from the Chair. 5. After Sub-Committee hears evidence, they will make a recommendation to the “Committee as a Whole.”    1. The Board of Directors can also remand the decision to the CEO, notifying the employee of the Board’s decision for the CEO to re-open and re-consider.    2. The CEO must make his decision within the same timeline required of the Board of Directors.    3. The decision from either the Governance Board or the CEO must be delivered in writing and must be submitted within the timeline in Section 3-C #2 above. 6. The Governance Board will take final action on the decision and disseminate the decision to the employee in writing in the event the case is not remanded to the CEO. 7. Any complaint not processed within the timetable required in this procedure must be forwarded to the next level.   **Level Three - Appeal from Level Two – Non Binding Mediation**   1. Should the LPA employee decide that they wish to appeal the decision made at Level Two, they have the ability to appeal by submitting to Mediation. 2. Mediation requires that the employee:    1. Submit a Request for Mediation to the CEO of LPA within five (5) working days of receipt of decision of the Level Two Appeal.    2. The request must state that *“…the Employee wishes to enter into Mediation with the Executive Leadership* [CEO] of the Leadership Preparatory Academy; further is must state that the employee was not satisfied with the Level Two decisions and therefore wishes to enter into the Mediation process for a final decision. 3. A neutral third party will contact the employee and the CEO and schedule the Mediation process based on the mutual approval of both parties. 4. Mediation is Non-Binding. However, LPA will consider this matter closed after that level unless there is a ruling of a court of competent jurisdiction.   SECTION 4-C.  Records, Time, Representation, Costs, Reprisals.  For the Record   1. The proceedings of the Informal Conference to resolve are between the immediate supervisor and the employee only. The immediate supervisor shall keep simple notes to memorialize the conference while making attempts to resolve the issue. Direction and memorandum are only provided to address and resolve the issues if deemed necessary by the supervisor and become part of the documentation in the record. Said documentation will be shared only as necessary. Otherwise it is filed with the CLO and CEO only. 2. The proceedings at Level One and Two shall be accurately recorded by mechanical means, and all evidence introduced at this level shall be preserved.  The record of these proceedings and the evidence introduced shall be made available at all times and memorialized in the school’s administrative files and ultimately the employee’s record.   Time Limits  The administrator and/or the moderator of the hearing shall have the authority to maintain order at any hearing; they will be able to limit the time within which the Employee or any other party presenting evidence or examining witnesses must be completed.  Time limits may be imposed at the outset of the hearing or at any time during the hearing.  Representation   1. At Level One and Two, the presence of any individual other than the Employee, and the LPA Supervisor, and any witnesses that may be called to testify by either of them is specifically prohibited.  The Employee and the administration are entitled to the presence of an individual of their choice to assist them in the presentation of the Complaint and the administration’s response thereto at Levels Three. 2. At the Level Three – Mediation, the mutually agreed upon mediator will establish the rules set forth for the mediation process.   Costs  Except for the cost of preparing and preserving the record of the proceedings conducted under this procedure, which shall be borne by the school, all costs and fees shall be borne by the party incurring or taking action that precipitates the costs or fees unless otherwise agreed upon in writing by the parties involved.  Reprisals  The Employee shall not be the subject of any reprisals or retaliation as a result of filing a Complaint under this policy.  Should any such reprisal occur, the Employee may refer the matter to the Professional Standards Commission. |  | |

**COMPENSATION**

To attract and retain highly qualified teachers and support personnel, LPA maintains competitive salaries by conducting regular job and market analysis of Metro Atlanta school districts as well as Metro Atlanta employers. Pay Statement/Direct Deposit Employees may access their pay statements online via Netchex Portal. Employees may also initiate a new direct deposit, change banking information, or inactivate their direct deposit via the Payroll Office. The employment contracts issued to certified staff are contingent upon the employee securing and continuing to hold a valid in-field certificate issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Salary adjustments may be made to conform to the certificate level approved by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. If an employee is unable to be certified properly, the daily rate of pay may be adjusted to that of a substitute employee retroactive to the beginning of employment under the contract. The employee must be ‘highly qualified’ to teach in the assigned subject area(s) as required by the Elementary and Secondary Education Assistance Act of 1965. Penalty for Failure to Meet Contractual Obligation If fewer than 20 days of service are rendered under contract, the daily rate may be equal to the substitute teacher rate.

*Cost of Living Adjustments and Step Increases*

Salary increases will be awarded for Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) when approved by the Governance Board. For certificated employees who receive satisfactory annual evaluations, step increases are given when approved by the Governance Board. A step increase may be denied to a certificated employee if s/he receives an unsatisfactory annual evaluation in a given school year.

*Extended Day/Year*

Supplemental pay may be provided to employees who work an extended school day or school year to meet program responsibilities or student needs. For example, some High School Teachers may be asked to work an additional hour beyond the normal eight hour day to provide student instructional services or to teach an additional period of instruction. Local school administrators must approve Extended Day/Year pay because of student and school needs; such pay cannot be based on tasks that would normally be performed during the regular work day.

*Overtime*

Overtime is defined as those hours worked by a public employee who qualifies for time-and-one-half overtime pay or time-and-one-half compensatory time as required by the Fair Labor Standards Act. Overtime for LPA non-exempt employees refers to those hours or major fractions of hours beyond 40 hours within a work week. For non-exempt employees paid monthly, the work week begins at 12:01 a.m. on Monday and ends at 12 midnight on Sunday. Employees classified under The Fair Labor Standards Act as non-exempt are compensated at a rate of one and one-half times their hourly rate after 40 hours within a work week and/or one-and-one half hours of compensatory time off for each hour over 40 hours within a workweek. Overtime for non-exempt employees must be approved in advance by their supervisor (except in emergency situations). Unauthorized (unapproved) overtime worked may subject the employee to disciplinary action. Nonexempt employees cannot waive their rights to overtime pay or volunteer to perform normal job functions outside normal work hours. As a general rule, employees may only bank 32 hours of compensatory time during any pay period. Hours that exceed 32 hours should be reported to the supervisor immediately. Employees classified under the Fair Labor Standards Act as exempt are paid a fixed rate and are not eligible for overtime pay.

*Non-Exempt or Exempt*

Under the FLSA, LPA employees are classified as “non-exempt” or “exempt.” Non-exempt employees are entitled to overtime pay; exempt employees are not. For non-exempt employees, the FLSA requires overtime pay (at time and one half) for all hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

*Pay Advances*

Employees who do not work during the scheduled attendance/service report period for a specific month will not receive a pay check at the end of that month and, therefore, are not eligible for ant type of pay advance.

Retirees Returning To Work

A retiree from the LPA or another Georgia school system will be employed in accordance with TRS and Board guidelines and procedures.

Salary Increase for Advanced Degree

Employee may receive a salary increase, if placed on a salary schedule, which recognizes a salary increase for an advanced degree. Due to changes instituted by the Professional Standard Commission (PSC) regarding degree upgrades and the LPA’s compensation structure, employees should contact the CAO prior to enrolling into a program to inquire about a salary increase for an advanced degree. This is the employee’s responsibility. The LPA Governance Board will authorize the salary increase based on the changes by PSC.

Salary Placement for Certified Employees

Salaries for certificated employees are determined by the Georgia teaching certificate that they hold and the years of experience that have been verified. Salary placement for a certified employee will be administered in accordance with Georgia Code: GBA (5)160-5-2-05, “Experience for Salary Purposes.”

Salary Placement for Classified Employees

For classified employees, salary placement is based on the salary schedule for the position.

Classified employees will not receive additional salary compensation for education that is beyond what is required for the position.

Salary Schedule

The annual compensation for teachers will be based on the teacher’s salary schedule from the State of Georgia.

*Summer Salary*

The pay for full-time employees on 190, 191, 200 and 220 day schedules who are present for the full contract year is prorated in 12 installments throughout the year including the summer months. Summer pay will also be prorated for 190, 191, 200 and 220 day employees who are present for at least one-quarter of the school year if they are:

Employed after the beginning of the regular school year,

Separated from LPA after the regular school year ends, or

Absent from duty without pay during any part of the required period of employment.

*Vacations and Holidays*

Employees (240 day) who earn vacation will accumulate hours based on the schedule below.

Creditable Years of Service Time Accumulated Each Year

* + Years 1 - 5 96 hours (12 days)
  + Years 6 - 10 120 hours (15 days)
  + Years 11 - 15 144 hours (18 days)
  + Years 16 - 20 160 hours (20 days)
  + Over 20 years 184 hours (23 days)

Other employees follow the holiday schedule as printed on the DeKalb County Public Schools’ Calendar:

* New Year’s Day
* Martin Luther King Jr. Day
* Spring Holiday
* Memorial Day
* Independence Day
* Labor Day
* Thanksgiving
* Winter Holidays

**CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

All employees shall avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of such conflict with their professional responsibilities. The LPA Governance Board provides the policy written below with the full knowledge that the good judgment of each employee is essential, and that no list of rules or guidelines can provide direction for all circumstances that arise. Employees who have questions about a potential conflict of interest must discuss the situation with the CLO and/or the CAO.

**CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK**

A criminal background check will be conducted at or prior to employment for every individual who is employed by the LPA Governance Board to fill either a full-time or a part-time position with the LPA. For initial hiring purposes, personnel employed by the LPA shall be fingerprinted and have a criminal background check as required by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-211.1(c). A clearance certificate verifying a satisfactory criminal background check may be required based on the requirements of state law and the rules of the Professional Standards Commission.

Subsequent criminal background checks shall be conducted on all personnel. Certified personnel, whose employment is

continued with the LPA, shall be subject to a criminal background check upon any certificate renewal application to the

Professional Standards Commission. All other employees of the LPA, whose employment is continued and who are not certificated personnel, shall be subject to subsequent criminal background checks on a periodic basis determined by procedures and schedules established by the CEO or his/her designee. The period between criminal background checks shall not exceed a maximum of five years. Fees required for criminal background checks shall be paid by the individual seeking employment or the employee.

**DRUG-FREE WORK PLACE**

The LPA Governance Board provides a drug-free workplace and professes that the use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of tobacco and alcohol are wrong and harmful. The unlawful possession, use, manufacture, distribution, or dispensation of illicit drugs, tobacco, and alcohol by employees on school premises, in school vehicles, or at any school-sponsored activities is prohibited. Compliance with these standards is mandatory. Disciplinary sanctions, up to and including termination of employment and referral for prosecution, will be imposed on employees who violate these prohibitions. Employees are prohibited from using or displaying drug, alcohol, and tobacco products in front of students while the employee is on duty, during the normal school day, or while on duty at any school- or system-sponsored function.

**Personnel Use of Illicit Drugs**: For criminal drug statute convictions of employees for violations occurring in the workplace, the following steps must be followed:

1. Employees must notify LPA in writing of any criminal drug statute arrest and/or conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace (in LPA facilities, vehicles, and at school-sponsored activities) no later than five calendar days after such arrest/conviction.

2. LPA will notify all appropriate federal agencies in writing within ten calendar days after receiving notice from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. LPA will take one of the following actions, within 30 calendar days of receiving notice with respect to any employee who is so convicted:

A. Take appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and/or

B. Require such employee to participate satisfactorily in drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.

No employee, student, nor school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product while in any building, facility, or vehicle owned or leased by LPA. This includes all school grounds and property as well as athletic fields and parking lots. Tobacco use is prohibited at all school- or system-sponsored events 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In recognition of its responsibilities to take reasonable measures to ensure that the students it undertakes to transport are transported safely; and in further recognition that safe transportation depends on the driver/employee’s physical dexterity, reflex action, unimpaired judgment, and unimpaired senses of sight and hearing; and in recognition of the fact that certain drug and/or alcohol use can impair an employee’s ability to transport students safely; the LPA Governance Board hereby implements a controlled substance and alcohol testing program for all employees engaged in safety-sensitive functions. As part of the LPA Governance continuing effort to provide an environment for students and employees that promotes health and safety, the LPA Governance Board will not tolerate the use, possession, or sale of any controlled substances, alcohol, or misuse of any legally prescribed or obtained medications by employees engaged in safety-sensitive functions. The LPA Governance Board will provide training, education, and other assistance to employees to help them understand their responsibilities in achieving an environment free of alcohol and controlled substances upon request from the employee. Noncompliance with this policy or violation of the regulations may result in severe disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal.

**EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

A completed Employee Information Data Sheet is required to be on file from each staff member. Changes in emergency data should be reported promptly to the CAO.

**EMPLOYEE ASSIGNMENTS**

Employees are assigned to positions based on the needs of the school and the employee’s certification, qualifications, and training. The CLO/CAO/CEO , through the Board, shall have the authority to reassign any employee for the efficient operation or for the best interest of the school.

**EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE**

All LPA employees shall dress in a professional manner and style in accordance with the dress of other professionals within the community. Employees are expected to be clean, neat, and appropriately dressed at all times during the employee’s regular hours of work. The CLO has the authority to interpret the dress code and make a case-by-case determination of the appropriate nature of dress and appearance. Any employee whose attire or dress is not professional in the opinion of the CEO or Administrator shall be directed to conform to the dress code. An employee, who is inappropriately dressed, may be sent home and required to return to work in acceptable attire. The employee shall not be paid for time away from work.

**EMPLOYEE EVALUATION CERTIFIED and CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL**

All certified leadership, teaching, and service personnel will be evaluated annually for performance appraisal and professional development purposes. The annual written evaluation will be based on performance and the job description or the position. The appropriate Board approved evaluation instruments shall be used to assess the performance of professional personnel. All classified personnel employed by the LPA Governance Board shall be evaluated at least once each year. The process and the frequency of the evaluations, the instruments used, and the training of the evaluators shall be established by the CEO. All evaluations shall be discussed confidentially with the employee.

**EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL RECORDS**

Information contained in an employee’s personnel file is kept confidential except as may be required by law, requested by the employee, or requested by authorized officials on a need-to-know basis. Otherwise, requests for information not specifically approved by the employee will be referred to the CAO or his/her designee. There are specific document types that are protected from public disclosure, as stated in the Georgia Open Records Act. These documents include confidential evaluations prepared as part of hiring process, medical records, home address information, Social Security numbers, insurance and medical information, and financial information. LPA will release , with written approval from the employee, information about the employee’s current salary, dates of employment, job title, and work location. Employees may review their personnel records by contacting the CAO to schedule an appointment. A request form must be completed and signed for employees who request copies of records from their personnel file. Confidential reference documents are not available for review.

**EMPLOYEES WITH COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Employees who have or are suspected of having any communicable disease may be required to take any and all recommended precautions to ensure the health and safety of students and other employees. The Governance Board, The Board of Education, the DeKalb County Health Department, and/or the Georgia Department of Human Services may require quarantine or surveillance of carriers of diseases and persons exposed to or suspected of being infected with infectious disease during such period until they are found free of the infectious agent or disease.

**EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION CARDS AND BADGES**

In order to ensure the safety and security of both staff and students, LPA ID Badges should be clearly visible at all times. Additionally, employees will be issued a key access card to their location. Please contact the CEO by email as soon you discover your access card is missing. The access card must be deactivated and new card will be issued.

**EMPLOYEE REQUIRING MEDICAL ATTENTION**

Employees should report all work-related injuries and accidents immediately or as soon as practicable to their supervisor, and then follow these steps:

1. Report the accident (even if you think the injury is minor) to a supervisor as soon as possible.

2. Make sure a written report of the incident is made.

3. If medical treatment is required, a representative from your location will contact the Risk Management division of Human Resources to receive referral information from the approved panel of doctors.

4. When you visit an approved physician, make sure you tell the doctor what happened and the visit is to be billed to your company's workers' compensation insurance company. Do not bill this to your health insurance.

5. Also request written instructions from the doctor with regard to future treatment and your ability to work.

6. Keep your direct supervisor informed.

**EVALUATION**

Teachers’ annual evaluation for this school year will be based on the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) in accordance with the Official Code of Georgia 20-2-210, all applicable rules of the State Board of Education, and the Implementation Handbook for TKES.

**TKES/LKES Formative Summative Evaluation Appeal Process -** Please Note: Teachers/Leaders are permitted to use the school district’s local complaint process to file grievances related to procedural deficiencies on the part of the local school system or charter school in conducting TKES evaluations. A teacher’s performance rating(s), professional growth goal(s) and/or plan(s), and job performance cannot be disputed through the complaint. (Georgia Department of Education, 2016) All appeals must be initiated within the current year of the evaluation in question.

Appeals not initiated during the specified timeline for the particular school year are final. Appeals must be filed within 10 business days of receiving the Formative or Summative Assessment rating. Appeals not filed within the 10 business days will not be considered for the Appeals/Grievance process. Walkthroughs cannot be appealed. Employees are encouraged to read evaluation guidelines in the Teacher/Leader Keys Effectiveness System Handbooks and to make sure that appropriate procedures have been followed within the 10 day window in order to appeal. Appeals may be made at the Formative or Summative Assessment/Evaluation.

**Cycle 1 Appeal**

* For TKES, the evaluatee submits appeal to the principal within 10 business calendar days of receiving their rating. For LKES, the evaluatee should submit the appeal to the primary evaluator. The appeal should include any relevant supporting documentation.
* The primary evaluator reviews the Cycle 1 appeal.
* Primary evaluator must provide a response in writing to the evaluatee within 10 business calendar days of the Cycle 1 appeal.
* If the appeal if resolved at Cycle 1, the appeal is considered closed or resolved. The findings are reported to the Coordinator of Performance Management by the principal once the appeals process is closed or resolved at the school level (no later than 10 business calendar days after the appeals process is closed or resolved at the school level).

**Cycle 2 Appeal**

* If the appeal is not resolved at Cycle 1, the evaluatee submits the second appeal to their principal’s (TKES) or evaluator’s (LKES) supervisor (Chief, Assistant Superintendent, and Coordinator of Performance Management) within 3 business calendar days of receiving the findings from the Cycle 1 appeal.
* The Chief or Assistant Superintendent will gather evaluation information pertaining to the appeal for the purpose of making a decision. ⎫The Chief or Assistant Superintendent will review all relevant information and provide a response in writing within 20 business calendar days to the evaluatee, primary evaluator, and the Coordinator of Performance Management. ⎫
* This ends the appeal process. Results are final. Please note: Documented performance deficiencies and/or performance evaluation ratings may be reviewed and considered as a factor with regards to promotional opportunities.

**FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT**

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is a federal labor law governing overtime, minimum wage, child labor, and equal

pay. It requires employers to keep records of all hours worked by non-exempt employees.

**FALSIFICATION OF RECORDS**

As with your job application, if you willfully submit false information on any records including, but not limited to, attendance records for an employee or student, records related to leave or workers’ compensation, and registration/enrollment records for your child or another student, you will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Harassment Policy It is the policy of this school to prohibit any act of harassment of employees or others based upon race, creed, sex, gender, national origin, ancestry, religion, age or disability, genetic information, or service in uniformed services at all times and during all occasions while at school, in the workplace or at any school event or activity. Any such reported act of harassment may result in discipline, including the possible termination of employment or other appropriate discipline of the employee. Sexual harassment may include conduct or speech which entails unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taunts, threats, comments of a vulgar or demeaning nature, demands or physical contact which creates a hostile environment for an employee. There may be other speech or conduct which employees experience as inappropriate or illegal harassment which should also be reported such as sexually suggestive drawings, leering, or sending inappropriate sexually-themed gifts; harassment can take many forms and it is not possible to itemize every aspect of the harassment forbidden by this policy. No form of sexual harassment will be tolerated. The School District's harassment policy applies equally to harassment based on an employee's other protected statuses: race, religion, creed, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or service in the uniformed services.

**REPORTING HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION AND PROHIBITION ON RETALIATION**

Any employee, applicant for employment, independent contractor, or other individual who performs work for the school who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or discrimination as prohibited by this policy should promptly report the same to the CEO of the school or to the appropriate designee, who will implement the Board's discriminatory complaints procedures as specified in that policy. It is the duty of all employees to promptly report harassment forbidden by this policy. All supervisors will instruct their subordinates as to the content of this policy and, through appropriate staff development, enlighten employees as to the varied forms or expression of prohibited harassment. No one will be subjected to, and the school prohibits, any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation or retaliation for good faith reporting of incidents of harassment of any kind, pursuing any harassment claim or cooperating in related investigations. LPA is committed to enforcing this policy against all forms of harassment. However, the effectiveness of our efforts depends largely on employees telling us about inappropriate workplace conduct. If employees feel that they or someone else may have been subjected to conduct that violates this policy, they should report it immediately. If employees do not report harassing conduct, school may not become aware of a possible violation of this policy and may not be able to take appropriate corrective action. Nothing in the harassment policy shall be construed or interpreted to create any additional rights or exceed requirements or standards as stated in applicable federal and/or state law.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The Governance Board recognizes the responsibility for ensuring the safety of all employees. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board to take all practical steps to develop and implement a safety program for all employees, which will provide and maintain safe and healthful working conditions, adequate protection equipment, and develop operating procedures and practices that comply with federal, state, and local legislation pertaining to accident prevention. To help ensure safe working conditions, an employee is responsible for:

* + - Knowing the potential hazards of the job.
    - Learning and following the safety practices required by management.
    - Using health and safety devices required by the job.
    - Correcting and/or reporting safety hazards immediately.
    - Immediately reporting any accident or injury to supervisor.
    - Obeying “No Smoking” regulations.
    - Operating machinery or equipment only if qualified to do so.
    - Maintaining good housekeeping practices including keeping all fire exits clear and firefighting equipment accessible.

**HIRING**

The CEO shall have the authority to place personnel in accordance with Board policies, adopted job classifications and salary schedules, and in such numbers authorized by the Board, provided that, placements at the level of teacher or above must be approved by the Board.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES**

In case of an emergency school closure or schedule change, staff reporting instructions will be on LPA’s website.

**INTERVIEWING**

CAO/CLO/CEO, under the directive of the LPA Governing Board, will interview the most qualified applicants.

**JOB POSTING**

Most announcements of job vacancies will be posted at the Georgia Charter School Association’s website, LPA’s employment tab and in the teacher’s lounge of LPA. Job vacancies will be posted for a minimum of five business days or until filled.

**MEDICARE**

All employees who were initially employed or reemployed after March 31, 1986, are required by federal law to pay Medicare tax. The Medicare employer contributions must be charged against the Alternative Plan to Social Security.

**NEPOTISM**

Employees cannot recommend for employment as a direct report, supervise or evaluate members of their immediate family.

**NONRENEWAL**

When the CEO or the LPA Governance Board proposes not to renew the contract of any teacher or other professional employee, certificated by the Professional Standards Commission, who was on the payroll and under contract on the beginning day of the current school year, written notification of such intention shall be given to the teacher or other certified professional employee.

**OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Employees may use personal leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays. If an employee desires to take leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays in excess of the days allowed for personal leave, the employee may take unpaid leave for such purposes provided that such leave is not excessive and does not interfere with fulfilling the obligations of his or her job.

**OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT/DUAL PAY**

Employees may, during the times not required of them to fulfill assigned duties, engage in other employment, provided such employment does not violate the Educators Code of Ethics or any contract the employee has with the LPA. Failure to disclose this information may result in disciplinary action, up to and including, termination. Moreover, Employees shall be prohibited from receiving dual pay for services rendered during regular working hours. The employee must forfeit the regular pay or the pay from another agency, organization, or individual. Employees may receive payment for services rendered while on non-medical leave or for services performed other than during the regular working day.

**PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

Payroll deductions include, but are not limited to, federal and state taxes required by law; retirement systems contributions; Social Security; and medical, dental and other deductions authorized by the employee. In the event of overpayment, employees will be notified about the overpayment and the CEO will authorize the payroll clerk to make the appropriate adjustments. In the case of a hardship for the overpayment, an agreement to tender the overpayment will be developed and must conclude by the last check issuance for the employee during the fiscal year.

**PERSONNEL CHANGES**

It is the responsibility of employees to inform the CAO of any change in home address and/or phone number by completing an Employee Information Data Sheet. Employees may update their name, personal address, and phone number by completing the Employee Information Data Sheet. Name change requests must be accompanied by a copy of the signed social security card reflecting the new name, before the request may be completed.

**PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

Schools and school districts are mandated by Federal law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), to protect educational records. “Educational records” refers to those data elements that are (1) directly related to a student; and (2) maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting on behalf of the agency or institution. FERPA permits school districts to disclose information designated as “Directory Information” without consent of parent or student. Directory information is considered information which is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes student information such as student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, grade level, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, most recent previous school attended and photograph or video. Extra care must be taken to protect “non-directory” student information as well as personally identifiable information contained within student records, either in electronic or paper form. Among the items considered non-directory information are:

* + - Advisement records
    - Courses taken
    - Disciplinary actions
    - Grades
    - Schedule
    - Student number
    - Test scores
    - Personally identifiable information in education records is defined as a student’s first and last name with one or more of the following data elements:
      * *A list of personal characteristics that would make the student’s identity easily traceable. Any other information or identifiers that would make the student’s identity easily traceable.*
      * *Name of student’s parent(s) or other family member(s).*
      * *Social security number*.

Employees shall not disclose any student information, directory or non-directory, with a third party without obtaining the approval of the CLO.

**RECORDS MANAGEMENT/RETENTION**

Each employee is responsible for maintaining and managing public records related to his/her work according to state and federal laws and LPA’s policy. Records may be maintained electronically or in hard copy. When no longer needed, you also must destroy records in an appropriate manner—records containing sensitive information must be shredded. Records destruction must be logged, and these logs must be maintained according to the retention schedule.

**Retention Schedule**: LPA generally follows the rules designated by the Georgia Secretary of State for the retention and destruction of records. In a few instances, LPA retains records for longer than the state required period.

*Type of Record Retention*

E-mail Retention period is determined based on the content, not the format of records. Many emails need only be maintained for the useful life of the information contained, but if the email documents a decision or other type of records that must be retained, it must be kept according to the schedule.

* General correspondence - 5 years
* Visitors logs and sign-in sheets - 2 years
* Accident reports (student or visitor) - 5 years
* Class rolls - 3 years
* Teacher lesson plans - 2 years
* Employee work schedules, time records and leave records - 3 years
* Daily/monthly activity reports - 2 years
* Publications (newsletters, handbooks, brochures, etc.)
* Permanent Travel authorizations and reimbursements - 3 years
* Records documenting the destruction of records - 7 years

**REDUCTION IN FORCE (RIF)**

The Board will make every effort to avoid exercising Reduction-in-Force (RIF) procedures through planned management

techniques. However, the Board recognizes that a RIF may be necessary when overstaffing occurs due to the reasons such as inadequate funds; loss of funding that includes the reduction or expiration of grant generated funds; insufficient student enrollment to merit continuation of a program or service; decline in average daily attendance; decline in need for services rendered by a position classification; return of contractual personnel from extended leave; discontinuation of a program by action of the Governance Board; change in class sizes; closure or change in purpose of a school or program; reorganization; legislative mandates; judicial decrees; other exigencies. The determination of employees to be demoted or terminated is based upon approved procedures established by the Governance Board and school’s administration. Employees who do not have a written contract are classified as “at-will.” Either the employee or CEO may terminate the employment of “at-will” employees at any time with or without cause.

**RE-EMPLOYMENT**

The contracts for Administrative (CEO, CAO and CLO) are automatically considered for renewal each year. Individuals whose contracts will not be renewed are notified in writing.

**RE-HIRE**

Candidates who were previously employed at Leadership Preparatory Academy and who left in good standing, will be considered as a New Employee and be subject to all of the provisions of a new hire.

**RESIGNATIONS**

The CEO or Designee shall have authority to accept on behalf of the Board, an employee's resignation. If the CEO does not accept a resignation, it may be submitted directly to the Board for final disposition. Non-contractual employees are requested to submit a letter of resignation as soon as possible, but at least two weeks prior to the expected date for leaving LPA. Contractual employees should provide a least a two week advance notice.

**REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

Any school employee who has knowledge or reasonable cause to believe that a student has been a victim of physical abuse, sexual misconduct or other forms of harassment by another school employee, shall report such abuse or misconduct to the appropriate school administrator immediately. Please refer to your school administrator regarding protocols for reporting child abuse or neglect.

**RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT CRIMINAL CHARGES**

Any employee of LPA who is arrested, charged, indicted, bound over by or to a grand jury, convicted, enters a plea or is nolle prossed for or to any crime or criminal offense in the State of Georgia or elsewhere, whether the crime or criminal offense is a felony or misdemeanor, shall report each and all of these events, occasions, or developments to the CEO within 48 hours after the arrest or legal action, or immediately upon the employee's return to work, whichever comes first. In making the report the employee shall: Provide a copy of the arrest warrant, citation, motor vehicle accident report, indictment, or any other narrative explanation of the arrest generated by the arresting officer/jurisdiction; Disclose all court dates and the disposition of the matter within 48 hours after that information becomes available to the employee.

**RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RESPONSES TO CIVIL RIGHTS CONCERNS**

All employees are required to fully comply with all federal and state non-discrimination laws, including Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination and Employment Act (ADEA); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Public Law 101-476, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Questions concerning these policies and procedures should be directed to the CAO.

**SAFETY**

Leadership Preparatory Academy recognizes that the work place needs to be safe as possible. Therefore, it is the policy of the Governance Board to take all practical and reasonable steps to develop and implement safety measures for all employees, which will provide and maintain safe working conditions, adequate protection equipment and develop operating procedures and practices that are in compliance with federal, state, and local legislation pertaining to accident prevention. To help ensure a safe work environment, an employee is to exercise their discretion and be aware of the following safety-conscious ways:

• Know the potential hazards of the job and work place;

• Learn reasonable safety practices;

• Use health and safety devices that are available;

• Correct and/or report safety hazards immediately as is reasonably appropriate;

• Report immediately or as soon as practicable to a supervisor any accident or injury;

• Obey “No Smoking” regulations. All employees and students are prohibited from tobacco use on campus or at school activities, functions, or events;

• Operate machinery or equipment only if qualified to do so; and

• Maintain good housekeeping practices including keeping all fire exits clear and firefighting equipment accessible

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

All employees of LPA are entitled to a work environment free from sexual harassment and all other forms of discrimination. Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct, which undermines the integrity of the employment relationship. No employee, male or female, shall be subject to unsolicited and unwelcomed sexual overtures or conduct of a verbal or physical nature.

**SMOKING**

Smoking is prohibited on any property owned or leased by Leadership Preparatory Academy as well as in any vehicle owned or insured by LPA. All employees, students and visitors are prohibited from smoking on district property and in district vehicles. We discourage using tobacco in any form.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

*Responsible Use of Technology*

LPA recognizes that the use of technology is prevalent in society. Students and staff have access to the Internet, cell phones, games, and a variety of personal technology devices. Students and staff utilize social media websites and applications as well as a variety of other digital resources that allow them to interact, share, create, and innovate. Staff members use these same resources as a means to effectively engage and motivate student learning and collaborate with colleagues. Access to more technology leads to more data access, as well. Regardless of the source, LPA’s staff students are reminded to follow the policies and procedures that protect data access, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), and the Children’s Internet Protection Act of 2000 (CIPA), which are detailed in the Student/Parent Handbook. While the Governance Board supports anytime/anywhere access to LPA business-related data, all staff members share the responsibility to protect sensitive data in a professional manner. Regardless of the device or the computer with which LPA data is retrieved, staff members are expected to protect LPA related personal and sensitive information at all times. This includes LPA purchased devices as well as devices owned, rented, or used by LPA employees.

*Staff Members’ Social Media Use*

As online technologies become more interactive, LPA is providing new methods for supporting teaching and learning, including social media, home access to learning activities, and enhanced online resources. Social media includes all types of communication shared in an electronic format, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, wikis, e-mail, social networks, instant messaging, and video-hosting sites, as well Personnel Handbook. As emerging technology that encourages sharing and electronic collaboration. Each vehicle has its own style and privacy options. These technologies must meet LPA standards and expectations for communication with students, parents, staff, and community members. Information regarding FERPA and the school district’s media release expectations are detailed in the Student/Parent Handbook.

**SOCIAL SECURITY**

Eligible part-time and substitute employees may participate in the Social Security Program and, when required under the

provisions of federal law, may pay contributions to FICA when employed by LPA.

**SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER**

LPA reserves the right to use an employee’s social security number in employment-related practices. All employees who handle documents containing employee identification data such as social security numbers should use reasonable precaution to preclude compromise or identity theft.

**SOLICITATION BY STAFF MEMBERS**

Employees cannot solicit, advertise, or endorse one product over another product when dealing with students, parents or other employees.

**SOLICITATION ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

No person, firm, corporation or business can solicit money from or sell, trade or barter merchandise of any kind to students, employees and school clubs or organizations without the approval of the CEO.

**SUSPENSION/TERMINATION**

The employment contract of any teacher or other professional employee having a contract for a definite term may be terminated, suspended or placed on administrative leave for any of the following reasons:

* incompetence;
* insubordination;
* willful neglect of duties;
* immorality;
* inciting, encouraging or counseling students to violate any valid state law, municipal ordinance or policy rule of the Board of Education;
* reduction of staff due to loss of students or cancellation of programs;
* failure to secure and maintain necessary educational training; or
* any other good and sufficient cause.

Misconduct that may lead to disciplinary action against classified (non-contracted) employees includes:

* incompetence;
* insubordination;
* willful neglect of duties;
* immorality;
* conviction of any crime involving moral turpitude;
* failure to comply with all reasonable orders, requests or directions of the CEO or other supervisors;
* violation of any rule or regulation of the Governance Board;
* inciting, encouraging or counseling students to violate any valid state law, municipal ordinance, or policy or rule of the Governance Board;
* violation of any provision of an employment agreement; or
* any other good and sufficient cause.

Detailed work rules are issued to non-contracted employees at the time of employment and are also located in the Human Resources Notebook located in the CAO’s office. This list is not all-inclusive. As “at-will” employees, non-contracted employees may be terminated at any time for good and sufficient cause.

**SUBSTITUTE EMPLOYMENT**

Substitute employees are defined as those employed for a daily, half-day, or hourly period to replace an employee who is absent from duty. The hours per day and days per week are based on the needs of the LPA. Substitute employees are paid at an hourly, daily or unit rate of pay on a semi-monthly payroll schedule. All substitute employees are subject to Medicare tax.

**TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

All employees, pursuant to applicable statute, who are eligible to participate in the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS), are required, under the provisions of the law, to become members of TRS when employed by the DeKalb County Board of Education. The state and the Board shall contribute their portions of the funds as required by law, and the employee's portion shall be deducted from the employee's salary as required by law. All covered compensation paid by the Board to eligible, full-time employees shall be reported to TRS. Eligible members of TRS are required to contribute 6% of their salary. The LPA contributes 14.27% of the employee’s earnable compensation. For additional information, please visit www.trsga.com. The following positions are covered under TRS: teachers, administrators, supervisors, teacher aides, secretaries, paraprofessionals, public school nurses, employees of the Agricultural Extension Service. For additional information on TRS, please contact the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) (404) 352-6500 or [www.trsga.com](http://www.trsga.com).

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

LPA provides technologies, networks, and Internet access to support the educational mission of the LPA and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and LPA employees. These technology resources may be used only in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the LPA.

All guidelines set forth in policy and any relevant regulations or rules are applicable to all telecommunication services and equipment provided by the LPA including, but not limited to, the following:

* Computer workstations and notebook computers;
* Smart phones, tablets, e-readers, and other mobile devices;
* Internet services;
* Telephone services; and
* Cellular telephone services.

Acceptable use agreements must be signed by all users of LPA technologies or networks. LPA-provided access must be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner. Failure to adhere to the LPA’s policies and guidelines for the use of telecommunication resources may result in suspending or revoking the right to access these resources. It is also important to remember that all electronic communications are subject to public records laws. Unacceptable uses of

the network include: violating the conditions of the Educators Code of Ethics dealing with students’ rights to privacy, using profanity, obscenity, or other offensive language, reposting personal communications without the author’s prior consent, copying commercial software in violation of copyright law, copying other copyright protected material and using the network for financial gain or for any commercial or illegal activity.

**TUTORING**

Except as provided for in LPA-sponsored programs:

(1) no employee shall provide tutoring on LPA property for which compensation that is in addition to the

employee’s LPA salary; and

(2) no employee shall tutor, for compensation, either during the school year or summer, any student who is currently assigned to the employee.

Teachers who tutor, may not offer private instruction on a fee basis to any student who is presently enrolled in their own classes. It is incumbent upon professional staff members to assist students in their classes after school and whenever feasible. It is preferred that a tutor be a person who is not on the staff of the school in which a student is enrolled. Tutoring must be done in such a way as not to interfere with the orderly routine of the teacher's regular day and school responsibilities.

**UNAUTHORIZED TAPE RECORDINGS**

Conversations and communications generally should be free and open among employees. You and/or anyone acting on your behalf may only use audio or video to record or reproduce any conversation among employees while on premises and/or while conducting school business if you get the expressed, written consent of everyone engaged in the conversation or communication on record. LPA may record public presentations, board meetings, hearings, grievances, procurement activities and official investigations. If you violate this policy, it can lead to employee discipline, up to and including termination.

**VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE**

The Governance Board has adopted a policy prohibiting workplace violence. Consistent with this policy, acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion, which involve or affect LPA or which occur on LPA property, will not be tolerated.

**WEAPONS**

The Board shall act forcefully to control anyone who brings weapons of any kind to school or school-sponsored activities. Anyone who unlawfully brings weapons to school or school functions shall be subject to prosecution under the provisions of the law. LPA employees who violate this policy are also subject to disciplinary action.

**WORK CALENDAR**

LPA shall adopt a calendar for each school year that will have additional days built in beyond the calendar established by the DeKalb County Public Schools.

**WORK HOURS**

All full-time employees of the LPA will work a minimum of 40 hours per week (currently 7:40 am until 4:10 pm). The CEO sets a schedule within this policy for the time of arrival and departure of all employees assigned to his/her operation. In order for an organization to achieve its desired goals, excellent attendance and punctuality are necessary. Duties which shall count toward fulfillment of the minimum work day requirement include such duties as teaching, preparation for teaching, assisting with teaching and with teaching preparation, staff meetings, conferences with students and parents, planning conferences, responsibilities. Therefore, regular and prompt attendance is expected and required of all employees. If it is necessary to be absent or late to work, employees are responsible for contacting their supervisor at least one day in advance, if possible. In case of emergency or other circumstances when it is impossible to give advance notice, employees are responsible for contacting their supervisor or designee before time to report to work. The CEO has the authority to set work hours. Work hours are subject to change to meet the needs of LPA. Personal activities should be arranged by each staff member to assure them of being available for work during their scheduled hours of duty. Changes in work schedules will be arranged as far in advance as possible. All employees must clock in and out using the biometric time clock**. Failure to do so will result in Leave Without Pay. Employees arriving after 7:40 am will be considered tardy.** The payroll department will electronically monitor your clock in time via the biometric time clock. Arrivals after 7:40 am will be calculated by the minute and your payroll will be impacted

**WORKERS’COMPENSATION**

Employees may be entitled to workers’ compensation benefits if injured on the job. The injury must arise out of and in the course of employment. The injured employee must provide notice, either in person or in writing, of the injury

immediately, but not later than 15 days after the accident, to the employee’s immediate supervisor. Failure to do so may result in the loss of benefits. The injured employee may select a medical care provider from the panel of approved physicians. Only those providers listed are authorized to provide medical care for a work-related injury. Generally, employees are not eligible for workers’ compensation benefits for injuries sustained going to or coming from work, during deviations from the scope of employment (e.g., a person making a delivery drives to a place unconnected to the employee assignment), as a consequence of imported danger (e.g., an employee’s own attire or a personal weapon causes injury to the employee, when an employee engages in a prohibited act, when the employee engages in horseplay, during recreational or social activities, or during times in which the employee is not subject to the employer’s control (e.g., not on the premises, not during the regularly scheduled work day). Any questions should be addressed to the CEO or CAO.

**VOLUNTEER WORK PROHIBITION**

The LPA is prohibited from asking a non-exempt employee, under any circumstances, to “volunteer” to perform services. Non-exempt employees, in turn, are prohibited from performing any volunteer work that is the same type of work for which the employee is usually paid. Under the FLSA, an overtime-eligible employee cannot volunteer or be asked to volunteer to do extra work if payment would otherwise be required in order to get the work accomplished. The FLSA states that an employee may volunteer and not receive compensation if and only if the employee;(1) performs hours of service for a public agency for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons, without expectation of compensation; (2) offers services freely and without pressure or coercion; **and** (3) is not otherwise employed by the LPA to perform the same type of services as those for which the individual proposes to volunteer. Therefore, for example, principals cannot ask a nonexempt employee to “volunteer” a day to perform duties for which they would usually be compensated.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

The Employee Handbook contains important information about the LPA, and I understand that I should consult the CEO/CAO or CLO regarding any questions not answered in the handbook.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described herein are subject to change at any time, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur, except to the LPA’s policy of employment-at-will. All such changes will generally be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the CEO, CAO, CLO or the LPA Governing Board has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

Furthermore, I understand that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legally-binding agreement. I have had an opportunity to read the handbook, and I understand that I may ask the CEO/CAO/CLO any questions I might have concerning the handbook. I accept the terms of the handbook. I also understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the policies contained in this handbook, and any revisions made to it. I further agree that if I remain with the LPA following any modifications to the handbook, I thereby accept and agree to such changes.

I have received a copy of the LPA’s Employee Handbook on the date listed below. I understand that I am expected to read the entire handbook. Additionally, I will sign the two copies of this Acknowledgment of Receipt, retain one copy for myself, and return one copy to the CAO/CLO on the date specified. I understand that this form will be retained in my personnel file.

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Signature of Employee Date

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Employee's Name - Printed

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Company Representative Date