

Southwest Charlotte STEM Academy
Operations and Board Policies

5203 Shopton Rd.

Charlotte, NC

www.scstemacademy.org

Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Anti-Harassment Policies

Purpose: To explicitly declare the non-discrimination, equal opportunity, and anti-harassment policies of Southwest Charlotte STEM.

Non-discrimination Policy

School complies with all Federal, State, and Local non-discrimination laws including but not limited to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, status, disability, veteran status, genetic information or as otherwise may be prohibited by federal and state law. We want to maintain an employee relations climate that promotes maximum personal development and achievement. We are an equal opportunity employer and do not discriminate on the bases of age, race, color, national origin, sex, religion, creed, veteran status, disability, sexual orientation or any other characteristic prohibited by law. We are dedicated to ensuring the fulfillment of this policy with respect to hiring, selection for training, promotion, transfer, layoff, termination, leaves of absence, rates of pay or any other term or condition of employment. When necessary, we will reasonably accommodate employees and applicants with disabilities and with religious requirements necessitating accommodation as required by law. We expect everyone to show understanding and consideration to fellow employees and to respect and observe this policy.

Equal Opportunity Employment Policy

School is an equal opportunity employer and will not discriminate against any applicant, contractor or employee on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, veteran status, disability, genetic information or other legally protected status, except where it is an occupational qualification. This policy extends to all terms, conditions and privileges of employment as well as the use of the school's facilities and participation in all activities sponsored by the school. It is also School's policy to ensure that all employees are treated fairly on the basis of merit and performance competence with regard to any and all terms of conditions of employment, including recruitment, hiring, compensation, promotions, demotions, assignments, trainings, layoffs, and terminations.

Discrimination and Harassment Policy

The School is committed to having a community in which every individual is treated with sensitivity and respect, and in which each student and teacher has an equal opportunity to work, learn, and develop to his or her full potential in an atmosphere free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. Furthermore, Southwest Charlotte STEM is committed to promoting the worth and dignity of all individuals. To that end, the School prohibits any form of harassment or discrimination (including sexual harassment) on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sex, sexual orientation or other protected characteristic, whether by a supervisor, administrator, co-worker, volunteer, contractor, student, or non-employee. The purpose of this policy is to assure that in the workplace, each employee is able to accomplish his or her job without being subjected to discrimination, harassment, or sexual harassment

While it is not easy to define precisely what harassment or discrimination is, it certainly includes verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct that denigrates, belittles, or puts down an individual or shows hostility, distaste, or aversion toward that individual based on that individual's race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, any other protected class or participation in a protected activity.

Discrimination involves intentionally treating anyone in an unequal or disparate manner because of that person's inherent or natural personal characteristics, including race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran status, any other protected class or participation in a protected activity, when such treatment causes the victim to suffer adverse employment consequences.

Harassment is any unwelcome offensive verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive as to significantly affect the conditions of one's employment or a student's learning. Harassment includes, but is not limited to the following: slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments, unwelcome or abusive jokes, insults, name calling, threats, bullying or intimidation, unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct such as uninvited touching or sexually-related comments or the exchange of benefits for performance of sexual or other favors.

Other conduct that can be unlawful harassment includes verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct that shows aversion, denigration, or hostility because of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation or other protected classification and that:

- Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment;
- Unreasonably interferes with an individual's work; or
- Adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Sexual Harassment and Prohibited Relationships Policy

Of the various types of harassment, sexual harassment is worthy of special considerations beyond those applicable under Southwest Charlotte STEM's general Discrimination and Harassment Policy. No employee, student, volunteer or contractor shall engage in sexual harassment against any other student, employee, or another person in the Southwest Charlotte STEM community.

Definition. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination involving unwelcome sexual, or sex-based conduct that interferes with the employment or education of others. Sexual harassment is any unwanted or unwelcomed verbal or physical advances, sexually explicit derogatory statements, requests for sexual favors, or sexually discriminatory remarks made by someone in the workplace or school environment which is offensive or objectionable to the recipient or which causes the recipient discomfort or humiliation or which interferes with the recipient's job performance. Harassing behaviors can be verbal, non-verbal, or physical, range from subtle innuendo of a sexual nature to coerced sexual activity, and other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that usually takes place under the following circumstances:

- When submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of instruction, participation in school activities, or employment;
- When submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions or benefits; or
- When such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic, extracurricular, or work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment or working environment

Examples of Sexual Harassment. Workplace and school environment behavior that is sexually harassing includes but is not limited to:

- Unwanted sexual remarks or inferences;
- Offensive comments about sex or gender-specific traits;
- Unwelcome sexual propositions, threats, bribes, written notes, or phone calls;
- Unwelcome gestures or sounds or the display of sexually suggestive objects, signals, or pictures;
- Unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature (e.g. touching, pinching, kissing, holding);
- Promise of promotion, favorable performance evaluations, etc. in return for sexual favors, known as “quid pro quo” or “this for that”; or
- Threatening or insinuating, whether explicitly or implicitly, that an employee’s refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect the employee’s employment, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts or any other condition of employment.
- Pressure for sexual activity, continued or repeated offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions;
- Continued or repeated verbal remarks about an individual's body;
- Sexually degrading words used toward, or in the presence of, an individual or to describe an individual

A hostile environment exists if the conduct of a sexual nature is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to creates a hostile or abusive educational or work environment.

Romantic or sexual advances toward students by employees or romantic or sexual relationships between school employees and students are always prohibited in all circumstances. School employees are prohibited from engaging in romantic or other inappropriate relationships with students and are required to report such relationships or reasonable suspicions thereof, to the Principal or other administrator. Procedures established by Southwest Charlotte STEM for reporting suspected sexual harassment shall be followed in any instances involving such conduct.

Either men or women can be sexually harassed by someone of the same or opposite sex, and the law protects both sexes equally from this discrimination. This policy applies to sexual harassment by staff, students, volunteers, vendors, and service providers of either gender against someone of the same or opposite gender.

Application

Discrimination and harassment (including sexual harassment), are prohibited at Southwest Charlotte STEM and during School-related activities between students, employees, School agents, volunteers, visitors and any other person associated with or under the control of Southwest Charlotte STEM. In addition, Southwest Charlotte STEM is not responsible for out of school conduct but reserves the right, in appropriate cases, to address out of school conduct that substantially disrupts the educational environment at Southwest Charlotte STEM or significantly interferes with a staff member’s work environment or a student’s learning at Southwest Charlotte STEM. Procedures established by Southwest Charlotte STEM for reporting suspected discrimination, harassment or bullying shall be followed in any instances involving such conduct.

Retaliation

School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of discrimination or harassment (including sexual harassment) or who participates in an investigation as a witness or in any other capacity. Anyone who has been subject to retaliation should report it to the Principal.

Procedure for Employee (and Volunteer) Complaints of Harassment, Discrimination, Bullying, and Retaliation

- Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination or retaliation should immediately discuss and report to his or her direct supervisor, the Principal, any other supervisor with whom the person feels comfortable, or, if the Principal is the subject of the complaint, to any supervisor or any member of the Board of Directors. While the person should report sexual harassment to a supervisor or the Principal, there is no requirement that the person report sexual harassment, discrimination or retaliation to a particular supervisor.
- Any supervisor receiving a complaint of harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination or retaliation shall report such complaint to the Principal. If the Principal is the subject of such complaint then the supervisor shall report to the Chair of the Board of Directors or to any other Board member that the supervisor believes is appropriate.
- Any complaint made under this policy will be investigated thoroughly and promptly. To the maximum extent possible, Southwest Charlotte STEM will protect the privacy of the parties involved.
- Any attempt to interfere with or influence the investigation of a harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination or retaliation complaint is strictly prohibited, and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.
- There will be no adverse action against an employee who acts in good faith and reports an incident, or who participates in or cooperates with an investigation of an alleged incident.

Disciplinary Action

Any employee found to have engaged in harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination. In addition, some forms of sexual harassment, such as sexual relations between an adult and minor, may violate criminal laws. Southwest Charlotte STEM will cooperate with local authorities in the investigation of any alleged criminal activity.

Confidentiality of Records

School will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and protect the privacy of the parties involved in the investigation of a sexual harassment, discrimination and retaliation complaint. All written materials related to the investigation of allegations of harassment will be placed in confidential files, which are separate from student and personnel records. Reasonable efforts will be taken to ensure that access to these records is limited to those persons with a need to know.

Sexual and Other Types of Unlawful Harassment/Discrimination on School Grounds by Contractors, Volunteers or Individuals Who Are Not School Employees

The policies contained in this section, including the reporting procedures and no retaliation policy, regarding harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination, shall also apply to contractors, volunteers or individuals who are not employees of the School when such individuals are on School property or during School events.

Implementation: Information and Education/Training

- This policy will be distributed to all employees and will be discussed as part of the staff orientation at the beginning of each school year.

- The Principal is authorized and expected to establish training and administrative procedures to help eliminate discrimination and harassment, and to foster an environment of understanding and respect for all individuals.

Volunteer Policy

Purpose: This policy is to provide clear guidance on volunteer activity at School to protect the safety and security of students while encouraging the involvement of parents and the community.

A volunteer is anyone who provides services, without compensation or benefits of any kind or amount, on an occasional or regular basis at Southwest Charlotte STEM or School activities. School strongly encourages parent, grandparent, guardian, and community involvement in our School. The following policy assists our volunteers in being effective, satisfied, and successful School volunteers while maintaining the integrity of Southwest Charlotte STEM and the health and safety of our students and teachers. Volunteers in large group functions may not be subject to all of the same requirements to serve.

1. All volunteers at the School are required to:
 - a) Have a Sex Offender Registry Check on file dated within the last two calendar years.
 - b) Have a background check performed through a third party vendor on file dated within the last two calendar years.
 - c) Comply with this policy.
2. The Principal or his/her designee will formally approve every volunteer application, and volunteers must be placed on the Authorized Volunteer list before volunteering their services at Southwest Charlotte STEM. All administrative staff will have a copy of the Authorized Volunteer list and will prohibit any person not on this list from volunteering at Southwest Charlotte STEM.
3. Information collected during the screening process for volunteers will be treated as confidential to the extent allowed by the law.
4. The Principal or her/his designee will review all flagged criminal background checks. No person who has been convicted of crimes against children, sex crimes, or serious crimes of violence will be allowed to volunteer at Southwest Charlotte STEM. The Principal will evaluate other criminal records on an individual basis. If a criminal history presents itself in a review, the Principal shall determine whether the results of the review indicate that the volunteer (i) poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel, or (ii) has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his or her duties as a volunteer. The Principal shall document the decision.
5. All volunteers must report directly to the School office when they arrive and should sign in. The School office will provide an official badge identifying the volunteer that must be worn at all times.
6. All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age unless they are supervised by another responsible adult as approved by the Administrator or his/her designee.
7. Volunteers work in partnership with, under the supervision of, and at the request of School administration and staff. Volunteers are expected to abide by all Board policies, procedures, and School rules when performing their assigned responsibilities. The

Principal or his/her designee shall make volunteers aware of all applicable policies, procedures, and rules.

8. Volunteers will not have access to confidential information in student records except as allowed by federal and state laws and regulations. Volunteers will be responsible for maintaining confidentiality regarding information seen and heard while working as a volunteer.
9. If there is a safety concern or an emergency situation, volunteers must immediately communicate that to someone in authority at Southwest Charlotte STEM.
10. Volunteers shall not use information learned or acquired in the course of volunteering for any reason other than in furtherance of their volunteer efforts at Southwest Charlotte STEM. For example, if a volunteer is a class parent and receives parent email information to communicate with parents, the volunteer shall not share parent email addresses with others and shall not use such email addresses to communicate with parents about anything other than for the purpose of serving as class parent.
11. Volunteers are to serve as positive role model and abide by the Volunteer Policy.
12. Volunteers are prohibited from disciplining students. Behaviors requiring discipline should be reported immediately to the appropriate teacher or staff member.
13. Volunteers are prohibited from administering medications of any kind to students.
14. Volunteers should refrain from giving students gifts, rewards, or food items of any kind without the permission of School personnel.
15. Volunteers are expected to be prompt and dependable. Volunteers should notify the School office if an illness or emergency prohibits them from attending a volunteer assignment.
16. Volunteers may not take students off School property without the written permission of parents and approval of School personnel.
17. Volunteers must leave children not enrolled School at home when volunteering.

School does not tolerate any kind of discrimination or harassment by volunteers of Southwest Charlotte STEM and it is expected that all volunteers will comply with Southwest Charlotte STEM's policies related to such matters.

Staff Criminal Background Check Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to identify how Southwest Charlotte STEM will conduct its criminal background checks to ensure the safety of all of our students and staff.

According to NC Charter School law GS_115C-238.29F (e) (1), all NC Charter Schools shall adopt a background check policy mirroring the local board of education policy that requires an applicant for employment to be checked for a criminal history, as defined in G.S. 115C-332. School is required to apply its policy uniformly in requiring applicants for employment to be checked for a criminal history before the applicant is given an unconditional job offer. According to NC charter School law, a charter School may employ an applicant conditionally while the board is checking the person's criminal history and making a decision based on the results of the check.

School is required by the state of North Carolina to conduct criminal background checks for all staff including full-time, part-time and substitutes, which will be done upon the acceptance of a conditional employment offer. A criminal records check may also be conducted on a selective, random or rotating basis for any current employees, annually rehired employees, and employees whose contracts are scheduled to be renewed.

The Principal and Assistant principals will be required to also undergo a credit history check and civil records check in addition to the criminal background check and a Social Security Search.

In order to conduct an accurate check of criminal records, all applicants for employment and any current employee may be required to submit to fingerprinting as part of the background check process. The refusal to consent to a criminal records check or fingerprinting will result in the applicant not being offered employment, or if a conditional offer has been made, the offer will be withdrawn or the employee's employment will be terminated, as applicable.

If a person omits information or gives false information concerning his or her criminal history on his or her employment application, background check form, resume or any other required or submitted application-related document, that person may not be offered employment. If the person has been: (a) hired, or (b) offered employment conditioned on the results of a criminal history check, the person will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal or the offer of employment will be withdrawn, as applicable.

The Principal will review all criminal background checks. If a criminal history presents itself in a review, Southwest Charlotte STEM Board of Directors shall review the criminal history it receives on a person. The Board shall determine whether the results of the review indicate that the applicant or employee (i) poses a threat to the physical safety of students or personnel, or (ii) has demonstrated that he or she does not have the integrity or honesty to fulfill his or her duties as school personnel and shall use the information when making employment decisions and decisions with regard to independent contractors. The Board shall make written findings with regard to how it used the information when making employment decisions and decisions with regard to independent contractors.

The Principal will notify applicants if any adverse results are found and the applicant will be given a chance to respond with any relevant explanation. School shall apply its policy uniformly in requiring applicants for School personnel positions to be checked for a criminal history.

Each employee is required to notify his or her immediate supervisor within 24 hours after an arrest for an offense other than a non-moving traffic violation, felony or misdemeanor criminal charge, felony or misdemeanor criminal conviction, guilty plea or plea of no contest. Any employee who is aware of any arrest for an offense other than a non-moving traffic violation, felony or misdemeanor criminal charge, criminal conviction, guilty plea or plea of no contest of another employee should notify their supervisor or an administrator.

There shall be no liability for negligence on the part of the Southwest Charlotte STEM Board of Directors, or its employees, or the State Board of Education, or its employees, arising from any act taken or omission by any of them in carrying out the provisions of The Staff Criminal Background Check Policy. The immunity established by this subsection shall not extend to gross negligence, wanton conduct, or intentional wrongdoing that would otherwise be actionable. The immunity established by this subsection shall be deemed to have been waived to the extent of indemnification by insurance, indemnification under Articles 31A and 31B of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes, and to the extent sovereign immunity is waived under the Tort Claims Act, as set forth in Chapter 31 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.

Any applicant for employment who willfully furnishes, supplies, or otherwise gives false information on an employment application that is the basis for a criminal history record check shall be guilty of a Class A1 misdemeanor. (1995, c. 373, s. 1; 2001-376, s. 1; 2012-12, s. 2(rr).)

Any staff members or coaches that will be driving students for School related purposes will be required to have a Motor Vehicles Check performed in addition to the criminal background check stated above.

The Principal's background check will be requested and reviewed by the Board's Governance Committee.

Information obtained through the implementation of this policy shall be kept confidential as provided in Article 21A of Chapter 115C of the North Carolina General Statutes, and NC GS §115C-332(e). However, the criminal history received on any person who is certificated, certified or licensed by the State Board of Education will be provided to the State Board as required by NC GS §115C-332(e).

Board of Directors Background Check Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to identify how Southwest Charlotte STEM will conduct its background checks of Board Members to ensure the safety of all of our students and staff.

All members of the Board of Directors shall undergo a criminal background check and a Social Security Search prior to officially joining the Board. Once a new board member has been identified and voted on, the checks will be performed. If a background check identifies issues, which may preclude acceptance, the case will be referred to the Board Chair and the Vice Chair. The Chair or Vice Chair will notify applicants if any adverse results are found and the applicant will be given a chance to respond with any relevant explanation. Once the new Board member's background check has been successfully completed, the new member may attend meetings and become fully involved School Board activities.

The School will initiate the background checks through an external company. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the results of criminal background checks will be kept as confidential as possible with a limited number of persons authorized to review results (to include the Principal and the Board Chair).

Registered Sex Offenders Policy

Purpose: To clearly identify how registered sex offenders will be expected to respect the boundaries set forth by Southwest Charlotte STEM.

Pursuant to Session Law 2008-117, *The Jessica Lunsford Act for North Carolina* (the "Act"), the General Assembly of North Carolina has recognized that sex offenders often pose a high risk of engaging in sex offenses after being released from incarceration or commitment and that the protection of students from sex offenders while on School property and at School-sponsored activities serves an important governmental interest.

School is committed to the following

1. Sex offenders are banned from all School property and School events

In accordance with G.S. 14-208.18, all persons who (1) are required to register under the Sex Offender and Public Protection Program AND (2) have been convicted of certain sexually violent offenses or any offense where the victim was under the age of 16 years at the time of the offense ("Prohibited Persons") are expressly forbidden to be present on any property owned or operated by the Southwest Charlotte STEM system, including Southwest Charlotte STEM buildings, athletic fields, playgrounds, parking lots, activity buses or other property of any kind for any reason, including attendance at sporting events or other School-related functions, whether before, during or after School hours. In addition, Prohibited Persons may not attend or be present at any student function or field trip on or off of School property which is 1) School-sponsored or 2) otherwise under the official supervision or control of School personnel. This policy applies to all Prohibited Persons regardless of their relationship to, or affiliation with, a student in the School system (i.e. stepparents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, etc).

A. Prohibited persons

The Principal or designee shall insure that administration is familiar with the criminal offenses that qualify an individual as a Prohibited Person under this policy. The Principal will also subscribe to electronic notification of Registered Sex Offenders and access the state database as needed.

B. No special permission

There shall be no "special permission" given for Prohibited Persons to be on Schools grounds or attend events or activities in violation of this policy.

C. Possible exceptions for students

Students who meet the definition of a Prohibited Person may be on School property only in accordance with state law.

D. Limited exception for prohibited persons who are parents / legal guardians of a student

- a. A Prohibited Person who is the Parent/Legal Guardian of a student may be on School property only for the following reason:

1. To attend a previously scheduled School conference with School personnel to discuss their child's academic or social progress; or
2. At the request of the Principal /designee, for any other reason relating to the welfare or transportation of their child.

- b. The procedure for making a request is as follows:

1. For each visit authorized by subsection (a)(1) above, the Parent/Legal Guardian must provide the Principal with prior written notice of their registration on the Sex Offender Registry.
 2. A request for presence at Southwest Charlotte STEM must be submitted to the Principal in writing, minimally 72 hours in advance.
 3. The request must include the nature and specific times of the requested.
 4. The Principal or designee will respond within 48 hours either authorizing or denying the request.
 5. The decision of the Principal or designee is final.
 6. The Principal will notify the Board of any such requests and the decision.
- c. For each visit authorized by subsection (c) above, the Parent/Legal Guardian must check in at the front office upon arrival and departure. In addition, during each and every visit, the Parent/Legal Guardian must be under the direct supervision of School personnel at all times. If personnel are not available to supervise the Parent/Legal Guardian during any visit then they shall not be permitted on Southwest Charlotte STEM property.
- d. For each visit authorized by subsection (c) above, the Parent/Legal Guardian shall comply with all reasonable rules and restrictions placed upon them by the Principal, including any restrictions on the date, time, location and length of meetings.

2. Enforcement

Any suspected violation of this policy shall be reported by a School administrator to the Principal and to law enforcement for immediate investigation. All School personnel should report the presence or suspected presence of a Prohibited Person to a School administrator and take appropriate action. The Principal shall immediately notify the Southwest Charlotte STEM Board Chair of any known or suspected Prohibited Person who is a student, or a parent or legal guardian of a student, at their School.

3. Applicability

This policy shall supersede any conflicting provisions in all other School Board policies regarding School safety, parental involvement, School field trips, School visitors, School volunteers and student transportation.

Policy for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Purpose: To ensure the healthy growth and development of all children by reporting suspected cases of child maltreatment or abuse.

School shall comply with the North Carolina law requiring all adults to report suspected child maltreatment as stated in G.S. 7B-301 and Chapter 115C of the General Statutes.

Who Must Report

North Carolina's reporting law applies to every person and every institution in the state. It requires "[a]ny person or institution who has cause to suspect that any juvenile is abused, neglected, or dependent, as defined by G.S. 7B-101, or has died as the result of maltreatment" to make a report to the county department of social services. The reporting requirement applies to doctors, social workers, therapists, teachers, law enforcement officers, and others whose professions sometimes involve them directly with problems of abuse, neglect, or dependency. It applies equally, though, to housing inspectors, store clerks, co-workers, friends, relatives, bystanders, and all others.

Chapter § 115C-400. School personnel to report child abuse. Any person who has cause to suspect child abuse or neglect has a duty to report the case of the child to the Director of Social Services of the county, as provided in the Juvenile Code.

How to Report

A report must be made to the county Department of Social Services in person, by telephone or in writing. It must be made to the Department of Social Services in the county where the child lives or is found, even if the child's legal residence is in another county or state.

The report should include as much of the following information as the person reporting knows:

- the child's name, age, and address;
- the name and address of the child's parent, guardian, custodian, or caretaker;
- the names and ages of other children in the home;
- the child's location if the child is not at the home address;
- the nature and extent of any injury or condition resulting from abuse, neglect or dependency; and
- any other information that might help to establish the need for protective services or court intervention.

Additionally, law also requires the person who makes a report must provide his or her name, address and telephone number.

Any School Faculty or Staff member who suspects abuse is required to report to the local Department of Social Services (DSS) providing the information listed above. All School Employees who suspect child abuse or neglect, will report it to DSS immediately. If an employee makes a report to DSS they must inform of Principal of the details of the report.. All School employees will receive training on how to report suspected child abuse. The Principal and School Counselor are available to all staff for support or questions relating to this matter.

The Principal must report immediately to the appropriate local law enforcement agency whenever the Principal has personal knowledge or actual notice from School personnel that any of the following acts has occurred on School property:

- assault resulting in serious personal injury
- sexual assault
- sexual offense
- rape
- kidnapping
- indecent liberties with a minor
- unlawful possession of a controlled substance

This reporting requirement applies regardless of the age or status of the person thought to have committed the act. School grounds includes any School building, bus, campus, grounds, recreational area or athletic field. In addition to the School's reporting requirements under N.C.G.S. Section 115C-288(g) and under any other state or federal law or regulation, the School may take any lawful action it deems appropriate, including reporting any suspected criminal activity to authorities, whether or not such activity occurred on School Property.

School Safety Policy

School will have a Crisis Management Team that will create and manage the following procedures by outlining the actions and responsibilities of staff and administration in addressing the following issues:

- Evacuation Fire
- Evacuation Non-Fire
- Hazardous Materials
- Lockdown-Perimeter
- Lockdown-Full
- Serious Medical Emergency
- Severe Weather (tornado; hurricane; etc.)
- Public Health Emergency
- Student in Crisis

The Principal oversees the Crisis Management Team and it is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that the procedures are current and applicable and that all applicable parties are aware of the procedures.

The Principal is also responsible for making sure that drills occur on a regular basis. These procedures will be reviewed annually by the Crisis Management Team and any changes or revisions will be made by the Principal. The Principal is responsible for communicating these procedures to the Board of Directors.

§ 115C-218.75. General operating requirements.

Health and Safety Standards. – A charter school shall meet the same health and safety requirements required of a local school administrative unit. The Department of Public Instruction shall ensure that charter schools provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal meningitis and influenza and their vaccines at the beginning of every school year. This information shall include the causes, symptoms, and how meningococcal meningitis and influenza are spread and the places where parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children.

The Department of Public Instruction shall also ensure that charter schools provide parents and guardians with information about cervical cancer, cervical dysplasia, human papillomavirus, and the vaccines available to prevent these diseases. This information shall be provided at the beginning of the school year to parents of children entering grades five through 12. This information shall include the causes and symptoms of these diseases, how they are transmitted, how they may be prevented by vaccination, including the benefits and possible side effects of vaccination, and the places where parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children.

The Department of Public Instruction shall also ensure that charter schools provide students in grades seven through 12 with information annually on the preventable risks for preterm birth in subsequent pregnancies, including induced abortion, smoking, alcohol consumption, the use of illicit drugs, and inadequate prenatal care.

The Department of Public Instruction shall also ensure that charter schools provide students in grades nine through 12 with information annually on the manner in which a parent may lawfully abandon a newborn baby with a responsible person, in accordance with G.S. 7B-500.

The Department of Public Instruction shall also ensure that the guidelines for individual diabetes care plans adopted by the State Board of Education under G.S. 115C-12(31) are implemented in charter schools in which students with diabetes are enrolled and that charter schools otherwise comply with the provisions of G.S. 115C-375.3.

The Department of Public Instruction shall ensure that charter schools comply with G.S. 115C-375.2A. The board of Directors of a charter school shall provide the school with a supply of emergency epinephrine auto-injectors necessary to carry out the provisions of G.S. 115C-375.2A.

School Risk Management Plan. – Each charter school, in coordination with local law enforcement and emergency management agencies, is encouraged to adopt a School Risk Management Plan (SRMP) relating to incidents of school violence. In constructing and maintaining these plans, charter schools may utilize the School Risk and Response Management System (SRRMS) established pursuant to G.S. 115C-105.49A. These plans are not considered a public record as the term "public record" is defined under G.S. 132-1 and shall not be subject to inspection and examination under G.S. 132-6.

Charter schools are encouraged to provide schematic diagrams and keys to the main entrance of school facilities to local law enforcement agencies, in addition to implementing the provisions in G.S. 115C-105.52.

Policy Against Bullying. – A charter school is encouraged to adopt a policy against bullying or harassing behavior, including cyber bullying, that is consistent with the provisions of Article 29C of this Chapter. If a charter school adopts a policy to prohibit bullying and harassing behavior, the charter school shall, at the beginning of each school year, provide the policy to staff, students, and parents as defined in G.S. 115C-390.1(b)(8).

School Safety Exercises. – At least once a year, a charter school is encouraged to hold a full school-wide lockdown exercise with local law enforcement and emergency management agencies that are part of the charter school's SRMP.

School Safety Information Provided to Division of Emergency Management. – A charter school is encouraged to provide the following: (i) schematic diagrams, including digital schematic diagrams, and (ii) emergency response information requested by the Division for the SRMP. The schematic diagrams and emergency response information are not considered public records as the term "public record" is defined under G.S. 132-1 and shall not be subject to inspection and examination under G.S. 132-6.

(e1) **(Effective July 1, 2019)** Anonymous Tip Line. – A charter school shall develop and operate an anonymous tip line in accordance with G.S. 115C-105.51.

Weapons Ban Policy

Purpose: To provide a safe and secure School environment for all students, employees and visitors of School.

School prohibits weapons (and replicas of weapons) on School property, in School vehicles and at School-sponsored activities on or off School property. Weapons and replicas of weapons constitute any item (regardless of its nature) used to threaten or cause actual harm, including but not limited to: firearms, knives, metal knuckles, chains, razors, explosives, poisonous or noxious gases or any other tool or instrument capable of inflicting bodily injury as determined by School administration. On-duty Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) or School Resource Officers (SRO) are the only approved individuals to carry weapons on School property or at other School-sponsored activities on or off School property.

Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from School. The Principal will review each alleged violation of this policy and will exercise discretion for expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including termination. The Principal will review each alleged violation of this policy and will exercise discretion for disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis.

Visitors or volunteers who violate this policy will be subject to local law enforcement action.

All acts of violence and possession of weapons as defined in this policy shall be reported to parents of the violator, appropriate law enforcement agency and any other government agency as required by law.

Any employee who is aware that a student, volunteer, parent, or employee is carrying a weapon must report the infraction to their supervisor or an administrator immediately.

The Principal is required to report immediately to the appropriate local law enforcement agency whenever the Principal has personal knowledge or actual notice from School personnel that any of the following acts has occurred on School property:

- assault involving the use of a weapon
- unlawful possession of a firearm
- unlawful possession of a weapon

This reporting requirement applies regardless of the age or status of the person thought to have committed the act. School property includes any School building, bus, campus, grounds, recreational area or athletic field. In addition to the School's reporting requirements under N.C.G.S. Section 115C-288(g) and under any other state or federal law or regulation, the School may take any lawful action it deems appropriate, including reporting any suspected criminal activity to authorities, whether or not such activity occurred on School Property.

Document Retention Policy & Procedures

Purpose: To provide the plan and procedures for retaining documents at the School.

Policy:

All storage of financial and administrative records shall be in a secure, safe, and confidential manner. The length of time for retention shall comply with legal requirements. Records related to a possible or pending judicial or administrative investigation shall be kept until all proceeding and actions are concluded.

Procedures:

Physical Records: once annually the physical documents and files should be transferred from active files to inactive storage and each file should be labeled with the retention date. All confidential files should be clearly labeled Confidential. All files in storage should be stored in a fire resistant, secure, dry place.

When files are past retention requirements, the documents shall be shredded and disposed of as soon as reasonably possible.

Long term storage of electronic files: all electronic files will be backed up daily and the backed up files are moved off-site monthly.

Southwest Charlotte STEM complies with all State and Federal laws and regulations for document retention, including the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources for retention and disposition of records of local school administrative units. (G.S. 115C-402(a)). The table below, which provides the minimum requirements for document retention, is intended to comply with all such laws and regulations.

| Type of Document | Minimum Requirement |
|---|---------------------|
| Accounts payable ledgers and schedules | 7 years |
| Audit reports | Permanently |
| Bank reconciliations | 2 years |
| Bank statements | 3 years |
| Cancelled checks | 7 years |
| Checks (for important payments & purchases) | Permanently |
| Contracts, mortgages, notes and leases (expired) | 7 years |
| Contracts (still in effect) | Permanently |
| Correspondence (general) | 2 years |
| Correspondence (legal and important matters) | Permanently |
| Correspondence (with customers and vendors) | 2 years |
| Deeds, mortgages, and bills of sale | Permanently |
| Depreciation schedules | Permanently |
| Duplicate deposit slips | 2 years |
| Employment applications | 3 years |
| Expense analyses/expense distribution schedules | 7 years |
| Year End financial statements | Permanently |
| Expired insurance policies | 3 years |
| Insurance records, current accident reports, claim policies, etc. | Permanently |

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Internal audit reports | 3 years |
| Inventories of supplies, materials, products | 7 years |
| Invoices (to customers, from vendors) | 7 years |
| Minute books, bylaws and charter | Permanently |
| Patents and related papers | Permanently |
| Payroll records and summaries | 7 years |
| Personnel files (terminated employees) | 7 years |
| Retirement and pension records | Permanently |
| Tax returns and worksheets | Permanently |
| Timesheets | 7 years |
| Trademark registrations and copyrights | Permanently |
| Withholding tax statements | 7 years |

Student Records:

After a student withdraws (meaning a student is not transferring to another public School) School will keep a student’s records including health and academic records for 5 years.

Student accident and special incident reports will be kept until the student turns the age of 21.

Public Records Request Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for any persons or public entity requesting information from Southwest Charlotte STEM through a public records request.

Southwest Charlotte STEM allows for public records requests, with certain exceptions.

The public records of Southwest Charlotte STEM shall mean any document that satisfies the general definition of “public record” set forth in North Carolina General Statute, Section 132 *et. seq.* and any other applicable laws, and does not fall within any of the exceptions set forth therein, as the definition and exceptions are amended from time to time and as the definition and exceptions are interpreted by state, federal and/or local courts.

Requests for public records shall be made in writing (electronic or paper) to the Director of Operations, Board of Directors Secretary or other designated Open Records Officer. The Open Records Act sets forth the various specifications for the contents of a written request. The request shall include the name of the requester and the address to which Southwest Charlotte STEM should address its response. The request shall identify or describe the records sought with sufficient specificity to enable Southwest Charlotte STEM to ascertain the records being requested. Southwest Charlotte STEM will not recognize anonymous requests for the review of public records.

The Principal, Board of Principal s Secretary or designee of the Principal shall act upon every defined written request (whether made in person, by mail, fax or electronic mail) within a reasonable time,.

If a written request for access to a record is denied or deemed denied, the Requester may file an appeal to the Southwest Charlotte STEM Board (“the Board”) within fifteen (15) business days of the mailing date of Southwest Charlotte STEM’s denial or of the date the request is deemed denied. The appeal should state the grounds upon which the Requester asserts that the record is a public record or financial record and shall address any grounds stated by Southwest Charlotte STEM for delaying or denying the request.

Unless the Requester agrees otherwise, the Board shall make a final determination, which shall be mailed to the Requester and Southwest Charlotte STEM within thirty (30) days of receipt of the appeal. If the Board fails to issue a final determination within thirty (30) days, the appeal is deemed denied.

The School shall establish reasonable fees for duplication of records in accordance with NC law.

Admissions and Enrollment Policy

Purpose: This policy is in place to address the process for handling admissions at School. The goal of this admissions policy is to declare the process and methods that will be used to admit students in a fair and consistent way that does not offer priority to any student except those specifically noted in required by North Carolina law.

School is a nonprofit, tuition-free charter school authorized by the state of North Carolina. As a charter school, School will be open to all students who would otherwise qualify for enrollment in North Carolina Public Schools. The school will not discriminate against any student on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, or disability. School will open enrollment on January 1. The open enrollment period will end on February 28. The lottery date, time and location will be published on the school's website by January 15th of each year.

No criteria for admission will be used except the completed application. The application may be completed online through our website., unless a family is unable to access the site. In that case, we will provide a paper application to parents when requested. The application will include the student's name, parent/guardian names, current address of student, phone number of parent/guardian, email of parent/guardian, county of residence, current grade level, their grade level for the coming year, student's date of birth, current school, the name of any siblings already enrolled at the school, declaration of the student's residence in the state of North Carolina, confirmation of access to email, parent email address and an indication as to how the family would like their children entered into the lottery.

Grade Level for the Lottery Application

Parents will be asked to confirm both their student's current grade as well as the grade for the coming year. Parents may not choose which grade they would like their child enrolled in for the coming year, they must enter the actual current grade and the next year's grade as confirmation. Parents wishing to have their child considered for retention must still submit their student for the subsequent grade level and then if admitted the student will be evaluated by the Principal and child's teacher before a retention decision is made. If the student's current school recommends a student for retention and has it documented in the student's file, the student will be moved to the appropriate grade if they have been admitted to school and will retain enrollment status with School. If the student is on the wait list at the time the retention decision is made, they will be moved to the correct grade level and placed on the wait list of their new grade based on the number they were pulled during the lottery.

Single or Family Application

Each family will be offered the choice to either enter all of their children into the lottery with one surname or enter each child separately in the lottery. When a family application (all siblings on one application) is pulled during the lottery, all of the students listed on the application will be pulled at the same time.

Returning Students

Current students at School will not be required to re-enroll. They will be asked to sign a letter of intent for the coming year during January to allow the school to plan appropriately for the lottery.

Enrollment Priority:

The School will follow all rules and regulations regarding enrollment priority as specified required by applicable North Carolina law

The following groups will have enrollment priority at School for subsequent school years in the order that follows as space permits in each grade:

1. Children of full time employees and board members (may not exceed 15% of total school population)
2. Siblings of current students (as determined by Charter School law G.S. 115C-238.29F(g)(5a))
3. Students who were enrolled in a NC charter school in the previous school year.

Multiple Birth Siblings

If multiple birth siblings apply to the school, their surname will be entered once to represent all of the multiple birth siblings. If the multiple birth siblings are pulled in the lottery when there is still at least one spot remaining in their grade level, all multiple birth siblings shall be admitted. If their application is pulled after the spots are all filled, they will be added to the wait list in the order they are listed on their application.

Other Siblings

If siblings apply for family admission through the lottery, Southwest Charlotte STEM will enter one surname into the lottery to represent all of the siblings applying at the same time. If that surname of the siblings is selected, then all of the siblings shall be admitted to the extent that space is available and does not exceed the grade level capacity. It is our intent to provide Lottery Procedures that benefit families but are fair and consistent for all of our applicants.

Prior to the general enrollment lottery, the school will conduct a lottery of the students with preference. If there are more qualified students that have applied than there are spots available, a grade level wait list will be started and students not receiving spots will be added to the wait list in the order in which they are pulled.

Once the preference lottery has been completed (if needed) the general lottery will begin. School will place all applications received during the open enrollment period into one school wide lottery.

Lottery Results

The school will share the results of the lottery immediately and post the results of the lottery on the website within 3 business days of the lottery. If a student has been admitted to the school, the parent/guardian of the student will be contacted via email unless they indicated on their application that they did not have access to email. If the parent is unable to receive email, an acceptance letter will be mailed to the child's residence.

The results and the wait list will be updated monthly to allow parents to determine their current place on the wait list. Parents of students placed on the wait list will receive an email notifying them of their place on the waitlist. They will be able to verify their place on the waitlist on our website and they will be notified if their child has moved up on the waitlist if a spot becomes available.

Enrollment

Students admitted before April 15 will have 10 calendar days from the date their acceptance email was sent to accept or decline enrollment and 5 days from the time of the acceptance email to turn in enrollment paperwork. If a student is admitted after April 15, they will have 5 days to accept or decline enrollment at the school and 5 days to return the enrollment paperwork. If a student is admitted after July 15, they will have 48 hours to accept or decline enrollment at the school and 3 days to return the enrollment paperwork. If the school does not receive enrollment confirmation and the paperwork back in the specified time period, the Principal may decline enrollment to the student and offer the spot to the next student on the wait list. If

enrollment is declined and then a parent later decides they would like to send their student after all, they will be asked to submit a new application and they will be placed on the wait list in the next available spot.

As spots at the school become available, the parent/guardian of the student will be contacted via email. If the parent does not have access to email and has specified that on their application, the school will mail a letter of acceptance to the child's residence.

School's Right to Refuse Enrollment

School reserves the right to refuse to enroll any student currently under a term of expulsion or suspension by his or her school until that term is over.

School reserves the right to refuse to enroll a student if a parent willingly and knowingly provided incorrect information on the enrollment application.

If a student has accepted enrollment at the school, but does not appear at the school in the first 2 days of school, the school will make reasonable attempts to contact the parents. If there is no response from the parent by the 3rd day of school, the school reserves the right to remove the student from their enrollment roster and offer the next student on the wait list the spot.

Handling of Errors

School Errors

If any mistake is made by School in administering the lottery (or if any discrepancy occurs in the lottery process as a result of the actions of School that is not corrected during the lottery), such mistake or discrepancy will not invalidate the lottery and the lottery results will stand with respect to all applicants who were admitted at the appropriate grade level through the lottery. The mistake or discrepancy will be corrected at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors (after recognition of the mistake). If a mistake is made by an applicant resulting in the applicant not being placed at the appropriate grade level in the lottery, the applicant will not be admitted and may submit a corrected application, which will be subject to the process followed for students applying after the enrollment period.

If too many students were included in the lottery at a grade level or if a student name was duplicated in the lottery at a grade level, the student or students who should not have been included (or the duplicate with the lower priority placement number, as applicable) will be removed, and any applicants with placement numbers behind the applicants who were removed will be advanced in order on the list.

If an applicant is left out of the lottery by mistake, the number of students who were included in the lottery will be determined. For each applicant not included by mistake, a random application number from the full pool of applicants received will be assigned, and the applicant will be assigned that number as his or her lottery placement number and appropriately placed as if they were pulled at the same time as the randomly assigned placement number. Any applicants with placement numbers on the wait list behind the applicants who were left off by mistake will be moved down in order on the list. As noted above, lottery results will stand with respect to all applicants who were admitted at the appropriate grade level through the lottery.

Parent Errors

If an applicant has been incorrectly placed in a grade because a parent wishes to have their student retained, the applicant will not be admitted and may submit a corrected application, which will be subject to the process followed for students applying after the enrollment period.

10/20 Day Rule for Dropping Courses

Purpose: This policy is in place to clearly identify School's policy for dealing with student's interested in dropping a course after the School year has begun.

The 10/20 Day Rule was established by the State Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Compliance Commission for Accountability. The rule (HSP-C-003) states that, effective with the 1999-2000 School year, students may drop a course with an end-of-course (EOC) test within the first 10 days of a block schedule or within the first 20 days of a traditional schedule. The 10/20 Day Rule was established to prohibit the removal of students from EOC courses later during the instructional year to avoid the impression that a School might have deliberately circumvented the requirement to test all students enrolled in EOC courses.

School will not allow a student to drop a course after the 10th day of a block scheduled course or 20th day of a traditional schedule course with the exception of the following:

1. A student transferred into Southwest Charlotte STEM without sufficient records to inform a proper placement. Records do not arrive until after the 10th or 20th day respectively. In such cases, Southwest Charlotte STEM has the latitude to withdraw a student if the student has been inappropriately placed in an EOC course.
2. A student is withdrawn to enroll in a higher level EOC course. The student will take the appropriate test for that course. In such a case the student may be better served and Southwest Charlotte STEM is still held accountable through the test given in the higher level course.
3. There is a valid medical reason for removing a student from a course. In very rare cases, an individual student may be involved in a major medical emergency such as an accident that incapacitates the student for an extended period of time. In such instances, it may be in the student's best interest to be withdrawn from a course.

The above, exceptions are allowable in individual cases where circumstances are extenuating and it is clearly in the interest of the student to remove them from an EOC course. Each case will be weighed individually by the Principal and consideration will be given to assure that the accountability of Southwest Charlotte STEM is not compromised. If the student is withdrawn, sufficient documentation will be kept by the Principal explaining why the student was withdrawn. These justifications will be summarized and forwarded to the LEA Testing/accountability Coordinator as supporting documentation to accompany the accountability files of Southwest Charlotte STEM.

The Principal is encouraged to consider both the credibility of a School's accountability results as well as the interests of the individual student as they consider rare exceptions to the 10/20 Day Rule.

OPERATING CALENDAR POLICY

The School's Principal is required to submit an operating calendar (days/instructional hours) as well as a master schedule (courses, programming, instructional and non-instructional time) to the Board for final approval. The Principal may create a school-wide calendar committee to support this effort. The calendar will meet all statutory guidelines (School systems throughout North Carolina will require a minimum of **185** days or **1,025** hours of instruction covering at least **nine** calendar months) and provide an educational program that meets the mission of the School. The calendar shall contemplate time or days for inclement weather, holidays and professional development for staff. The operating calendar will be submitted for final

approval by the March Board meeting and will be posted on the School's website and shared in the Newsletter.

McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act Policy

Purpose: To declare Southwest Charlotte STEM's intent to follow the laws set forth in the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act.

The McKinney-Vento Homelessness Act states as follows:

- (1) Each State educational agency shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public pre-school education, as provided to other children and youths.
- (2) In any State that has a compulsory residency requirement as a component of the State's compulsory School attendance laws or other laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in School of homeless children and youths, the State will review and undertake steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that homeless children and youths are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths.
- (3) Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream School environment.
- (4) Homeless children and youths should have access to the education and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging State student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

Southwest Charlotte STEM shall have a designated McKinney-Vento Coordinator that coordinates services for students under the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act and reports all data as required to NC Department of Public Instruction. The coordinator will be identified by the Principal and shall follow all federally mandated protocols for identifying and serving homeless students identified by the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act.

Corporal Punishment

No Southwest Charlotte STEM employee or volunteer may use corporal punishment to discipline a student. Corporal punishment is any kind of punishment inflicted on the body, including, but not limited to, spanking, paddling, or slapping.

Notwithstanding the policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment as a means of discipline, school personnel may use reasonable force to control behavior or to remove a person from the scene in these situations when necessary:

- To quell a disturbance threatening injury to others;
- To obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects on the person or within the control of a student;
- For self defense;
- For the protection of persons or property; or
- To restrain or direct pupils or otherwise maintain order.

Seclusion and Restraint House Bill 1032 Policy

Purpose: This policy is to comply with the laws governing seclusion and restraint including House Bill 1032, the Deborah Greenblatt Act.

Southwest Charlotte STEM has established guidelines for the use of restraint and provisions for training the staff in the management of student behavior in accordance to North Carolina General Statute, 115C-391.1, also known as House Bill 1032 – Deborah Greenblatt Act. This law took effect July 1, 2006; and requires Southwest Charlotte STEM to inform parents of the existence of the law, the definitions for the following terms and how Southwest Charlotte STEM will use these forms:

- a. Physical Restraint is the use of physical force to restrict the freedom of movement of all or a portion of a student's body. Southwest Charlotte STEM will use a trained crisis team to physically restrain a child only as the last resort to protect the health and safety of the child and others in the area.
- b. Mechanical Restraint is the use of any device or material attached or adjacent to a student's body that restricts the freedom of movement. Southwest Charlotte STEM will use a trained crisis team to mechanically restrain a student only as a last resort to protect the health and safety of the student and others in the area. Southwest Charlotte STEM will also contact the proper authorities (law enforcement) to assist when needed.
- c. Seclusion is the confinement of a student alone in an enclosed space from which the student is prevented from or not capable of leaving. Southwest Charlotte STEM will use a trained crisis team to seclude a student only as a last resort to protect the health and safety of the student and others in the area. Southwest Charlotte STEM will also contact the proper authorities (law enforcement) to assist when needed.
- d. Isolation is a behavior management technique in which a student is placed alone in an enclosed space from which the student is not prevented from leaving. Southwest Charlotte STEM will use isolation to help a child get their behavior back under control before allowing them to rejoin their classmates. This space will follow the guidelines set forth in the law.

- e. Time-out is a behavior management technique in which a student is separated from others for a limited time in a monitored setting. Southwest Charlotte STEM uses the time out system to manage student behavior. The new law does not regulate the use of time out.

Aversive Procedures are a systematic physical or sensory intervention program for modifying the behavior of a student, which causes physical harm and long-term psychological impairment. Southwest Charlotte STEM will at no time use aversive procedures to modify a student's behavior.

School Testing Materials Policy

Purpose: This policy is in place to clearly identify the process for maintaining and holding testing materials while they are at School.

All testing materials at School will be kept secure at all times. Testing materials will be kept in a locked filing cabinet or locked closet of one of the lead administrator's offices. The secure location must be approved by the Principal . Testing materials will only be handled by a School administrator. The Principal may appoint an additional staff member to handle testing materials if necessary. For the purpose of this policy, the term "testing materials" refers to all state mandated testing materials including End of Grade test materials and End of Course test materials.

Fundraising Policy

Purpose: To provide parameters to ensure all fundraisers conducted at School are directly related to assisting Southwest Charlotte STEM and/or enhance learning opportunities.

In order to foster an environment that is focused on learning and student growth, School will only allow fundraisers that are directly related to school improvement, school community development or learning enhancement.

Approval: All fundraisers must be approved by the school administration prior to implementation.

Frequency: There may be no more than one school-wide fundraiser conducted each semester of the school year.

Purposes of Fundraising: The following are acceptable fundraising purposes:

- Fundraisers where proceeds go directly towards enhancing Southwest Charlotte STEM facilities or other budget needs.
- Fundraisers where proceeds reduce field trip costs or other student costs as they pertain to school-related opportunities.
- Fundraisers for charities or causes will only be conducted if there is a direct tie to a school service project in which Southwest Charlotte STEM students are involved.

Restrictions: The following are to be avoided in the context of any Southwest Charlotte STEM fundraisers:

- In the instance of approved school fundraisers, students and staff may not be required to participate in selling any type of product.

Donors Choose and Internet/Social Media/Crowdsourcing Policy

All fundraising, grants and monies intended to be raised for School, or any classroom, activity, athletics or club or project, through organizations such as Donors Choose or any like organizations or other internet/social media/crowdsourcing must be pre-approved by Southwest Charlotte STEM. Please contact the Principal for such approval. Only the Principal or his/her designee has the authority to approve such requests. If the project is for technology or equipment, the technology will remain with Southwest Charlotte STEM if and when the teacher leaves.

School Attrition Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to identify how Southwest Charlotte STEM will track attrition data.

The Principal of Southwest Charlotte STEM shall be responsible for collecting and providing the attrition data for Southwest Charlotte STEM monthly and on an annual basis. The data shall be reported in the monthly Principal's report.

School Fee Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide for the establishment of fees.

Consistent with North Carolina law (N.C.G.S. Section 115C-218.50), the Board of Southwest Charlotte STEM has approved the establishment of certain fees, including fees for extracurricular activities, to be charged to parents/guardians. The Principal shall ensure that fees are communicated to parents/guardians. The Principal shall take steps to ensure that financial assistance is available for parents/guardian who are unable to afford such fees.

Campus Expectation Policy

Purpose: To establish shared expectations for the Southwest Charlotte STEM community and encourage frank respectful engagement.

At Southwest Charlotte STEM, we are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body. Our parents recognize that educating children is a process that involves partnership between parents, class teachers and the Southwest Charlotte STEM community. We understand and value the importance of sustaining a good working relationship between our parents and our educators to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. We greatly appreciate the commitment that our parents have made in choosing to entrust the education of their children to Southwest Charlotte STEM, and thank them for their support of our unique programming through which we engage our students daily. As we welcome and encourage parents/guardians to participate fully in the life of our school, and so we can continue to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding, the purpose of this policy is to provide a

reminder to all parents, guardians and visitors to our school about their expected conduct. Parents, guardians and visitors are expected to:

- Respect the caring spirit of Southwest Charlotte STEM.
- Understand that both teachers and parents need to work together for the benefit of their children.
- Demonstrate that all members of the Southwest Charlotte STEM community should be treated with respect and therefore set a good example in their own speech and actions.
- Use effective communication with Southwest Charlotte STEM staff, administration, and board members that cultivate open dialogue while seeking peaceful solutions to issues.
- Engage Southwest Charlotte STEM with an open mind to help resolve any issues of concern.

In order to support a peaceful and safe School environment, Southwest Charlotte STEM cannot tolerate parents, guardians and visitors exhibiting the following:

- Disruptive actions which interfere or threaten to interfere with the operation of a classroom, an employee's office, board meeting, School event, field trip, car line or parking lot, office area or any other area of the School grounds (including social media postings or discussions with community members regarding Southwest Charlotte STEM or a staff member).
- Using loud/or offensive language, swearing, cursing, using profane language or displaying temper on or in the sight of campus.
- Threatening to do actual bodily harm to School staff, board member, visitor, fellow parent/guardian or student regardless of whether or not the action constitutes a criminal offence.
- Damaging or destroying School property.
- Abusive or threatening e-mails, texts, voicemails, phone messages or other written communication.
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding Southwest Charlotte STEM or any of the pupils, parents, staff, or board on Facebook or other social sites. Any concerns you may have about Southwest Charlotte STEM must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, or the administration team, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child. This includes physical punishment against your own child on School premises.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss or chastise them because of the actions of this child towards their own child. (Such an approach to a child may be seen to be an assault on that child and may have legal consequences).
- Carrying weapons, smoking, and consuming alcohol or other drugs whilst on Southwest Charlotte STEM property.

Media (Utilizing the Southwest Charlotte STEM name or brand)

All media utilizing the Southwest Charlotte STEM name or brand (e.g. logo, mascot, etc.) must have approval by Southwest Charlotte STEM's Board of Directors and shall be linked to Southwest Charlotte STEM's official websites.

Misuse of the Brand (Defined):

The Board of Directors encourages parents and students to voice their concerns. It is important that any concerns you may have be made through appropriate channels as set forth in the student/parent handbook which includes speaking to the class teacher, the principal or the Board of Directors, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned. We consider the use of social media websites

used to fuel campaigns and complaints against Southwest Charlotte STEM, board, staff, students, and in some cases other parents not in the best interests of the children or the whole School community. Nothing in this policy is intended or should be construed to interfere with or infringe upon any rights, obligations, or responsibility under state or federal law, including but not limited to free speech rights. Furthermore, nothing in this policy is intended or should be construed to discourage or interfere with any individual's right or decision to participate in a proceeding with any appropriate federal, state or local government agency, or to prohibit any individual from cooperating with any such agency in its investigation.

FERPA and Confidentiality Policy

Purpose: To provide guidelines for the board, volunteers, and staff regarding FERPA and confidentiality of information within Southwest Charlotte STEM.

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all educational agencies and institutions that receive funds under any program administered by the Department of Education. The law prohibits a School from disclosing personally identifiable information from students' education records without the consent of a parent or eligible student, unless an exception to FERPA's general consent rule applies.

School employees, contractors and volunteers are exposed to confidential information daily. Information concerning children and their families should be treated as confidential information, including personally identifiable information from students' education records. Southwest Charlotte STEM staff with access to this information do not have the right to give this information to anyone who does not have a legitimate professional reason for access. Teachers or other staff members can be held liable for the individual release of information. Staff members are not permitted to discuss information about their students in open areas or where parents or other students have access. Anything said in meetings discussing students is considered confidential!

Please do not put a student's name in the subject box of an email. Treat their names as confidential as well.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a School beyond the high School level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." If you have questions regarding FERPA or have received a request for educational records, please contact the Principal . See FERPA:

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

Confidentiality

Respecting the privacy of our students, donors, staff, and volunteers of Southwest Charlotte STEM itself is a basic value of School. Confidential information should not be disclosed or discussed with anyone without permission or authorization from the Board of Directors. Care shall also be taken to ensure that unauthorized individuals do not overhear any discussion of confidential information and that documents containing confidential information are not left in the open or inadvertently shared.

Employees, volunteers and board members of School may be exposed to information, which is confidential and/or privileged and proprietary in nature. It is the policy of School that such information must be kept confidential both during and after employment or volunteer service. Staff and volunteers, including board members, are expected to return materials containing privileged or confidential information at the time of separation from employment or expiration of service.

Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or privileged information is a serious violation of this policy and will subject the person(s) who made the unauthorized disclosure to appropriate discipline, including removal/dismissal.

Social Media Policy

Purpose: This policy is meant to outline the guidelines for use of social media for all staff, contractors, volunteers and the Board.

At School, we understand that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist you in making responsible decisions about your use of social media, we have established these guidelines for appropriate use of social media.

This policy applies to all persons who work or volunteer for Southwest Charlotte STEM. In addition, Southwest Charlotte STEM expects students, parents and other members of the Southwest Charlotte STEM community to follow the posting guidelines set forth herein.

Guidelines

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity Web site, Web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with Southwest Charlotte STEM, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

The same principles and guidelines found in Southwest Charlotte STEM policies and these basic beliefs apply to your activities online. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any of your conduct that adversely affects your job or educational performance, the performance of others or otherwise adversely affects students, parents, suppliers, volunteers, people who work on behalf of School or School's legitimate business/education interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Know and follow the rules

Carefully read these guidelines, Southwest Charlotte STEM's Employee Handbook, including the communications policy, confidentiality policy, Southwest Charlotte STEM's non-discrimination and anti-harassment policies, and ensure your postings are consistent with these policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Be respectful

Always be fair and courteous to fellow teachers or staff, volunteers, students, parents, suppliers or people who work on behalf of School. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve work-related complaints by speaking directly with your co-workers or by utilizing our Open Door Policy than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage students, parents, volunteers, staff, or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, sex, disability, religion or any other status protected by law or School policy.

Be honest and accurate

Make sure you are always honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous posts you have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about Southwest Charlotte STEM, board members, fellow workers, students, parents, volunteers, suppliers, and people working on behalf of School.

Post only appropriate and respectful content

- Maintain the confidentiality of School private or confidential information. Such information may include information regarding the development of systems, processes, know-how and technology. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal business/School-related confidential communications. Do not post information about individual students or families and be sure to maintain the confidentiality, as is protected and required under state or federal law.

- Do not create a link from your blog, website or other social networking site to a School website without identifying yourself as an employee or volunteer of Southwest Charlotte STEM.

- Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for School. If Southwest Charlotte STEM is a subject of the content you are creating, be clear and open about the fact that you are an employee or volunteer and make it clear that your views do not represent those of Southwest Charlotte STEM, fellow workers, parents, students, suppliers or people working on behalf of Southwest Charlotte STEM. If you do publish a blog or post online related to the work you do or subjects associated with Southwest Charlotte STEM, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of Southwest Charlotte STEM. It is best to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Southwest Charlotte STEM."

Using social media at work

Refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment we provide, unless it is work-related as authorized by your supervisor or consistent with School Communication's Policy. Do not use School email addresses to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Student Pictures and Information

Parents, employees and volunteers shall not post any pictures of students on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or any other form of social media or on the internet unless the Principal has approved such posting. This applies to all School functions, whether or not conducted on school property, including field trips. Nothing in this policy shall prohibit a parent from taking and posting pictures of their own child, provided no other students are featured in such pictures. Southwest Charlotte STEM reserves the right to post pictures and images of current and former students on its website, official Facebook page or for any other School purpose. Parents who do not wish to allow School to use their child's picture or image must fill out the Publicity Consent Form and turn it into the front office.

Retaliation is prohibited

Southwest Charlotte STEM prohibits taking negative action against any employee or volunteer for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee or volunteer who retaliates against another employee or volunteer for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Media contacts

Employees and volunteers should not speak to the media on Southwest Charlotte STEM's behalf. All media inquiries should be directed to Southwest Charlotte STEM's Board or Principal .

For more information

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact Southwest Charlotte STEM's Principal or its Board of Directors.

Grievance Policy For Employees and Volunteers

Purpose: To provide the procedures employees or volunteers will follow when they have an issue at Southwest Charlotte STEM.

This policy is in place to respond to a grievance by an employee or volunteer (herein after “employee”). It is expected that any employee with an issue should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with their supervisor. If an employee feels that their issue is still a concern after speaking to their supervisor and that the issue has risen to the level of a grievance then the employee may initiate the grievance procedures as described below. The goal of filing a formal grievance would be to use the process to come to an equitable solution.

1. **Definition of a grievance:** a grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by an employee stating that a specific action has violated a School policy, board policy, or law/regulation. Complaints that do not raise an alleged violation of a Southwest Charlotte STEM policy, board policy or law/regulation do not raise grievance issue and are not subject to these procedures. In addition, a grievance does not include the non-renewal of employment. And, a grievance does not include a complaint of sexual harassment, discrimination or retaliation, which shall be handled pursuant to the Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Harassment policy in the Employee Handbook and consistent with state or federal laws.
2. **Time Limits:** A grievance will only be heard if the complaint has been filed within fifteen days of the act that is being reported. The fifteen-day deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Principal .
3. **The grievance process is as follows:**

Step 1: To file a grievance, an employee must submit a letter in writing (email accepted) stating Southwest Charlotte STEM policy, board policy or law that was violated including details of the actions and the place, date and time of the violation. The employee should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision making process. The written letter should be submitted to the Principal . If the Principal is implicated in the grievance, the grievance should be submitted to the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board of Principals or to any other Board member with whom the individual(s) feel comfortable disclosing the information.

Step 2: In response to the formal grievance, the Principal shall have up to five business days from the time they receive the formal grievance to respond to the grievance in writing. If the employee is satisfied with the decision after they receive the response from the Principal , the issue is considered resolved. The employee shall submit their satisfaction to the Principal in written form.

Step 3: If the employee is not satisfied with the response from the Principal , the employee may file an appeal to the Board by submitting a letter in writing (email accepted) stating the Southwest Charlotte STEM policy, board policy or law that was violated including details of the actions and the place, date and time of the violation. The employee should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision making process to the Board of Directors. This must be done within 5 business days of the initial response from the Principal .

Step 4: Where the grievance is filed directly with the Board as set forth above or after receiving the appeal letter, the appeal shall be considered by the Board at its next regularly scheduled monthly meeting provided such meeting is more than seven days after the filing, or the Chair of the Board of Directors may call a special meeting of the Board to consider the appeal in accordance with Southwest Charlotte STEM's bylaws. The Board will consider and discuss the grievance at the meeting in accordance with Open Meetings laws. Prior to the meeting, at the Board's sole discretion, the Board may conduct an investigation or gather additional information regarding the grievance, including interviews, if needed. The individual filing the grievance or appeal will attend the meeting. At that meeting the Board of Directors will make a decision on how to handle the grievance. Any decision of the Board will be communicated to the individual who filed the grievance within five school days. The Board's decision concerning the grievance is final.

Grievance Policy For Parents/Students

Purpose: To provide the procedures parents/students will follow when they have an issue at Southwest Charlotte STEM that constitute a grievance.

This policy is in place to respond to parent/student grievances. It is expected that any parent/student with an issue should try to resolve the issue by using open communication with the teacher. This means that if a parent or student disagrees with any policy or procedure within the classroom, the first level of grievance is their student's Teacher. If the student/parent is not satisfied with the teacher's response, they should then set a meeting with the Principal. At that meeting, the teacher, student, Principal and parent must be present and the issue at hand will be fully discussed. If the parent or student wishes to pursue the matter further, they may then meet with the Principal. Similarly, if a parent/student disagree or have an issue with a policy or procedure at Southwest Charlotte STEM, the parent/student should set a meeting with the Principal. If the parent/student feels that their issue is still a concern after meeting with the Principal and the issue meets the definition of a grievance set forth below, the parent/student may initiate the grievance procedures as described below. Many issues that a parent/student has with the classroom, teacher or School will not rise to the level of a grievance and appropriate resolution will be found with the teacher and/or Principal.

1. **Definition of a grievance:** a grievance is defined as a formal written complaint by a parent/student stating that a specific action has violated a School policy, board policy, or law/regulation. A grievance does not include a complaint of sexual harassment, discrimination or bullying, which shall be handled pursuant to those policy provision and consistent with state or federal laws, including Title IX.
2. **Time Limits:** A grievance will only be heard if the complaint has been filed within fifteen days of the meeting with the Principal. The fifteen-day deadline may be extended at the discretion of the Principal. A response will be communicated within 5 days of receiving the complaint.
3. **The grievance process is as follows:**

Step 1: If the parties are not satisfied with the decision of the Principal, and the grievance meets the definition set forth above, the parent/student must submit a letter in writing stating the Southwest Charlotte STEM policy, board policy or law/regulation that was violated including details of the actions and the place, date and time of the violation. The parent/student should make all efforts to include any details about the event that may be helpful in the decision making process. The written

letter should be submitted to the Principal and to the Chair of the Board of Directors. If the Principal is implicated in the grievance, the grievance should only be submitted to the Chair or the Vice Chair of the Board of Directors.

Step 2: The Board will review the facts and notify the parties in writing (email accepted) if further action is necessary. If the Board considers the matter should be heard, the parties will be called to meet with the Board. After the hearing, any decision of the Board will be communicated to the Principal and the parent/student who filed the grievance within five school days, The Board's decision concerning the grievance is final.

Public Comment Policy

Purpose: To define the process by which the public may make comments or provide feedback at a board meeting.

The School Board of Directors complies with the NC Open Meetings Law, which allows public comments at board meetings at the discretion of Southwest Charlotte STEM's Board of Directors. Southwest Charlotte STEM Board of Directors welcomes public comments during open board meetings. This policy outlines the process for how public comments will be handled at open board meetings.

Southwest Charlotte STEM's Board generally allows public comments for a total of 15 minutes at the beginning of each open board meeting. Each person may speak for 3 minutes on either non-agenda or agenda items. Each speaker must sign up in advance by emailing the Board's Secretary more than 24 hours in advance of the board meeting by submitting their name, organization, and topic to be discussed. Speakers will be assigned spots on a first come first serve basis. The Board may allow for a walk-in speaker comment at its sole discretion. Notwithstanding the above, the Board reserves the right to modify or eliminate time for public comment at any open board meeting.

Speakers shall present themselves in a professional manner while speaking at the open board meetings, and shall act in a courteous and responsible manner. If the speaker failed to abide as such, the speaker will be asked to leave the meeting. Under North Carolina Law (General Statute, N.C.G.S. § 143-318.17), there can be legal consequences for individuals who do not adhere to public meeting protocol. *"A person who willfully interrupts, disturbs, or disrupts an official meeting and who, upon being directed to leave the meeting by the presiding officer, willfully refuses to leave the meeting is guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor."* (1979, c.655, s.1; 1993, c.539, s.1028; 1994, Ex. Sess., c.24, s.14(c).) Adopted April 16, 2013. Speakers may not specifically speak about any individual student, teacher, staff member or board member and they may not engage in any personal attacks. Generally, the Board does not respond to any public comments.

Speakers may request special permission to conduct a presentation to the board if they would like to have an extended time to speak. The speaker must email the Board's Secretary and request the specific amount of time needed and the topic to be presented. The request shall be considered by the Board Chair, and shall either be approved or denied in the discretion of the Chair.

Open Meetings Policy

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to comply with North Carolina's Open Meetings law.

It is the public policy of North Carolina that the hearings, deliberations, and actions of public bodies be conducted publicly. An official meeting is a meeting, assembly, or gathering together of a majority of the members of the board for the purpose of conducting hearings, participating in deliberations, voting upon public business, or otherwise transacting public business.

As a public body, Southwest Charlotte STEM is subject to North Carolina's Open Meeting laws, N. C. G.S. Section 143. It is the Board's policy to comply with those laws. To that end, except for closed sessions, board meetings are open to the public. Notice of board meeting will be publicly posted at the School and on its website in accordance with State law. The timing for meeting notice will be consistent with North Carolina law. Notice of the meeting will identify the date, time and location, including the type of meeting to be held. If members of the Board deliberate, vote or take other action on a matter at an official meeting, they must do so in a way that allows the public in attendance to understand what subject is being considered.

Southwest Charlotte STEM's Board may hold a closed session if it first begins an open official meeting after proper public notice. During the open part of the official meeting, the Board shall make and adopt a motion to hold a closed session. In making the motion to hold a closed session, the Board shall state which of the legally acceptable purposes it is relying upon to justify the closed session. As such, the Board may hold a closed session during one of its official meetings to prevent public disclosure of the following types of information: legally confidential information, honorary degrees, scholarships, prizes and awards, attorney-client discussions, location or expansion of business, contract negotiations, certain personnel matters, and criminal investigations (North Carolina General Statutes Section 143-318.11. Closed sessions)

The Board shall keep full and accurate minutes of all official meetings (including closed sessions). Such minutes may be in written form or, at the Board's option, may be in the form of sound or video and sound recordings. When the Board meets in closed session, it shall keep a general account of the closed session so that a person not in attendance would have a reasonable understanding of what transpired. Minutes of legitimate closed sessions are public records, but they may be withheld from public inspection so long as public inspection would frustrate the purpose of the closed session. The minutes of open sessions and accounts of closed sessions may be in written form or video and/or audio recordings.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Purpose: The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect Southwest Charlotte STEM's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or Principal of the School or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement, but not replace, any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations. (G.S. 115C-218.15 (b)(3))

Definitions for the purposes of this policy:

1. Interested Person

Any Director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. Financial Interest

A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

- a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the School has a transaction or arrangement,
- b. A compensation arrangement with the School or with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, or
- c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the School is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.
- d. NO voting member of the governing board shall be an employee of a for profit company that provides substantial services to the charter school for a fee.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under this policy a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

Procedures:

1. Duty to Disclose

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, s/he shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

- a. An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, s/he shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
- b. The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- c. After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the School can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
- d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested Directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the School's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy

- a. If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.
- b. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Records of Proceedings:

The minutes of the governing board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

- a. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
- b. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Compensation:

- a. A voting member of the governing board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- b. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
- c. No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the School, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

Acknowledgment:

Each Principal and board member shall sign a statement which affirms such person:

- a. Has read and understands the conflicts of interest policy,
- b. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
- c. Understands the School is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption, it must engage primarily in activities that accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

Periodic Reviews:

To ensure the School operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining,
- b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the School's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

Use of Outside Experts:

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for this policy, the School may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

Nepotism Policy

Purpose: To ensure compliance with best practices and state laws governing the relationship between employees, leadership and board members as well as to ensure the fair and equal treatment of all employees and applicants for employment at School. G.S. 115C-218.15 (b)(2)

The employment of immediate family (defined below) can cause various problems including but not limited to charges of favoritism, conflicts of interest, family discord and scheduling conflicts that may work to the disadvantage of both Southwest Charlotte STEM and its employees. It is School's goal to avoid creating or maintaining circumstances in which the appearance or possibility of favoritism, conflicts or management disruptions exist. Southwest Charlotte STEM may allow existing personal relationships to be maintained or employ individuals with personal relationships to current employees under the following circumstances:

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

No personal employee relationship covered by this policy will be allowed to be maintained, regardless of the positions involved, if it creates a disruption or potential disruption in the work environment, creates an actual or perceived conflict of interest or is prohibited by any legal or regulatory mandate. This policy must be considered when electing, hiring, promoting or transferring any employee. Should relationships addressed within this policy be identified with either candidates for employment or current employees, the matter should be immediately reported to the Principal and/or Board of Directors and the following policies and procedures will be followed:

- A determination will be made whether the relationship is subject to School's Nepotism policy based on the conditions described above.
- If the relationship is determined to fall within one or more of the conditions described in this policy the Principal in consultation with the affected employees and the Board of Directors, will attempt will to resolve the situation through the transfer of one employee to a new position or identifying

some other action (e.g., supervisory reassignment) which will correct the conflict or issue identified. If accommodations are not feasible then, with affected employee suggestions, the Principal in consultation with School's Board of Directors shall determine which employee must resign in order to resolve the situation.

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

Every employee is responsible for identifying and communicating to the Principal or the Board of Directors any potential or existing personal relationship, which falls under the definitions provided in this policy. Employees who fail to disclose personal relationships covered by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including the termination of employment.

For the purposes of this policy, the term "immediate family member" means a spouse, parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent, or grandchild. The term includes the step, half, and in-law relationships. The term also includes domestic partners (a person with whom the employee's life is interdependent and who shares a common residence) and, a daughter or son of an employee's domestic partner.

Financial Controls Policy

Purpose: To ensure compliance with the laws and best practices in School's financial management.

I. USE OF FUNDS

Southwest Charlotte STEM and its Board of Directors adopt the following financial and fiscal management policies and procedures applicable to its use of state and federal funds.

Southwest Charlotte STEM is subject to the financial audits, the audit procedures, and the audit requirements adopted by the State Board of Education for charter schools. The Board will select an auditor based on a completed RFP process. Unless otherwise needed, the Board will conduct open RFP for services every three years. The auditor will be selected and engaged for services by March of the fiscal year.

Southwest Charlotte STEM shall comply with the reporting requirements established by the State Board of Education in the Uniform Education Reporting System or any other system required by law or regulation.

The School shall report at least annually to the chartering entity and the State Board of Education the information required by the chartering entity or the State Board.

II. SCHOOL FINANCE OFFICER OR CONTRACT FINANCIAL SERVICES PROVIDER

There shall be a School Finance Officer or Contract Financial Services Provider ("CFSP") designated by the Principal and approved by the Board, in accordance with the provisions of state law. The duties of the School Finance Officer shall be as set forth below, prescribed by law, and assigned by the Board or Principal.

III. DUTIES OF SCHOOL FINANCE OFFICER OR CFSP

The School Finance Officer or CFSP shall be responsible to the Principal and the Board for:

- A. Keeping the accounts of the school in accordance with generally accepted principles of governmental accounting, the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, the Local Government Commission, and any other applicable governmental oversight agencies;
- B. Giving the pre-audit certificate required by law;
- C. Processing all checks, drafts, and state warrants by the school, receiving and depositing all moneys accruing to the school in accordance with all applicable laws, rules and policies;
- D. Preparing and filing a statement of the financial condition of the school as often as requested by the Principal or the Board; and
- E. Performing such other duties as may be assigned by law, by the Principal or the Board, or by rules and regulations of the State Board of Education or any other applicable government oversight agencies.

IV. ANNUAL BUDGET

The Principal , in consultation with the School Finance Officer or CFSP shall prepare an annual budget and submit it with his/her budget message to the Board not later than April 1. The budget shall comply in all respects with the requirements imposed by law.

Budget planning shall be an integral part of program planning so that the budget may effectively express and implement all programs, related services, and activities of the school. Budget planning shall be a year-round process involving broad participation by administrators, teachers, other personnel throughout the school, and citizens.

The Principal 's budget message shall contain a concise explanation of the educational goals fixed by the budget for the budget year, set forth the reasons for stated changes from the previous year in program goals, programs, and appropriation levels, and shall explain any major changes in educational or fiscal policy.

Upon receiving the budget from the Principal , the Board shall consider the budget, and make such changes therein as it deems advisable. The Board may hold a public hearing on the proposed budget prior to final action.

A. ADOPTION OF BUDGET RESOLUTION

The Board shall adopt a budget resolution making appropriations for the budget year in such sums as the Board deems sufficient and proper.

The budget resolution shall be adopted in accordance with the provisions of state law. The budget resolution shall conform to the uniform budget format established by the State Board of Education. The budget resolution shall be entered in the Board minutes.

B. BUDGET TRANSFERS AND AMENDMENTS

The Board shall have the right to make budget transfers or amendments to the budget resolution for the reasons prescribed by state law and in accordance with the adopted budget resolution and state law.

C. INTERIM BUDGET

In case the adoption of the budget resolution is delayed until after July 1, the Board shall make interim appropriations for the purpose of paying salaries and the usual expenses of the school for the interval between the beginning of the fiscal year and the adoption of the budget resolution. Interim appropriations so made and expended shall be charged to the proper appropriations in the adopted budget resolution.

V. ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

Southwest Charlotte STEM shall establish and maintain a financial accounting and reporting system designed to show the School's assets, liabilities, equities, revenues, and expenditures. The system shall be designed to show appropriations and estimated revenues as established in the budget resolution as originally adopted and subsequently amended.

VI. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND STATEMENTS

Southwest Charlotte STEM shall prepare a comprehensive annual financial report that encompasses all the funds and account groups of the school. The comprehensive annual financial report shall contain the general-purpose financial statements as well as combining statements by fund type and individual fund statements.

VII GATE RECEIPTS AND ADMISSIONS

Admission receipts of school events shall be adequately controlled. The principal or designee is responsible for the administration and supervision of all phases of school events for which an admission is charged.

Admission to those school events for which an admission is charged shall be by serially numbered tickets only. However, persons presenting season, faculty or special passes will be admitted to all events. Adequate records shall be maintained to provide chronological and accounting data for subsequent review and analysis.

VIII - RECEIVING AND INSPECTING

Personnel responsible for purchasing shall establish and maintain a receiving procedure for all supplies, materials, and equipment as appropriate. Personnel responsible for receiving items delivered shall inspect them and have ready access to specifications. Receiving personnel shall be responsible for determining that the items received are in good quality condition and shall be responsible for entering in the receiving document an actual count of quantity delivered. Personnel responsible for receiving shall be responsible for acting on deficiency and complaint reports.

IX - MAINTENANCE OF INVENTORY AND FIXED ASSETS

Administrative personnel shall be responsible for taking a physical count of all equipment items and stock supplies at least once each year.

Administrative personnel shall be responsible for all fixed assets assigned to their site or department, and shall account for each item at least once per fiscal year according to procedures established by the finance officer.

X. PURCHASING AND PROCUREMENT GENERALLY

A. *Comingling of Charter & Non-Charter Business Prohibited.* Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that its business activities are not directly related to the management and operation of Southwest Charlotte STEM are kept in a separate and distinct accounting, auditing, budgeting, reporting, and recordkeeping systems from those recording the business activities of Southwest Charlotte STEM.

B. *Board Approval Required.* The Board is required to review and approve all contracts or procurements of goods or services valued above \$10,000.00. The Principal does not have authority to bind the Board or Southwest Charlotte STEM to any contract for goods and/or services valued above \$10,000.00. Any contract or purchase valued above this amount that is not approved by the Board is null and void.

C Interested Transactions/Conflicts of Interest

1. Each member of the Board shall comply with all conflict of interest policies, laws and rules applicable to affected Board members as set forth herein. The Principal shall ensure that employees of Southwest Charlotte STEM shall comply with all conflict of interest policies, laws and rules applicable to affected employees as set forth herein.

2. Definitions for the purposes of this policy

a. *Interested Person.* Any Director, officer, member of a committee of the Board of Directors or employee who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person. Interested person shall also include individuals and organizations that have a direct or indirect organizational interest as defined below.

b. *Financial Interest.* A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

- i. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which Southwest Charlotte STEM has a transaction or arrangement,
- ii. A compensation arrangement with the School or with any entity or individual with which Southwest Charlotte STEM has a transaction or arrangement, or

- iii. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which Southwest Charlotte STEM is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial. A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the Board of Directors decides that a conflict of interest exists.

c. *Organizational Interest.* An organizational interest means that because of the relationship with a parent entity, affiliate entity, subsidiary, or benefactor entity (i.e., foundation), Southwest Charlotte STEM, its Directors, officer, members of a committee of the Board of Directors or employees are unable or appear to be unable to be impartial in conducting a procurement action involving a related organization.

D. Procedures:

1 *Duty to Disclose.* In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest or organizational interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the Board of Directors or members of a committee with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. *Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists.* After disclosure of the financial interest or organizational interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, s/he shall leave the Board of Directors or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists

3. *Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest*

a. An interested person may make a presentation at the Board of Directors or committee meeting, but after the presentation, s/he shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

b. The chairperson of the Board of Directors or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

c. After exercising due diligence, the Board of Directors or committee shall determine whether Southwest Charlotte STEM can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the Board of Directors or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested Board members whether the transaction or arrangement is in Southwest Charlotte STEM's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement

E. *Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy*

1. If the Board of Directors or committee has reasonable cause to believe an individual has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the individual of the basis for such belief and afford the individual an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

2. If, after hearing the individual's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Board of Directors or committee determines the member has failed

to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

F. *Records of Proceedings.* The minutes of the Board of Directors and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

1. The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest or organizational interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest or organizational, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.
2. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

G. *Compensation.* A voting member of the Board of Principals who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Southwest Charlotte STEM for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

1. A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Southwest Charlotte STEM for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.
2. No voting member of the Board of Directors or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from Southwest Charlotte STEM, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

H. *Annual Statements.* Each Director, principal officer and member of a committee with Board of Directors delegated powers shall annually sign a statement, which affirms such person:

1. Has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy,
2. Has read and understands the policy,
3. Has agreed to comply with the policy, and
4. Understands the School is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption, it must engage primarily in activities, which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

I. *Periodic Reviews.* To ensure Southwest Charlotte STEM operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

1. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining,
2. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to Southwest Charlotte STEM's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.
- 3.

J. *Use of Outside Experts.* When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in this policy, Southwest Charlotte STEM may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the Board of Directors of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

K. *Professional Services.* The Board and Principal shall ensure that professional service providers are selected in accordance with the applicable law.

L. Cooperative Purchasing Programs. The Principal shall ensure full compliance with all applicable law and rules if Southwest Charlotte STEM to enter into a cooperative purchasing program provided such programs are permitted under its charter or Southwest Charlotte STEM amends its charter to allow for such programs.

M. Attorney Review Required. For all contracts for goods or services with a term of more than one year or where the value of such contract is greater than \$10,000.00, legal counsel must review the contract unless the Board votes to waive the requirement of such review and documents the reason waiving such requirement.

XI Use of State Funds

A. The Board and Directors shall ensure compliance by Southwest Charlotte STEM employees, officers, and agents with all applicable federal and state procurement standards and policies. Violations of applicable laws or policies may lead to disciplinary consequences including and up to termination of employment or removal from any officer and/or Board position if applicable.

B. The Principal shall develop procedures that ensure compliance with the following provisions:

1. The purchase of unnecessary items is prohibited;
2. The solicitation of bids or offers must provide a clear and accurate description of the requirements to be fulfilled by the bidder, technical requirements to be performed including the minimum acceptable standards, specific features of brand name or equal descriptions that bidders are required to meet, the acceptance of products and services dimensioned in the metric system of measurement, a preference, where economically feasible, for products that conserve natural resources, protect the environment, and are energy efficient;
3. Positive efforts shall be made to enter into business and other transactions that are of the highest quality for Southwest Charlotte STEM, at the lowest cost;
4. The type of procurement instruments used (e.g. purchase orders) must be appropriate for the particular procurement;
5. Contracts are made only with responsible and financially sound contractors who possess the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed procurement;
6. Procurement documents shall be made available, upon request, to appropriate government officials when:
 - a. Procurement procedures fail to comply with the standards in this section;
 - b. The procurement is expected to exceed the small purchase threshold (currently \$5,000) and is to be awarded without a competitive bidding process or there is only one bid received in response to a solicitation;
 - c. The procurement which is expected to exceed the small purchase threshold, specifies a brand name product;
 - d. The proposed award over the small purchase threshold is to be awarded to a bidder under a sealed bid procurement; or
 - e. A proposed contract modification changes the scope of a contract or increases the contract amount by more than the amount of the small purchase threshold.

C. Open, Full, and Free Competition. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted in a manner that provides open, full, and free competition. Awards must be made to the bidder/offeror whose bid/offer is responsive to the solicitation and is most advantageous to Southwest Charlotte STEM, considering price, quality, ability of the supplier to deliver the product and/or service, and other relevant factors deemed appropriate by the Board and Principal .

D. Conflicts of Interest. In accordance with Southwest Charlotte STEM policy 7400.3 Interested Transactions/Conflicts of Interest set forth herein, Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that no employee, officer, or agent of Southwest Charlotte STEM, who has a real or apparent conflict of interest,

participates in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by Southwest Charlotte STEM funds. Employees, officers, and agents may also not solicit or accept favors, gratuities, or anything of monetary value from contractors or their agents.

E. *Record Documentation.* Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure there is a cost or price analysis made and documented with every procurement action. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall also ensure the evaluation of the contractor performance and document whether the contractor has met the terms, conditions, and specifications of the contract. Procurement records for purchases over the small purchase \$10,000.00 shall also contain the following information:

1. The basis for contractor selection;
2. The justification for lack of competition when competitive bids or offers are not obtained;
3. The basis for award cost or price; and
4. Written assurance from the contractor that there are no conflicts of interest that they are reasonably aware of that could materially negatively affect Southwest Charlotte STEM.
5. Written assurance from the contractor that it does not directly or indirectly do business with Iran in accordance with North Carolina law.

F. *Board Approval.* For all procurement/contracts under this section that exceed \$10,000.00, the Principal shall endeavor to obtain three bids. In the event that three bids are not obtained, the Principal must present the Record Documentation, set forth above, to the Board and the Board must approve such procurements/contracts. Under these circumstances, the Principal does not have authority to bind the Board or Southwest Charlotte STEM to any contract for goods and services valued above \$10,000.00. Any contract or purchase valued above this amount that is not approved by the Board is null and void.

G. *State Indebtedness Provision.* Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure, through the following policies and procedures, that it uses state funds in accordance with all applicable laws, rules and regulations. No indebtedness of any kind incurred or created by Southwest Charlotte STEM shall constitute an indebtedness of the State or its political subdivisions, and no indebtedness of Southwest Charlotte STEM shall involve or be secured by the faith, credit or taxing power of the State or its political subdivisions.

H. *Mandated Contract Provisions.* The Principal shall ensure that all legally mandated provisions are included in each procurement contract. The Principal shall ensure the school's compliance with all federal and state rules governing purchasing and procurement.

XII. State Fiscal Compliance

A. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that it fully complies with generally accepted accounting principles, and all applicable federal and state standards for financial management systems.

B. *Financial Reporting.* Southwest Charlotte STEM shall make an accurate, current, and complete disclosure of financially assisted activities in accordance with financial reporting requirements for all funds received.

C. *Accounting Records.* Southwest Charlotte STEM shall maintain records that adequately identify the source and application of funds provided for activities assisted with state or federal funds.

D. *Internal Control.* Southwest Charlotte STEM shall maintain effective control and accountability of all cash, real and personal property, and other assets obtained with public funds. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall safeguard all such property and assure that it is used solely for authorized purposes.

E. *Grant Management Standards.* If Southwest Charlotte STEM receives a grant directly from a state or federal agency, it shall ensure that Southwest Charlotte STEM is in compliance with the grant requirements of that state or federal agency. If a Southwest Charlotte STEM employee's compensation is funded by any grant, Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that the employee maintains a time sheet on which he or she records the time spent during the work day along with a description of the service he or she performed during that time. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that the time sheets will contain the signatures of the employee that completed the time sheet, a school official, and the Southwest Charlotte STEM grant manager.

F. *Annual Audit of Financial Statements.* Annually, the Southwest Charlotte STEM Board shall the engage a qualified certified public accountant (“CPA”) to audit the financial and programmatic operations of Southwest Charlotte STEM. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall select and contract only with CPAs that are licensed and in compliance with all federal and North Carolina rules and regulations. The Principal and Board shall ensure that it files a copy of the annual audit report with the North Carolina regulatory body(s) responsible for school financial audits, on a timely basis. The Board or Principal shall ensure that all persons with a substantial interest in a management company are separately disclosed in the annual audit. Any deficiencies identified in the audit will be reported to the Board at the conclusion of the Audit with a timeline in place to cure weaknesses and all findings will be reported during a regular open meeting and documented in the monthly minutes.

G. *Annual Financial Statement.* The Principal or designee shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, an annual financial statement for each fund subject to the authority of the Board during the fiscal year showing:

1. the total receipts of the fund, itemized by source of revenue, including taxes, assessments, service charges, grants of state money, gifts, or other general sources from which funds are derived;
2. the total disbursements of the fund, itemized by the nature of the expenditure; and
3. the balance in the fund at the close of the fiscal year.

H. *Annual Financial Management Report.* The Principal shall ensure that it complies with the reporting procedures required by the State of North Carolina for charter holders to prepare and distribute the school’s annual financial management report.

I. *Attendance Accounting.* The Principal shall ensure that it complies with all laws and rules concerning charter school student attending accounting, reporting, and record keeping. The Principal, chief campus leaders, and teachers of Southwest Charlotte STEM will be responsible to the Board and to the state to maintain accurate, current student attendance records. Attendance at Southwest Charlotte STEM will be determined by taking attendance by 10:00a.m. Eastern Time each regular school day. Southwest Charlotte STEM will not change the established period in which absences are recorded during the school year.

USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS AND FEDERAL FISCAL COMPLIANCE

A. *Fiscal Requirements under Title 1.* Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that Title I funds will be used to supplement, not supplant regular non-federal funds. Documentation shall be maintained, or caused to be maintained, by the Principal . The documentation must clearly demonstrate the supplementary nature of federal funds. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that Title I funds shall be aligned to the School Improvement Plan, as appropriate and in compliance with applicable rules and regulations.

1. A comprehensive needs assessment shall be conducted that will inform the drafting of the School Improvement Plan. The School Improvement Plan shall be aligned to the needs assessment of Southwest Charlotte STEM.
2. New goals shall be added as new money is identified.
3. The Principal shall conduct the needs assessment and School Improvement Plan prior to any grant application.

B. *Federal Grant Allowable Expenditures.* Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that it consults the appropriate OMB Circular, applicable to open-enrollment charter schools, to determine what costs are allowable. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that all grant funds are expended in accordance with the circular.

C. Time and Effort. If a Southwest Charlotte STEM employee's compensation is funded by any grant, Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that the employee maintains a time sheet on which he or she records the time spent during the work day along with a description of the service he or she performed during that time. The Principal shall ensure that the time sheets contain the signatures of the employee that completed the time sheet, a school official, and Southwest Charlotte STEM's grant manager.

D. Use of Federal Grant Funds for Procurement. When expending federal grant funds, Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure compliance by Southwest Charlotte STEM employees, officers, and agents with all applicable federal and state procurement standards and policies. Violations of applicable laws or policies may lead to disciplinary consequences including and up to termination of employment or removal from any officer and/or Board position if applicable. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall develop procedures that ensure compliance with the following provisions:

1. The purchase of unnecessary items is prohibited;
2. The solicitation of bids or offers must provide a clear and accurate description of the requirements to be fulfilled by the bidder, technical requirements to be performed including the minimum acceptable standards, specific features of brand name or equal descriptions that bidders are required to meet, the acceptance of products and services dimensioned in the metric system of measurement, a preference, where economically feasible, for products that conserve natural resources, protect the environment, and are energy efficient;
3. Positive efforts shall be made to enter into business and other transactions that are of the highest quality for Southwest Charlotte STEM, at the lowest cost;
4. The type of procurement instruments used (e.g. purchase orders) must be appropriate for the particular procurement;
5. Contracts are made only with responsible and financially sound contractors who possess the ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of the proposed procurement;
6. Procurement documents shall be made available, upon request, to appropriate government officials when:
 - a. Procurement procedures fail to comply with the standards in this section;
 - b. The procurement is expected to exceed the small purchase threshold (currently \$5,000) and is to be awarded without a competitive bidding process or there is only one bid received in response to a solicitation;
 - c. The procurement which is expected to exceed the small purchase threshold, specifies a brand name product;
 - d. The proposed award over the small purchase threshold is to be awarded to a bidder under a sealed bid procurement; or
 - e. A proposed contract modification changes the scope of a contract or increases the contract amount by more than the amount of the small purchase threshold.

E. Open, Full, and Free Competition. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that all procurement transactions are conducted in a manner that provides open, full, and free competition. Awards must be made to the bidder/offeror whose bid/offer is responsive to the solicitation and is most advantageous to Southwest Charlotte STEM, considering price, quality, and other relevant factors deemed appropriate by the Board and Principal .

F. Conflicts of Interest. In accordance with Southwest Charlotte STEM policy 7400.3 Interested Transactions/Conflicts of Interest set forth herein, Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that no employee, officer, or agent of Southwest Charlotte STEM, who has a real or apparent conflict of interest, participates in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by federal funds. Employees, officers, and agents may also not solicit or accept favors, gratuities, or anything of monetary value from contractors or their agents.

G. Record Documentation. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure there is a cost or price analysis made and documented with every procurement action. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall also ensure the evaluation of the contractor performance and document whether the contractor has met the terms, conditions, and specifications of the contract. Procurement records for purchases over the small purchase threshold (\$5000.00) shall also contain the following information:

1. The basis for contractor selection;
2. The justification for lack of competition when competitive bids or offers are not obtained; and
3. The basis for award cost or price.

H. Board Approval. For all procurement/contracts under this section that exceed \$5000, the Principal shall endeavor to obtain three bids. In the event that three bids are not obtained, the Principal must present the Record Documentation, set forth above, to the Board and the Board must approve such procurements/contracts. In such circumstances, the Principal does not have authority to bind the Board or Southwest Charlotte STEM to any contract for goods and services valued above \$5,000. Any contract or purchase valued above this amount that is not approved by the Board is null and void.

I. Mandated Contract Provisions. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that all legally mandated provisions are included in each procurement contract. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure the school's compliance with all federal and state rules governing administration of the program.

XIII PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS

A. Applicable Law. In awarding contracts that will involve the construction, repair, or renovation of a structure, road, highway, or other improvement or addition to real property, Southwest Charlotte STEM will comply with all applicable rules and regulations. The Board and Principal shall ensure that all applicable advertisement notice bid requirements are satisfied.

B. Bidding Threshold. The Principal shall engage the applicable law when an expenditure of more than \$10,000 in public funds is required.

C. Contract Award. The Principal shall make a recommendation to the Board concerning the award of a public works projects bid pursuant to this policy.

D. In determining the contract award, the Board may take into account factors regarding the bidder and their bid or proposal including:

1. The safety record of the bidder;
2. Whether the bidder, its employees, and agents have relevant and mandatory licensures/registrations;
3. Complaints and/or accident reports to relevant local and/or state agencies;
4. The purchase price or cost of the product and/or service;
5. The reputation of the bidder and of the bidder's goods or services, and the bidder's financial and operating ability to deliver the requested goods and/or services;
6. The quality of the bidder's good or services;
7. The extent to which the goods or services meet Southwest Charlotte STEM needs;
8. The bidder's past relationship with Southwest Charlotte STEM;
9. The impact on the ability of Southwest Charlotte STEM to comply with the laws and rules relating to historically underutilized businesses;
10. The total long-term cost to Southwest Charlotte STEM to acquire the bidder's goods or services;
11. Any other relevant factor specifically listed in the request for bids or proposals.

E. Definition of Safety Record. The safety record includes a bidder's Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspection log for the last three years, a loss analysis from the bidder's insurance carrier, any known safety violations on previous projects, and a loss history covering all lines of insurance coverage by the bidder.

XIV PURCHASING AND SERVICE CONTRACTS NOT OTHERWISE COVERED

A. *Appropriate Value.* In procuring or awarding contracts for goods and services over \$10,000.00 that are not governed by any other Southwest Charlotte STEM policy or are not sourced by State or Federal funds, the Principal shall ensure that the Southwest Charlotte STEM receives appropriate value for the expenditure.

B. *Competitive Process Threshold.* If an expenditure of Southwest Charlotte STEM funds for such a contract awarded will exceed \$10,000, then the Principal shall engage a competitive process before selecting a person or entity to, which to make the award.

C. *Record Documentation.* The Principal shall ensure there is a cost or price analysis made and documented with every procurement action or contract. He/she shall also ensure the evaluation of the contractor performance and document whether the contractor has met the terms, conditions, and specifications of the contract. Procurement records for purchases or contracts over \$10,000.00 shall also contain the following information:

1. The basis for contractor selection;
2. The justification for lack of competition when competitive bids or offers are not obtained;
3. The basis for award cost or price; and
4. Written assurance from the contractor that there are no conflicts of interest that they are reasonably aware of that could materially negatively affect Southwest Charlotte STEM.
5. Written assurance from the contractor that it does not directly or indirectly do business with Iran as required by North Carolina law.

D. *Board Approval.* For all procurement/contracts under this provision, the Principal shall endeavor to obtain three bids. In the event that three bids are not obtained, the Principal must present the Record Documentation, set forth above, to the Board and the Board must approve such procurements/contracts. In such circumstances, the Principal does not have authority to bind the Board or Southwest Charlotte STEM to any contract for goods and services valued above \$10,000.00. Any contract or purchase valued above this amount that is not approved by the Board is null and void.

XV CASH MANAGEMENT & CREDIT CARD PROCEDURES

School funds are public funds. Consequently, all expenditures of school funds, including cash expenditures, shall be documented and accounted for by daily receipts. As a general rule, cash will not be used to make purchases except from petty cash, as described below. School checks shall not be made payable to "Cash". Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that appropriate "separation of duties" are complied with in the handling of all money transactions, including reconciliation.

A. *Accounting for Cash Transaction.* All cash transactions shall be recorded in writing, such as by hand a written receipt, which shall be signed and dated by the individual who receives the cash. Staff members who receive or collect money from parents or teachers shall document from whom the money was received and in what amount. A copy of the receipt shall be kept with the cash received. Such money shall be submitted to the designated Southwest Charlotte STEM administrator on the same school day as it is received, or as soon as feasible, for deposit. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall be responsible for ensuring that cash received is deposited in Southwest Charlotte STEM's bank account. Deposits shall be made whenever cash receipts total \$250.00 or greater, or at a minimum once per week to the extent there is cash to deposit. A copy of the validated deposit slip shall be returned to the school on same day the deposit is made or the next day after the deposit is made.

B. *Checks.* Any authorized check drafted on Southwest Charlotte STEM's bank account(s) shall have two authorized check signers. The following Southwest Charlotte STEM officers are authorized to sign checks from Southwest Charlotte STEM's bank account on behalf of Southwest Charlotte STEM: Board Chairman, Board Treasurer, Board Vice-President, Board Secretary, or Principal . Each check must be

completed in its entirety before it is signed by any party. Checks received shall be endorsed “for deposit only” and shall either be deposited when the total amount is at least \$100.00 at least weekly, whichever is more frequent. Services or products rendered, reimbursement requests with original receipts, or mileage reimbursements may receive payment with a check. A check request form must be completed by the requestor and approved with a signature by the Principal. The check request form shall contain the name of the payee, the date the check is requested to be written, the amount of the check, a brief description for the issuance of the check, and the funding source that will be drawn from. Checks made payable to “Cash” are prohibited. The check request shall then be submitted to the Business Manager for processing. All check request forms shall be maintained by the School Finance Officer or CFSP. Parents of students enrolled at Southwest Charlotte STEM and employees of Southwest Charlotte STEM must receive prior notice from Southwest Charlotte STEM that in the event a check they have submitted to Southwest Charlotte STEM is returned for insufficient funds, or any other reason, Southwest Charlotte STEM shall collect from the check maker the amount originally due in addition to any fee assessed to Southwest Charlotte STEM by the bank because of the returned check.

C. *Paying Bills with State or Federal Grant Funds.* Grant funds shall not be requested from any appropriate entity until Southwest Charlotte STEM is prepared to pay any outstanding balances within three days from when the funds are deposited in Southwest Charlotte STEM’s bank account. Southwest Charlotte STEM shall ensure that all bills, including payroll and related withholding taxes, shall be paid by Southwest Charlotte STEM within three working days from when such funds are deposited in Southwest Charlotte STEM’s bank account.

D. *Bank Reconciliations.* The Principal or his/her designee is responsible for bank reconciliations a minimum of once a month. Each Southwest Charlotte STEM bank statement, assets, and liabilities shall be reconciled to both the checkbook and the general ledger.

E. *Credit And Debit Card Procedures.* If Southwest Charlotte STEM decides to utilize credit or debit cards, only the following are authorized to use a Southwest Charlotte STEM credit or debit card: the Principal and the School Principal’s, subject to the expenditure limitations set forth in Policy 7407. All authorized users of the Southwest Charlotte STEM credit or debit card assume the responsibilities pertaining to the use and reconciliation of the credit or debit card. The Southwest Charlotte STEM credit or debit card shall only be used for school business expenditures. It may not be used for personal purchases and/or cash transactions and shall be maintained by the highest level of security. Employees issued a Southwest Charlotte STEM credit or debit card must receive prior, documented approval from the Southwest Charlotte STEM Board before the use of the credit or debit card. Each credit or debit card transaction by any user must be accompanied by appropriate documentation such as original receipts documenting each transaction (digital receipts are acceptable).

F. *Activity Funds.* Southwest Charlotte STEM shall develop procedures for parent and school volunteer groups to follow in the collection of funds. Such procedures should distinguish between what the school is collecting and what the parent group is collecting.

The Principal is authorized to approve activity expenditures.

G. Anticipated reimbursements for staff expenditures not related to travel must be approved in advance.

XVI – PRINCIPALS USE OF FUNDS

Subject to the financial policies set forth above in Sections I-XV, School principals may enter into contracts for:

- A. School pictures;
- B. Yearbooks and school newspapers (all other contracts for printing of reports, forms, etc., should be handled through the finance Principal);
- C. Fund-raising activities undertaken in compliance with Board policies;
- D. Disc jockeys/bands and facilities for dances to be paid for with school funds;
- E. Athletic officials and other persons working at athletic events to be paid from athletic funds derived from gate receipts;
- F. Class rings;
- G. Caps and gowns; and
- H. Senior supplies (i.e., invitations, note cards, class keys, etc.).

School principals may enter into other contracts for goods or services in amounts up to \$500.00 without prior approval, provided there are sufficient funds in the local school account to cover the contract and the contract is executed during the current fiscal year. Principals shall submit semi-annual reports to the school's Principal of all school contracts.

XVI - DEPOSITORIES

The Board shall designate as official depositories of the school one or more banks, savings and loan associations, or trust companies in North Carolina. No money belonging to the school or any individual school shall be deposited in any other place, bank, savings and loan association, or trust company other than an official depository.

XVII DAILY DEPOSITS

Except as otherwise provided by law, all monies collected or received by an officer, employee, or agent of the school or an individual school shall be deposited in accordance with this policy. Each officer, employee, and agent of the school or individual school whose duty it is to collect or receive any monies shall deposit his collections and receipts daily; provided, however, if the amount on hand is less than \$500 daily deposits are encouraged but not required by the Board. Regardless of the amount on hand, all funds shall be deposited at the end of each school week and on the last business day of each month.

- A.** All deposits shall be made with the School's Finance Officer, CFSP, or in an official depository. Deposits in an official depository shall be reported immediately to the school's finance officer, CFSP, or individual school treasurer by means of a duplicate deposit ticket.
- B.** The School Finance Officer or CFSP may at any time audit the accounts of any officer, employee, or agent collecting or receiving any taxes or other monies, and may prescribe the form and detail of these accounts. The accounts of such an officer, employee, or agent shall be audited at least annually.

XVIII - BOARD AUTHORITY TO OVERRIDE FINANCE OFFICER

- A.** The Board may approve a bill, invoice, or other claim against the school that has been disapproved by the school. It may not approve a claim for which no appropriation appears in the budget resolution, or for which the appropriation contains no encumbrance and the unencumbered balance is less than the amount to be paid.
- B.** The Board shall approve payment by formal resolution stating the Board's reasons for allowing the bill, invoice, or other claim. The resolution shall be entered in the minutes together with the names of those voting in the affirmative. The Chairman of the Board, or some other Board member designated for this purpose, shall sign the certificate on the check or draft given in payment of the bill, invoice, or other claim.

If payment results in a violation of law, each member of the Board voting to allow payment is jointly and severally liable for the full amount of the check or draft given in payment.

XIX- PAYMENTS OF BILLS, INVOICES, OR OTHER CLAIMS

The school shall not pay a bill, invoice, salary, or other claim except by a check or draft on an official depository, by a bank wire transfer from an official depository. Except as provided in this policy, each check or draft on an official depository shall bear on its face a certificate signed by the school finance officer or signed by the Chairman or some other member of the Board.

XX - TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

A. Southwest Charlotte STEM Board members, officers, and employees engaged in travel on official business of Southwest Charlotte STEM shall, to the best of their knowledge and to a reasonable degree of effort, utilize the least expensive reasonable travel alternative where it provides a better value for Southwest Charlotte STEM.

B. Southwest Charlotte STEM Academy Charter School employees shall be reimbursed for reasonable transportation, or registration expenses incurred while traveling on official business upon presentation of receipts for said expenses. The school will not reimburse employees for purchase of alcoholic beverages or unreasonable costs. The Principal or designee must authorize reimbursement in advance.

XXI - PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

The Southwest Charlotte STEM Academy Charter Schools will comply with all required salary deductions as set forth by state and federal law. School personnel must notify the payroll department in writing of any additions, deletions, or other changes to payroll deductions at least 30 days before the effective date of the change.

XXII - FUNDING REQUESTS FROM ORGANIZED CHARITIES

A. Fundraising activities shall take place outside of the normal working day for staff and outside of the normal instructional day for students. Such activity will be strictly voluntary for school employees and students.

B. In the event of a major catastrophe or during special food or clothing drives, with the principal's approval, receptacles for donations may be placed at appropriate places in school buildings. Any donation made under these conditions will also be voluntary on the part of the donor. The principal will ensure that efforts to promote these efforts shall not significantly interrupt the instructional program.

C. Students shall not be used to raise money for any school or non-school organization during school hours. Nor shall a non-school organization use the school name in raising funds for non-school programs at any time.

XXIII - GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE

The Board shall provide general liability insurance coverage for the Board, its members, collectively and individually, and for school employees.

XXIV. ACCOUNTING FOR CAPITAL ASSETS

A. Capital Asset. A capital asset for Southwest Charlotte STEM is an asset that is:

- a. Tangible in nature;
- b. Has a life that exceeds one year;
- c. Has value of at least \$5,000 per unit; and
- d. Is reasonably identified and controlled through a physical inventory system.

B. *Documentation.* The Principal shall ensure that Southwest Charlotte STEM maintains accurate records of capital assets in accordance with applicable rules.

C. *Inventory.* The Principal will ensure that a physical inventory of capital assets takes place once every two years in accordance with applicable rules.

D. *Financial and compliance reporting.* For purposes of the Financial and Compliance Report, the Principal shall ensure that the report includes:

- a. An exhibit in the financial and compliance report identifying all capital assets and the ownership interest of local, state, and federal parties; or
- b. A statement that all property acquired during the term of Southwest Charlotte STEM, and all property presently held by Southwest Charlotte STEM, may be considered public property.

Third Party Agreements

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY/BUSINESS PARTNERSHIPS

Southwest Charlotte Stem Academy Board of Directors is committed to providing all students opportunities to develop their individual potential. In fulfilling this goal, the Board encourages and supports the involvement of community groups, businesses, and individuals who can provide programs, materials, consultation, and volunteers in an effort to enhance and enrich student achievement and prepare all students for future careers.

In implementing partnerships between schools and the community, the Principal or designee shall consider how partnerships should be organized, the responsibilities of all parties in the partnership, training of school staff and volunteers, and an evaluation process.

The Board of Directors values involvement of parents/guardians, businesses, community groups, and individuals in school activities and programs. All school employees are expected to demonstrate a commitment to working with the community. School administrators shall communicate to the public the goals of each school and its needs for public involvement.

PARENT/GUARDIAN AND BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

The Board welcomes the participation of parent/guardian organizations or booster clubs in the school. Administrators should educate such organizations on the goals of the charter and seek their assistance in improving student success within the education plan. Parent/guardian organizations or booster clubs that are involved with school activities or students should establish a document that sets forth the purposes of the organization and the general rules and procedures by which it will operate.

Parent/guardian organizations, such as the PTO, and booster clubs shall secure the advice and approval of the principal in planning any function in which students will participate while under the jurisdiction of the Charter Schools.

A parent/guardian organization or booster club shall secure advance approval of the principal before planning a fund-raising activity intended to benefit a school program. Principals should assist parent/guardian organizations and/or booster clubs in planning activities, not limited to fund raising, that

serve school needs and involve significant numbers of interested parents/guardians in meaningful service to schools and their students.

Parent/guardian organizations and booster clubs are responsible for maintaining adequate financial records and ensuring that such records are accessible to parents/guardians and school officials on request. Any property that a parent/guardian organization or booster club donates for a school or a school activity shall be the property of the Mallard Creek Stem Academy Charter Schools, and the organization should receive prior acceptance of the principal before purchasing such items.

PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The Schools Board of Directors recognizes that parents/guardians, families, caregivers, schools, and the community share the responsibility for the education of our children. Creating positive home, school, and community partnerships is essential to carrying out this shared responsibility successfully. To promote high student performance, school administrators, teachers and parents/guardians must work as knowledgeable partners.

The Schools Board of Directors believes that schools must create an environment that is conducive to learning and supports strong family partnerships. Collaboration between all school personnel and parents/guardians is essential to support student learning. School personnel will encourage and involve parents/guardians of children at all ages and grade levels by providing a variety of opportunities for involvement, while recognizing and respecting the diverse needs of families in their community.

Board of Directors Roles and Responsibilities

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Principals as it relates to those of the Southwest Charlotte STEM administration team. Additionally, this policy clearly defines the Board Committees as well as any School Committees that the board has representation on.

Responsibilities of the Board of Directors include but are not limited to the following:

- Create and update the mission and vision statements
- Set the direction of Southwest Charlotte STEM by setting annual goals and benchmarks and by creating the 5 & 10 year strategic plans
- Hire, evaluate and terminate the Principal
- Establish compensation for the Principal
- Approve all hiring for the staff of Southwest Charlotte STEM
- Review, develop and adopt written Southwest Charlotte STEM policies
- Plan and approve committee structure and responsibilities
- Review roles of the Board and roles of the committees
- Recruit and train new Board members
- Maintain legal status by ensuring proper paperwork is submitted to governmental agencies
- Sign legal documents
- Approve contracts as per Southwest Charlotte STEM's financial control policies
- Plan agenda for meetings
- Complete annual review of the Board, including reviewing the alignment of all major decisions to the mission statement of Southwest Charlotte STEM
- Approve major programs for Southwest Charlotte STEM
- Finalize and approve the budget
- Approve and authorize expenditures outside of the approved budget
- Approve and monitor financial policies
- Review monthly financial reports
- Ensure that internal controls are in place and are being followed
- Review and approve all major grant proposals (greater than \$50,000)
- Review annual audit
- Develop mechanisms for validating information provided by the Principal
- Assesses compliance of Southwest Charlotte STEM in achieving goals set in the charter as well as any School improvement plan goals
- Sets and reviews personnel policies
- Promotes the charter School to the general public
- Hear grievances in accordance with the grievance policies
- Conduct student discipline hearings in accordance with North Carolina law
- Meet regularly in accordance with its publicly noticed meeting schedule
- Evaluate board meetings by spending the last few minutes of each board meeting reviewing what worked at the meeting and what improvements could be made

Committee Structure Policy

Purpose: This policy is in place to describe the structures of the committees of the Board of Directors.

Southwest Charlotte STEM bylaws permit the establishment of Committees. The Southwest Charlotte STEM Board of Directors has the following three (3) standing committees as set forth in this policy. In addition to the standing committee, the Board may create additional standing and ad hoc committees at its discretion in accordance with the bylaws. The standing committees are:

1. Finance Committee
2. Governance Committee
3. Human Resources Committee

The Finance committee shall be comprised of only current board members and the Principal . The Treasurer shall serve as the Chair of the Finance Committee,

The Governance committee shall be comprised of only current board members and the Principal The Board Chair or his/her designee shall serve as the Chair of the Governance Committee.

The Human Resources Committee shall be comprised of only current board members.

The Chair of each committee must be board members. Minutes must be taken at all committee meetings. The Chair or designee shall report back to the full board at each regularly scheduled board meeting.

Board Committees

Purpose: To identify the Board Committees' roles and responsibilities.

The Board has an Executive Committee that consists of the Board's officers. In addition, the Board has three standing committees, Finance, Governance and Human Resources, which have the following roles. The board shall establish the roles of any other committees created by the board.

Finance Committee

- Select an audit and tax firm
- Assist the Principal of Finance facilitate the audit process
- Assist the Principal of Finance with the completion of the 990 Tax form
- Support and assist in preparing the annual budget
- Ensure that the Leadership Team is staying on track with expenditures and the annual budget
- Review all request for additional expenditures outside of the annual budget
- Communicate with the fundraising committee about the financial needs of the organization
- Review employee benefit plans, and School insurance coverage
- Review School internal control procedures
- Review Government Programs
- Consider programs to help the full utilization of the campus (after School, etc.)
- Take minutes at all meetings and reports back to Board
- Meets a minimum of once per quarter

Governance Committee

- Reviews Board policy manual annually for necessary revisions and to ensure all policies are being followed
- With the Principal, develops any new Board policies required for the School
- With the Principal , revises policies for Southwest Charlotte STEM as needed
- Ensures the Board policy manual is up to date and that every Board member has a current copy of the policies
- Take minutes at all meetings and reports back to Board
- Meets a minimum of once per quarter unless the Committee Chair determines that a meeting is not necessary.
-

Human Resources Committee

- Reviews the job description of the Principal and recommends modifications to the Board
- Prepares the performance review of the Principal to present to the Board for approval and makes a recommendation to the Board concerning contract renewal
- Reviews the contract of the Principal and recommends any modifications
- Tracks possible Board additions
- Interviews potential Board members to fill vacant spots
- Recommends new Board members to Board for a vote
- Take minutes at all meetings and reports back to Board
- Meets a minimum of once per quarter unless the Committee Chair determines that a meeting is not necessary.

Board Meeting Procedures

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to identify the procedures that will be followed at all meetings of the Board of Directors.

The following are the procedures for every Board of Directors Meeting:

1. Prior to each regular board meeting the Board Chair or Principal will circulate the agenda for the upcoming meeting. In the event that a Board member wishes to add an agenda item, that Board member must submit such addition to the Board Chair or Principal prior to the board meeting pursuant to a timeline established by the Board.
2. All Board of Directors meetings must be open to the public, as required by the North Carolina Open Meetings Law § 143-318.10, with the exception of closed session as set forth in NC law.
3. The Board may go into closed session pursuant to North Carolina Law, N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11.
4. Minutes shall be recorded at each meeting, including committee meetings.
5. The Board shall approve the minutes from the previous meeting. The approved minutes shall be put in the official Board of Directors binder.
6. In accordance with the bylaws, there must be 2/3 quorum of all voting board members in order for a board meeting to take place.
7. All members shall be provided a copy of the agenda prior to the meeting by the Chair. The official Board of Directors meeting materials shall also include a copy of the meeting agenda.
8. In regards to the formal matters of the board meetings, the board shall follow Robert's Rules of Order, including making motions, seconding the motions, and voting on formal business.
9. The conflict of interest policies shall be following which includes that no board member shall vote on a motion in which he/she has personal interest. All dissenting and abstaining votes shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.
10. All approved resolutions shall be signed by the Chair and Vice Chair, or the Secretary and Treasurer can sign in place of the Chair or Vice Chair. The official copy of the resolution shall be kept with the official Board of Directors materials.
11. At the end of each school year, the Board shall evaluate its activity and meetings during that year and determine what went well and what, if anything, could be improved.

Board of Directors Training and Professional Development Policy

Purpose: To provide guidelines for the way the board will be trained on an ongoing basis.

The Southwest Charlotte STEM Board of Director s members are encouraged to participate in training and professional development annually, including training to be provided by the Board at one or more regularly scheduled monthly meetings. The training topics may include financial training, charter school training, training on how to be an effective board member, or any other topic that the Board determines may be beneficial.

Board members are also encouraged to attend conferences relevant to charter Schools, and shall attend any training that is required by the state legislature or Office of Charter Schools.

When new board members are elected to the Board, they shall attend the annual Board of Directors New Board Member Orientation and they will receive access to Southwest Charlotte STEM's policies.

Board of Directors Board Member Recruitment Policy

Purpose: To provide direction for the nominating committee as they face the task of recruiting and nominating board members.

Board Member Residence Requirement:

The majority of the board members and 50% or greater of the board officers for a charter school must have their primary residence in North Carolina.

The Human Resources Committee (or any committee designated or created by the Board to do so) shall be responsible for taking the initial steps of the recruiting process for new board members. All board members are encouraged to assist in recruiting possible board members. As current board members come across potential board members, they should pass along the person's name, contact information and qualifications to the Chair of the Committee. The Chair will keep a database of all potential board members.

When a spot on the Board of Directors comes open the Human Resources Committee (or other designated Committee) will review the database of potential board members. They will select a person who has the qualifications that will fit the vacant position. The Chair will contact the potential board member and talk to them about the role of a board member. The Chair will be transparent and will explain the time commitment and expectations for board members. If the person is interested then the Vice Chair shall have them complete the Potential Board Member form and come meet with the Human Resources Committee (or other designated Committee). If the Human Resource Committee (or other designated Committee) recommends this person then they will then have the potential board member come interview with board members. The board will interview them and then vote on adding the person to the board.

Board of Directors Attendance Policy

Purpose: To define the board's attendance policy and the procedures to address situations where a board member does not comply with the attendance policy.

As a member of the Southwest Charlotte STEM Board of Directors, Directors are agreeing to a three-year commitment of service. Board members commit to attending monthly meetings and all required trainings for the Board members. By agreeing to this commitment, the Board of Directors of School ensures consistency and commitment to its students, staff and mission.

All Board members are required to attend a minimum of 75% regularly scheduled monthly board meetings. If a Board member has an unusual circumstance surrounding their absence, the Board member should contact the chair at least 48 hours in advance. If a Board member attends less than 75% of meetings in one year, the Board Secretary shall bring the attendance issue to the Board of Directors. A discussion and vote will occur regarding whether that Board member should retain their position on the board or whether they will be asked to step down from their position.

If the Board member is asked to step down, the board shall follow the Board of Directors recruitment policy and the bylaws to replace that Board member with a new Board member from the community.

Board of Directors Agreement

Purpose: To ensure all members of the Board of Directors have agreed to their role upon joining the board.

As a member of the Southwest Charlotte STEM Board of Directors I will:

- Act with integrity and honesty
- Attempt to attend all Board meetings by phone or in person
- Review the agenda for the meetings and come prepared to all meetings
- Serve on at least one committee
- Agree to my role on the Board of Directors
- Contribute to all meetings that I attend
- Take on any special tasks assigned to me by the Board of Directors
- Suggest nominees for the Board of Directors
- Participate in the creation of the annual goals and the strategic plan
- Abide by the State Board of Education approved charter School application for School and any charter agreement

As a Board member I understand that I have the duty to do the following:

- Think about the mission of School and my fiduciary duty before making any decision or voting on any policy
- Follow the North Carolina Charter School Law
- Agree to the Southwest Charlotte STEM Conflict of Interest Policy
- Agree to the Southwest Charlotte STEM Non-discrimination Policy and all other policies
- Carry out the purpose of the organization while complying with the law
- Support the decisions of the Board of Directors in a positive manner, even if I was in a minority position on certain actions
- Participate in either the training session of the Board of Directors or/and the Board retreat
- Participate in any annual self-evaluation process of the Board of Directors
- Always represent Southwest Charlotte STEM in a positive manner

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

