

UME Preparatory Academy

"Strengthening America's Families through the University Method of Education for Grades K-12"

UME Prep Employee Handbook 2022-2023

Revised July 2022

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Disclaimer:

This handbook does not create an employment contract. Employees are terminable at-will by the school. Similarly, employees may resign their positions without penalty. No individual board member or employee has the authority to alter any employee's at-will status, or guarantee an employee's employment for a specific period of time, unless it is approved by the Superintendent, is in writing, and is signed by both the employee and the Superintendent.

UME Preparatory Academy reserves the right to amend or withdraw any or all provisions of the *Employee Handbook* at any time with or without notice.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Employee Handbook

The information contained in this employee handbook is important and I should consult with my supervisor or Human Resources department if I have a question that is not answered in this handbook.

I acknowledge that the UME Preparatory Academy employee handbook does not create an employment contract or otherwise modify my at-will employment status. I understand that no one has the authority to alter an employee's at-will status, or guarantee an employee's employment for a specific period of time, unless it is approved by the Superintendent, is in writing, and is signed by both myself and the Superintendent.

I understand that UME Preparatory Academy may amend or withdraw any or all portions of this handbook at any time. I understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the provisions in this handbook, including any revisions, and that failure to comply may lead to disciplinary action. I further acknowledge that any revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing provisions within this handbook. By remaining employed by UME Preparatory Academy following any modifications to this handbook, I thereby accept and agree to such changes.

I acknowledge that I have read this handbook and agree to read any amendments of the handbook. I understand that I am required to sign and date this Acknowledgment of Receipt and return it to the HR Director. I understand that a copy of this form will be retained in my personnel file.

Signature of Faculty/Staff Member

Date

Printed Name of Faculty/Staff Member

Date

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. About this Handbook

The purpose of this *Employee Handbook* is to provide employees with a source of information about UME Preparatory Academy's policies and procedures. The policies and procedures in this handbook are to serve as guidelines. Although UME Preparatory Academy strives to be comprehensive, the handbook does not, and cannot, include procedures and policies which address every situation that may arise. Such a list would be limitless.

UME Preparatory Academy has, and reserves, the right to adopt new procedures and policies, or modify, alter, change or cancel existing policies and procedures at any time. Violation of any provision within this handbook may lead to disciplinary action up to and including discharge from employment.

Questions regarding this handbook or any of the policies/procedures should be directed to your supervisor or to the Human Resources Department.

1.2. Control and Accountability

Insofar as we are able, at UME Prep we wish to emphasize accountability over control. By this we mean that, as a general principle, we are far more interested in seeing our faculty, staff, and students achieve Academy goals, than we are with what they do—so long as what they do is not illegal, immoral, unethical, or imprudent—to achieve those goals. To a large degree, then, the rest of this *Employee Handbook* is an attempt to define or clarify these expectations, and to satisfy certain legal requirements. As noted in the introduction, UME Preparatory Academy has, and reserves, the right to adopt new procedures and policies, or modify, alter, change or cancel existing policies and procedures at any time.

1.3. Board of Trustees Directory

Scott Graves, Board Chairperson

scott.graves@umeprep.org

Pioneer Bible Translator, Personnel Officer

Dr. Blake Flickner, Board Vice Chairperson

blake.flickner@umeprep.org

Dallas Baptist University, Head Basketball Coach

Greg Burleson, Board Treasurer

greg.burleson@umeprep.org

Mullican Flooring, Director of Global Procurement

Jolene McVean, Board Secretary

jolene.mcvean@umeprep.org

Mind in Balance, Psychotherapist

Alicia Baker

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MHN, Director of Call Center Operations

Susan Davis

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Airbus Helicopter, HR Support

Davis Howard

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Radiology Associates of North Texas, Director of Business Development

Jenna Pecor

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Bancroft Realty, Realtor

Chris Stewart

chris.stewart@umeprep.org

W.R. Berkley Corporation, Manager Software Development

Leslie Todd, Parent Representative

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Angels of Care Pediatric Home Health, Registered Nurse

Jessica Zambrano

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1.4. Administrative Directory

Administrators:

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Work: (214)545-0829

Misty Stern, Assistant Superintendent Curriculum & Instruction

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Work: (214)545-0857

Felicia Davis, Operations and Compliance Administrator

felicia.davis@umeprep.org

Work: (214)445-6243

Dianne Williams, Principal: Secondary – Dallas Campus

dianne.williams@umeprep.org

Work: (214)445-6243

Joni Holder, Principal: Elementary – Dallas Campus

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Work: (214)445-6243

Andrea Evans, Principal: Elementary – Duncanville Campus

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Work: (972)296-0084

Stacey Witherspoon, Elementary Principal – Mansfield Campus

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Work: (214)545-0900

Directors/Managers:

Toni Oppliger, Women’s Athletic Director

toni.oppliger@umeprep.org

Work: (214)445-6243

Kyle Shaffer, Men’s Athletic Director

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Work: (214)445-6243

Sarah Green, Director of Special Education

sarah.green@umeprep.org

Work: (214)445-6243

Kortlynd Dickerson, HR Director

kortlynd.dickerson@umeprep.org

Work: (214)445-6243

James Foster, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Director

james.foster@umeprep.org

Work: (214)445-6243

2. STARTING YOUR JOB

2.1. Accuracy of Information

UME Preparatory Academy relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other information presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Employees are expected to provide truthful and accurate information in connection with their employment at UME Preparatory Academy.

Any falsification or misrepresentation in connection with application materials, or during the course of employment, is a serious offense and may lead to discharge from employment or non-selection of an applicant.

2.2. Employment Application & Other Forms

New faculty and staff members are asked to complete the following forms:

- Employment Application
- Computerized Criminal History (CCH) Verification Form
- Race/Ethnicity Form
- W-4 Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate Form
- I-9 Employee Eligibility Form
- SSA-1945
- Authorization for Direct Deposit Form
- Acknowledgement of Receipt of Faculty Handbook
- Employee Election Form to Withhold Certain Information from Public Access
- Applicable Healthcare/Benefit Enrollment Forms
- Skyward User ID Security Form
- Signed Letter of Agreement/Understanding
- Signed Job Description
- Teacher Service Record (if applicable)
- Copy of social security number
- Copy of driver's license
- Official transcripts (if teaching or administration)

Current employees may be required to update or execute any of the above forms. Any employee who fails or refuses to complete the above forms or to provide UME Preparatory Academy with requested documentation may be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge from employment.

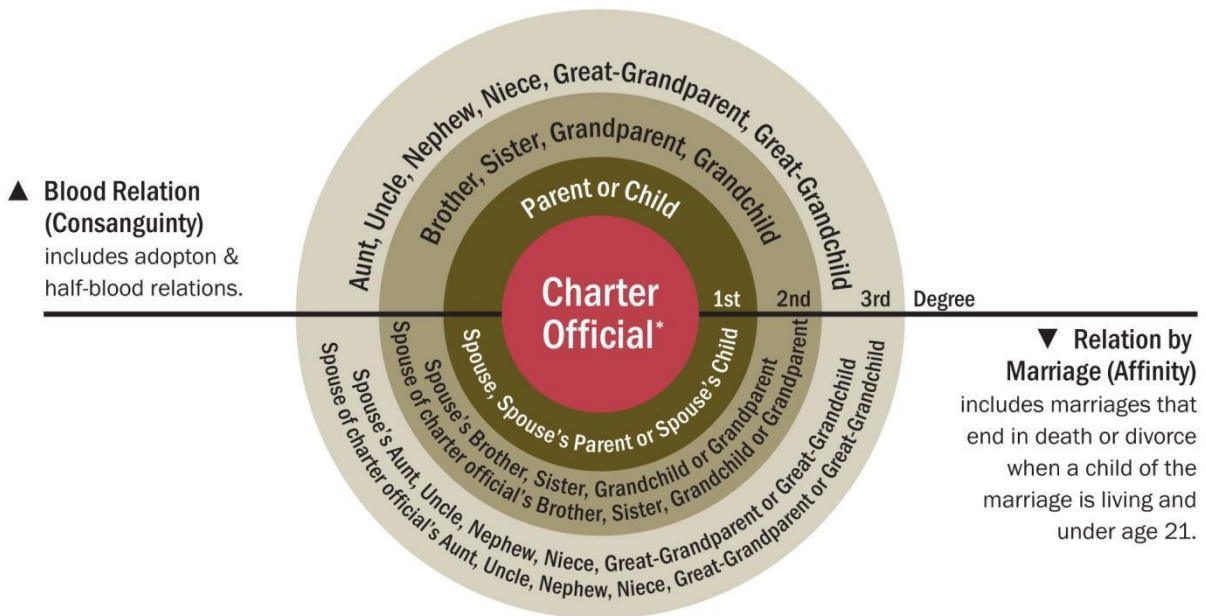
2.3. Nepotism Policy

The governing body ("Board") of UME Preparatory Academy adopts the following policy which shall be effective on the date that the policy is adopted by the Board.

The Board of UME Preparatory Academy shall comply with all applicable nepotism statutes and rules.

Unless UME Preparatory Academy falls under a statutory or regulatory exception, if a charter holder or charter school board member, or an officer of a charter school, is related to the one of the following individuals then that related individual may not be employed by the charter school:

200.100 Nepotism Diagram



*Charter Official includes charter holder board member, charter school board member, or officer of a charter school.

2.4. Criminal History Background Checks

A person may not be employed or serve as a teacher, substitute teacher, librarian, educational aide, administrator, or counselor unless the person has been approved by the Texas Education Agency following a review of the person’s National Criminal History Record Information. Each individual serving or expected to serve in the aforementioned roles will be expected to comply and submit the necessary information for the background check. Additionally, other employees and contractors subject to criminal background checks will be required to comply and submit the necessary information for the background check.

2.5. New Employee Orientation

During the first few weeks of employment, employees will receive orientation applicable to their position.

2.6. Health Safety Training

Certain employees must maintain and submit to the proof of current certification in first aide, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). Certification must be issued by the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or another organization that provides equivalent training and certification.

3. REPORTING TO WORK

3.1. Official UME Preparatory Academy Office Hours

Standard hours of operation in the administrative office areas are from 8:00am until 4:00pm.

3.2. Regular Work Schedules

Teachers and Substitutes: UME Prep teachers and substitute teachers are expected to be in their assigned classrooms during regularly scheduled meetings of the courses they are assigned to teach. They should arrive early enough to receive incoming students at the beginning of their class period (generally on campus about 15 minutes before class begins, and in the classroom about five minutes before class begins) and remain as directed by your Letter of Agreement. A similar expectation exists for instructors who are fulfilling additional support roles; they should be in their assigned area at the time(s) indicated by their support position schedule.

Exempt Employees: Exempt employees are expected to work the hours necessary to complete their assigned work to the satisfaction of their supervisor without regard to scheduled hours and without expectation of additional compensation.

Non-Exempt Employees: Non-exempt employees (*hourly school support staff and salaried staff not included in "exempt" list*) are expected to work the assigned number of hours according to the agreed upon rate of pay in the Letter of Agreement/Understanding.

3.3. Attendance

Teachers: UME Prep instructors are expected to be reliable and punctual in reporting for work in accordance with their individual schedules. If an instructor will be late to work or is unable to work as scheduled, the instructor should notify the Sub Coordinator by 6:30 am, who will contact appropriate backups to ensure responsibilities are covered. Notification of absence should be reported to Director of Office Management/HR of absence within 3 days. A Personal Leave form should be completed for all absences.

Staff: UME Prep staff members are expected to be reliable and punctual in reporting for work in accordance with their individual schedules. If a staff member will be late to work or is unable to work as scheduled, the staff member should notify their Supervisor by 6:30 am, who will contact appropriate backups as well as ensure responsibilities are covered.

Coaches: UME Prep coaches are expected to be reliable and punctual in reporting for work in accordance with their individual schedules. If a coach will be late to work or is unable to work as scheduled, the coach should notify their Supervisor by 6:30 am, who will contact appropriate backups as

well as ensure responsibilities are covered.

All: UME Preparatory Academy recognizes there will be occasions when an illness or other personal event may result in an unscheduled absence. As such, UME Preparatory Academy has a leave policy (see section 4).

Poor attendance and/or repeated tardiness are disruptive to the operations of UME Preparatory Academy and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment.

3.4. Workload and Work Schedules

Exempt Employees: Exempt employees are not eligible to receive overtime pay and are employed according to the work schedules articulated in the Letter of Agreement signed upon being hired. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules including start and end dates and scheduled holidays will be published each school year.

Non-Exempt Employees: Non-exempt employees will receive notification of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Non-exempt employees are not exempt from overtime but are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor.

3.5. Employee Involvement

UME Prep offers opportunities for input in matters that affect employees and influence the instructional and operational effectiveness of the Academy. As part of the Academy's planning and decision-making process, employees will be invited to serve on advisory committees as they are developed.

3.6. Staff Development

Staff development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and UME Prep staff. Staff development for all personnel is predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives and meeting legal requirements and addressed in campus improvement plans when such plans are developed.

Individuals holding renewable State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) certificates are responsible for obtaining the required training hours and maintaining appropriate documentation to report annually. For further information, contact the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and Teacher Support.

4. TIME AWAY FROM WORK (LEAVES/ABSENCES)

The Academy offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This handbook describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. Employees who expect to be absent for more than five (5) days should contact their Supervisor for approval. The Supervisor will meet with the HR Director to make a determination on leave. Information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with UME Prep will be provided

Employees who are on an unpaid leave of absence may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Health care benefits for employees on leave authorized under the Family and Medical Leave Act (if applicable) will be paid by the employee, as they were when they were working. Otherwise, the Academy does not make benefit contributions for employees who are on an unpaid leave.

Employees must follow department or campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate leave request.

4.1. Holidays & School Breaks

UME Preparatory Academy will be closed during the following holidays and breaks recognized by the school:

- a. Labor Day
- b. Columbus Day
- c. Thanksgiving (1 week)
- d. Christmas Break (2 weeks)
- e. Spring Break (1 week)
- f. Good Friday
- g. Memorial Day
- h. July 4th

Administrators, directors, and salaried school support staff, will receive holidays and breaks as designated above. Any other time off is subject to the supervisor's approval.

4.2. Vacation/Personal Paid Leave/Sick Leave

Personal Leave-Paid Time Off

Texas law entitles full-time and part-time public school employees to five (5) days of paid personal leave per year ("state days"), which accumulates from year to year, without limit, and which can be transferred to other Texas school districts upon the employee's request. Part-time regular employees who are scheduled to work 18 or more hours per week are eligible to receive three (3) state days per year. Full-time regular employees who are scheduled to work 30+ hours will receive five (5) state days per year. Employees will not be paid for any accrued state days upon separation of employment.

In addition, UME Prep provides up to three (3) days of paid personal leave per year ("local days") to each full-time regular and part-time regular employee (see chart on next page for explanation). These local days do not rollover and are not transferable to other districts. Unused local days are not paid upon separation of employment.

A "day" for purposes of earning, using, or recording shall mean the average number of hours per day equivalent to the employee's usual work assignment, whether full-time or part-time. The chart below lists the allotment of State days and Personal days based on the number of days worked per week.

Staff Hours (6-6.5 hrs./day)	State/Local Day Allotment
1-day (6-7 hrs.)	1 state day, .5 local day
2-day (12-13 hrs.)	2 state days, 1 local day
3-day faculty (18-21 hrs.)	3 state days, 1.5 local days
4-day faculty (24-28.5 hrs.)	4 state days, 2.5 local days
5-day faculty/staff (30+hrs.)	5 state days, 3 local days
5-Day, 12-Month Employees:	5 state days, 3 local days*

- *For 12-month employees who work 226+ calendar days, you will be eligible to accrue 1 vacation day per month for 10-months worked and will receive two weeks of vacation in the summer.

An employee wishing to take anticipated leave should submit a request to his or her supervisor five (5) days in advance of the anticipated absence via Skyward Employee Access. The effect of the employee's absence on the educational program or department operations, as well as the availability of substitutes/backups, will be considered by the Principal for granting approval for the leave. Your leave may be denied and could result in an unpaid transaction. Leave may not last more than two consecutive workdays, except in extenuating circumstances as determined by the Principal or designee and you will be asked to submit documentation (e.g., a doctor's note when absent 3 consecutive days) upon return to duty.

Leave normally may *not* be taken on the following key days: on the day before a school holiday, the day after a school holiday, days scheduled for end-of-term assessments, days scheduled for state tests, the first or last week of school, or professional or staff development days. Extenuating circumstances for unapproved absences must be supported by a viable doctor's excuse or other appropriate documentation as deemed by the supervisor.

Expectations of UME Prep Faculty and Staff: In all cases of leave, *teachers* should provide adequate lesson plans, class lists, attendance instructions, first aid/fire drill info, and other instructions for the substitute, if at all possible. All *staff members* are expected to have trained other appropriate personnel to be backups, as soon as reasonably possible, for any task they are responsible to perform. Staff members should notify their supervisor, as well as their backups, so that the operations of the school can proceed as normal.

4.3. Long-Term Leave

Absence from duty for more than 12 weeks (defined in terms of a standard week's instructional load) during an academic year may be grounds for dismissal from service at UME Preparatory Academy. Regular teachers or staff anticipating the need to be absent from duty for more than 12 total weeks should secure the approval of their supervisor before missing more than 4 weeks of instruction or operational work.¹

Regular instructors taking leave are subject to the compensatory policies described above; however, full-time regular instructors will retain all benefits to which they are entitled and have previously chosen to accept until such time as they finish their term of service or are dismissed from employment. Instructors dismissed from employment prior to completing their terms of service for reason of being absent from duty will be compensated on a pro-rated basis, meaning that they will be paid any deferred compensation to which they are entitled within 31 days of dismissal. Any additional benefits which they have been receiving will cease on the first day of the month following the date of their dismissal.

4.4. Military Leave of Absence

UME Preparatory Academy will comply with applicable state and federal laws regarding an employee's absence due to service in the uniformed services.

4.5. Bereavement Leave

Paid bereavement leave will be granted according to the following schedule:

Employees are allowed up to three consecutive days off from regularly scheduled duty with regular pay in the event of the death of the employee's spouse, child, father, mother, brother or sister and any relative who may be residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death, may be included as well.

4.6. Jury Duty/Court Appearance

UME Preparatory Academy will grant employees time off for mandatory jury duty or for court appearances as a witness when the employee must serve or is required to appear as a result of a court order or subpoena. A copy of the court order or subpoena must be supplied to the employee's supervisor when requesting time off. The employee is entitled to full pay for each day of jury duty or service as a witness up to a maximum of ten (10) days per year, in addition to any other paid leave.

However, if the employee is court-ordered or subpoenaed for court appearances as a party to any civil or criminal litigation, it shall not be compensated and the employee must arrange for time off without pay or use accrued vacation or personal leave for such appearances.

4.7. Continuation of Health Insurance

Qualifying employees (working 10 hours or more per week) on an approved leave of absence other than family and medical leave may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Health insurance

¹ With regard to faculty and staff, UME Preparatory Academy does not appear to be subject to the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act, nevertheless, this 12 week maximum was determined in part from our desire to honor the spirit of the law.

benefits for employees on paid leave and leave designated under the Family and Medical Leave Act will be paid by the Academy as they were prior to the leave. Otherwise, the Academy does not pay any portion of insurance premiums for employees who are on unpaid leave.

4.8. Docked Days

After an employee's accrued days of leave have all been used, employees will begin dock days. Employees who begin dock days after exhausting all available leave options, (FMLA, etc), will be placed on Payroll Inactive Status. For further information regarding Payroll Inactive Status, contact the HR Coordinator.

4.9. Family and Medical Leave (FML)—General Provisions

The following text is from the federal notice, *Employee Rights and Responsibilities Under the Family and Medical Leave Act*.

Eligibility Requirements. Employees are eligible if they have worked for a covered employer for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

Basic Leave Entitlement. The FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

Military Family Leave Entitlements. Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active military duty and deployed to a foreign country may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings. It also includes a family member who is a veteran with an illness or injury that occurs in the line of duty while on active duty and manifests itself before or after the service member became a veteran. The veteran must have been on active duty during the five years preceding the need for treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

Benefits and Protections. During FML, the employer must maintain the employee's health coverage under any "group health plan" on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FML, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. Use of FML cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave.

Definition of Serious Health Condition. A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing

treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities. Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than 3 consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

Use of Leave. An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave. Employees may choose or employers may require use of accrued paid leave while taking FML. In order to use paid leave for FML, employees must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

Employee Responsibilities. Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FML when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with an employer's normal call-in procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the employer to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the employer if the requested leave is for a reason for which FML was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

Employer Responsibilities. Covered employers must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for the ineligibility. Covered employers must inform employees if leave will be designated as FML and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the employer determines that the leave is not FML, the employer must notify the employee.

Unlawful Acts by Employers. The FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right protected under the FMLA;
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to the FMLA.

Enforcement. An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. The FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

*FMLA section 109 (29 U.S.C. § 2619) required FMLA covered employers to post the text of this notice.
Regulations 29 C.F.R. § 825.300 (a) may require additional disclosures.*

For additional information:

1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627

www.wagehour.dol.gov

4.10. Shared Leave Program.

UME PREP LEAVE-SHARING PROGRAM Policies, Procedures, and Forms

.Purpose:

The UME Prep Leave-Sharing Program (ULSP) is to provide additional sick leave days to members of the bank in the event of a medical emergency or major disaster affecting the employee or their family member. Days may be requested from the Leave Bank only after the member has exhausted all accumulated sick leave and local personal leave days, paid vacation days, and short-term disability (if applicable).

II. Definitions:

“Medical emergency” is defined as “a medical condition of the employee or a family member that will require the prolonged absence of the employee from duty and will result in a substantial loss of income to the employee because the employee will have exhausted all paid leave available apart from the leave-sharing program.” An employee who has exhausted his or her leave may seek to draw from the Leave Bank if the employee needs more paid leave in the event that they experience a medical emergency, need to tend to a parent, spouse, or child who has experienced a medical emergency, or need additional time off for bereavement in the event of the death of an employee’s spouse, child, father, mother, brother or sister as stipulated in 4.5 of the UME Prep Employee Handbook.

“Major disaster” is defined as “a major disaster as declared by the President under § 401 of the Stafford Act, 42 U.S.C. § 5170, that warrants individual assistance or individual and public assistance from the federal government under that Act, or (b) a major disaster or emergency as declared by the President pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 6391, in the case of employees described in that statute.”

“Family member” for the purposes of this policy, is defined as a “spouse, son/stepson, daughter/stepdaughter, parents, or any relative who may be residing in the employee’s household at the time of illness or death.”

III. Eligibility:

All regularly employed personnel (working 20+ hours a week) are eligible to participate. Participation is voluntary but requires contribution to the Leave Bank.

IV. Enrollment:

Open enrollment to the Leave Bank is September 1st through September 30th of any given year. New employees hired during a school year may enroll in the bank within 30 days of employment. Those employees who elect not to enroll in the bank shall not be permitted to enroll until the following annual open enrollment period.

V. Contributions:

Any employee who is eligible to enroll in the ULSP may do so by providing the “**Donation Minimum**” as set forth in the table below during the first year and as needed to maintain days in the Leave Bank equal to one times the number of bank’s members. (It is permissible to designate days to a specific individual as long as at least one day is also donated to the Common Leave Bank during enrollment). Any member, however, using 10 or more days from the bank must donate two sick leave days at the beginning of the next school year to be reinstated in the ULSP. The days donated will be subtracted from the member’s total sick leave days. ALL donations will remain in force and cannot be returned even upon cancellation of membership.

Staff Hours (6-6.5 hrs./day)	State/Local Day Allotment	Shared Leave Program Donation Minimum:
1-day (6-7 hrs.)	1 state day, .5 local day	Ineligible
2-day (12-13 hrs.)	2 state days, 1 local day	Ineligible
3-day faculty (18-21 hrs.)	3 state days, 1.5 local days	Ineligible
4-day faculty (24-28.5 hrs.)	4 state days, 2.5 local days	2 days leave donation
5-day faculty/staff (30+hrs.)	5 state days, 3 local days	2 days leave donation
5-Day, 12-Month Employees:	5 state days, 3 local days*	2 days leave donation

Additional situations when an employee may donate sick leave days is limited to situations in which other employees have experienced a personal or family medical emergency or a major disaster in accordance with IRS guidelines.

VI. Donor Cap:

Donations to the ULSP cannot exceed five (5) of an employee's sick leave days for the current school year.

Donee Cap:

Employees meeting eligibility requirements to receive benefit from the Leave Bank may receive up to 10 days from the Common Leave Bank, and up to an additional 10 days (20 total) if specifically designated. Designated days will be used prior to Common Leave Bank days.

VII. Tax information:

Recipient:

The amounts paid by the employer to a leave recipient pursuant to the plan are *includible in the gross income of the recipient* under section 61 of the Code as compensation for services provided by that recipient to the employer. These *amounts are considered wages* for purposes of the Federal Insurance Contributions Act, the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, the Railroad Retirement Tax Act, the Railroad Unemployment Repayment Tax, and income tax withholding, unless excluded therefrom under a specific provision of the Code.

Donor:

An employee who surrenders leave to the employer or deposits leave in the Leave Bank does *not realize any income and incurs no deductible expense or loss* either upon the surrender or deposit of the leave or its use by the recipient. The holding and underlying rationale of this ruling apply only to bona fide employer-sponsored leave-sharing arrangements.

Rules and Procedures

- A. Should there be a medical emergency or major disaster affecting the employee or their family member (as defined in the policy), the member may submit a request for days from the bank, only after the member has exhausted all accumulated sick leave and personal leave days, and short-term disability days (if applicable). Requests should be made through the HR manager to be reviewed by the ULSP Committee.

- B. A member who requests days from the Leave Bank must submit to the ULSP as soon as possible forms containing the following information:
 - 1. A sick leave ment signed by the member attesting to the fact that the condition which necessitated the request for days from the bank was unknown to the employee at the time he/she became a member of the bank and for new employees at their first opportunity to join the bank.
 - 0. Completion of the attending physician's sick leave ment which includes:
 - a. Identification of the nature of the illness and/or extent of injury.

- b. Date of initial onset of this particular condition.
 - c. Anticipated date eligible to return to work on a full or part-time basis.
0. Anticipation of days, if any for follow-up examinations. (May be limited by the ULSP Committee.)
- C. Forms for the above purposes have been prepared and are available in the Business Office. Please see HR manager or designee.
 - D. The ULSP Committee may refuse to consider an application that does not contain the required information.
 - E. If the member is critically ill or just had a family member pass away and is unable to file an application for leave days from the bank, the school principal, immediate supervisor, or department head may initiate the application form at the request of the family.
 - F. An applicant may be required to undergo a medical review by a second opinion physician of the Committee's choice at any time, at the member's expense.
 - G. Grant of days from the bank:
 - 1. Conditions known to exist by the employee on or before the date of joining the Leave Bank will not be covered under provisions of the Leave Bank. This sick leave is waived for the initial enrollment period and for new employees at their first opportunity to join the bank.
0. Leave days from the bank will be granted only after the member has exhausted all accumulated sick leave and personal leave days, and short-term disability (if applicable).
- 0. In a case where an 8-day waiting period applies to short-term disability, any Leave Bank Time requested can cover any difference not covered by the employees' accumulated sick leave and personal leave days.
0. Days from the bank shall be granted only for medical emergencies and major disasters as defined in this policy. Leave Bank days may be allowed to cover the period of bereavement after a family member passes away.

0. Leave Bank days shall be granted only for absences from working days and will not be granted for holidays, or other such days for which a member is not paid.

0. Pregnancy and accompanying complications will not be covered by the bank. Rare complications occurring after and arising from childbirth will be considered on an individual basis, provided the recovery period requires longer than six weeks.

0. Leave Bank grants will not be authorized for illness or disability resulting from self-inflicted injury or act of war.

0. The maximum number of days that can be granted to any one member of the bank will be up to ten (10) days per year from the Common Leave Bank with an option of up to ten (10) additional days if specifically designated by other employees for a total of up to twenty (20) days per school year. Days would be prorated for regularly employed part-time employees. The Leave Bank may not grant more days than its members have contributed.

0. If a member of the Leave Bank qualifies to receive days from the bank due to the illness of someone in the immediate family as defined in this policy, but has used all of the days allowed under the above provision, and if his/her spouse is a member of the bank and qualifies to receive days for the same illness, the days may be shared with the spouse who has no more days left. (Personal illness of either employee does not qualify for Leave Bank sharing of days.)

0. If a request to draw upon the bank is for other than consecutive days of illness, a separate request, including a physician's sick leave form on the required form, must be submitted for each period of illness. Each separate application must meet the initial criteria of just cause.

0. All requests to draw upon the Leave Bank must be accompanied by the appropriate physician's signed sick leave form confirming actual treatment and certification of the existence of a disability to perform assigned duties. Elective surgery is not included.

0. A contributor will lose the right to utilize the benefits of the bank by:
 - a. Termination of employment with UME Prep

 - b. Notice of cancellation of participation by the member on the proper form.

 - c. Being on approved leave of absence.

- d. Attempted abuse of the bank and/or its policies.
- e. Refusal to continue regular contributions.

VIII. UME Prep Leave-Sharing Program (ULSP) Committee:

- A. Name: The governing committee, which will approve or disapprove all requests for Leave Bank days, shall be called the USLP Committee.
- B. Composition of membership of ULSP Committee
 - 1. The CEO or designee will appoint in August up to three members for the ULSP Committee.
 - 0. Other members of the ULSP Committee must have been employed by the school district for at least two consecutive years prior to appointment, and must be members of the Leave Bank.
- C. Term of Office: The term of office will be two years. The term of office shall run from September 1 to August 31.
- D. Duties and Responsibilities of the ULSP Committee:
 - 1. All applications for Leave Bank days shall be reviewed individually by the Committee in a called meeting and will maintain confidentiality (A confidentiality agreement will need to be signed by members of this Committee.)
 - 2. A member may be requested to appear before the Committee to substantiate his/her case.
 - 3. The Committee shall determine the number of days approved up to 20 days (10 from Common Leave Bank, as well as any specifically designated) and reserves the right to approve, disapprove, or modify the days requested.
 - 4. A member may appeal the decision of the Committee by writing a letter to the CEO requesting to appear in person before the Committee.
 - 6. The decision of the Committee will be final.
 - 7. Vacancies on the Committee that arise during the school year will be filled prior to the next meeting.

8. The CEO shall serve as the Executive Officer of the Committee and process all approved leave days for members through the Payroll Department.
9. The Committee shall review and vote on approval of any policy and procedure revisions recommended during the final meeting of the school year (except as required to comply with School Board Policy or applicable law). A simple majority of voting members shall decide the issues.

4.11. Substitute Procedures.

Teachers should first notify the sub coordinator when a sub is needed. If unable to be reached, please contact the appropriate supervisor by phone. After making personal contact, please e-mail or text the Sub Coordinator and all applicable supervisors with the necessary information.

Sub Coordinator: Jennifer Pena – Secondary, Dallas Campus; jennifer.pena@umeprep.org

Sub Coordinator: Ronda Standard – Elementary, Dallas Campus; ronda.standard@umeprep.org

Sub Coordinator: Sarai Romero - Duncanville Campus; sarai.romero@umeprep.org

Sub Coordinator: Michelle Foster – Mansfield Campus; michelle.foster@umeprep.org

Kortlynd Dickerson, HR Director; kortlynd.dickerson@umeprep.org

Susy Brommers, Secondary Principal – Dallas Campus; susy.brommers@umeprep.org

Joni Holder, Elementary Principal – Dallas Campus (817)475-0770; joni_holder@umeprep.org

Andrea Evans, Elementary Principal – Duncanville Campus; andrea.evans@umeprep.org

Stacey Witherspoon, Elementary Principal – Mansfield Campus; stacey.witherspoon@umeprep.org

If the teacher is requesting leave, he or she should submit *Leave Request via the Skyward Employee Access for approval* at his or her earliest opportunity.

- Teachers missing class due to approved, school-related business (e.g., ARD meetings) also will need to submit a *Leave Request via Skyward Employee Access-Time Off* but will not be charged with absence from duty nor lose either compensation or compensated leave time.
- If the teacher is requesting leave, he or she should inform the Sub Coordinator of the circumstances requiring use of the leave at the time of the request and complete the *Leave Request via Skyward Employee Access-Time Off* at his or her earliest convenience.
- In all cases, teachers should provide adequate lesson plans, class lists, attendance instructions, first aid/fire drill info, and other instructions for the substitute, if at all possible.

Sub coordinator or Principal will arrange for a substitute to supervise and instruct the affected class(es) in accordance with their order of priority: more highly qualified substitutes will generally be offered the opportunity to conduct the affected class before less highly qualified substitutes. The order of preference is as follows:

- First: Bachelor's degree in a field closely related to the affected discipline AND a valid teaching credential
- Second: Bachelor's degree in a field closely related to the affected discipline OR a valid teaching credential for the relevant grade level
- Third: Bachelor's degree in unrelated field without a teaching credential
- Fourth: Some college hours
- Fifth: High school diploma

All substitutes at UME Prep must hold at least a high school diploma.

1. Substitute Compensation

Standard Substitutes are expected to conduct class in accordance with the regular instructor's plan in place of the absent regular instructor but have no additional planning or grading duties. Standard substitutes will be compensated at the rate of \$15.00 per instructional hour.

Long-Term Substitutes are substitutes fulfilling all aspects of the role of the regular course instructor in the absence of that instructor. Long-term substitutes are expected to plan lessons and assess students as well as conduct classes when the regular instructor is expected to be absent from duty for more than a week and is unable to fulfill his or her lesson planning and assessment duties during that time or when no acceptable regular instructor is available. The regular instructor's supervisor, with the superintendent's approval, may determine that the lesson planning and/or assessment efforts of a regular instructor absent from duty for more than a week are ineffective or insufficient and so appoint a long-term substitute in his or her place. Because of the additional duties involved, long-term substitutes must hold at least a bachelor's degree, preferably in a field related to the discipline in which they are temporarily teaching. Long-term substitutes are compensated at the rate of \$30.00 per instructional hour for the period in which they are functioning as long-term substitutes. Long-term substitutes will retain their position only for as long as the regular instructor is absent or the school is unable to secure an acceptable regular instructor; the long-term substitute's services are terminated immediately upon the return of the regular instructor or the appointment of a regular instructor.

2. Special Case Substitutes may be appointed by the Principal when he or she feels such an appointment is necessary and proper. Special substitutes may be compensated at variable rates, as determined by the Principal. In no case may a Special Case Substitute be compensated at a rate greater than the base rate for the position in question.

5. BENEFITS

5.1. Summary of Employee Benefits, Leaves, and Absences

Note: When referencing "All employees," Substitutes and Temporary Employees are excluded unless stated otherwise.

Note: Percentages are subject to current legislative law.

5.2. Health, Dental, Vision, and Life Insurance

Group health insurance coverage is available to all full-time employees through TRS-ActiveCare. Is a statewide "health coverage program for public education employees" An "eligible employee" for health insurance is one who has a normal work schedule of at ten (10) hours or more each week and is not employed on a temporary or "as-needed" basis. The board of trustees determines the Academy's

contribution to the employee insurance program annually. Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, prices, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees at the time of their induction as a new employee.

New employees must complete enrollment forms and make their health care election within thirty (30) days from their first day of employment. The election is fixed for the remainder of the plan year unless a qualifying event occurs. Current employees can make changes to their insurance coverage when the employee has a personal status change (“qualifying event”) or during annual open enrollment. Employees should contact the Human Resource Department if there is a qualifying event or change in family status that may allow a change to the health care election. Annual open enrollment will generally be each year in July/August. Information about open enrollment changes can be obtained from the Human Resources

Dental and vision insurance will be provided by Cigna Dental and is not employer sponsored.

The insurance plan year is from September 1st through August 31st of each year.

5.3. Workers’ Compensation Insurance

The Academy, in accordance with state law, provides workers’ compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or injury in the course and scope of their regular duty. If eligible, workers’ compensation benefits pay for medical treatment of the work-related illness or injury. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case.

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to the employee’s supervisor who will report the work-related illness or injury to the HR Coordinator. Employees who are unable to work due to a work-related illness or injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code.

5.4. Unemployment Compensation Insurance

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled breaks in the school year or the summer months if they have employment contracts or reasonable assurance of returning to service. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact the HR Coordinator.

5.5. Life Insurance

An employer paid Life insurance policy in the amount of \$10,000 will be provided for all employees working over 15 works per week.

5.6 Teacher Retirement

All personnel employed on a regular basis for at least four and one-half months are members of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS). TRS provides members with an annual statement of their account showing all deposits and the total account balance for the year ending August 31.

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should complete a *UME Prep Letter of Retirement Form* and

notify the Director of Office Management/HR as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available at locally held annual TRS seminars or by directing inquiries to: Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call (800) 223-8778 or (512) 542-6400. TRS information is also available on the Web (www.trs.state.tx.us). See Employment After Retirement for information on restrictions of employment of retirees in Texas public schools.

5.7. Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)

Employees may be eligible to participate in the Cafeteria Plan (Section 125) and, under IRS regulations, must either accept or reject this benefit. This plan enables eligible employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pretax basis (i.e., health, dental, and vision).

New employees must accept or reject this benefit during their first month of employment. All employees must accept or reject this benefit on an annual basis and during the specified time period.

6. WAGES & EXPENSES

6.1. Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. The Academy's pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All Academy positions are classified as exempt or non-exempt according to federal law.

Exempt: UME Prep Teachers, Administrators, and Directors, are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation.

Non-Exempt: Other hourly school support staff and salaried staff are generally classified as non-exempt and are paid an hourly wage or salary or overtime pay for each hour worked beyond 40 hours in a work week.

Salary and wage schedules are reviewed annually and adjusted according to the budgeted amounts approved by the board. Employees should contact the Human Resources Department for more information about the Academy's pay schedules or their own pay.

6.2. Payday

Monthly Payroll-UME Preparatory Academy pays its exempt employees on a monthly basis depending on job classification. Paydays will take place on the 15th of each month, or the Friday before if 15th is on a weekend.

Semi Monthly-UME Preparatory Academy pays its Non-exempt employees on a semi-monthly basis. Paydays will take place on the 1st and 15th of each month, or the Friday before if the 1st or 15th is on a weekend. For non-exempt employees or employees who have accumulated extra-duty pay, time sheets must be turned in by the payroll cutoff date in order to be eligible for the following payroll. Please see "*Monthly Payroll Schedule*" for dates.

6.3. Overtime Compensation (Non-Exempt Only)

The Academy compensates overtime for non-exempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. All employees are classified as exempt or non-exempt for purposes of overtime compensation. Professional (teachers, counselors, librarians) and administrative employees are ineligible for overtime compensation. Only non-exempt employees (hourly school support staff and regular salaried employees) are entitled to overtime compensation. All non-exempt employees are entitled to an unpaid, duty-free 30-minute lunch. Non-exempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from their supervisor.

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours weekly and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. Non-exempt employees must work more than 40 total hours in a week to earn overtime compensation. **For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. Saturday and ends at Midnight on Friday.**

Non-exempt employees may be compensated for overtime at time-and-a-half. Weekly time records will be maintained on all non-exempt employees at the work location for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

6.4. Direct Deposit

Direct deposit is UME Preparatory Academy's preferred method of payment for all employees paid by UME Preparatory Academy. Direct deposit enables UME Preparatory Academy to facilitate the distribution of pay to employees in a safe, secure, and timely manner.

6.5. Mistake in Payroll or Expense Reimbursement

Employees are required to immediately notify their supervisor or the Director of Office Management/HR in the event of a suspected mistake in their payroll. Failure to report an overpayment in payroll may result in disciplinary action.

6.6. Time Sheets

Time sheets are required of non-exempt (hourly) employees and any general faculty or staff member being paid out of federal funds. Employee time sheets (attendance records) must be kept complete and accurate. Time sheets are subject to unannounced reviews to ensure proper use. Falsification of time records is a serious offense and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment.

6.7. Travel Expense Reimbursements

It is preferred that local training be attended versus out of town. Before an employee incurs travel expenses related to UME Preparatory Academy business, the employee must submit a *Travel Request Form* for approval to his/her supervisor and Director of HR. Mileage for use of an employee's personal car will be reimbursed at a rate of allowable rate by IRS. Employees should select moderately priced lodging convenient to their destination to minimize time and expense. A *Mileage Reimbursement Form* and/or *Travel Authorization/Reconciliation Form* will need to be filled out in order to be reimbursed.

Travel expenses from approved travel must be itemized and detailed on the UME Preparatory

Academy Travel Reimbursement Form. To be reimbursed, all original receipts for travel expenses must be included with the reimbursement form and submitted to the employee's supervisor. Travel arrangements will be made by the Office Manager in the Business Office.

The UME Prep travel guidelines generally follow the travel guidelines as established within the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts *TexTravel*, where applicable. The *TexTravel* can be accessed online at <https://fmx.cpa.state.tx.us/fm/travel/travelrates.php/>. Because the reimbursement rates can change, it is recommended that travelers print the page at the time reservations are made and submit the printout with the travel reimbursement voucher as a supporting document.

A UME Prep employee is entitled to be reimbursed for transportation, lodging, meal and *incidental expense* incurred while conducting Academy business at a duty point outside of his or her designated work location (more than 50 miles).

6.8. Deductions in Pay

UME Preparatory Academy shall make the following periodic deductions from its employees' salaries or wages or shall reduce its employees' salaries or wages in accordance with state law or salary reduction agreements executed between the Academy and its employees:

1. The amount of *income tax* required to be withheld by federal law.
2. The amount of *Medicare tax* required by law (only those employees hired after March 31, 1986).
3. The required contribution to the *Teacher Retirement System of Texas* in accordance with applicable law and rules.
4. The required contribution to the *retired school employees' group insurance fund* in accordance with applicable law and rules.
5. The amount specified in an order or writ of withholding issued under Family Code Chapter 158 for *child support payments*. The amount withheld shall be remitted to the person or office named in the order on each regular due date or pay date.
6. The amount specified in an order or writ of withholding issued under Family Code Chapter 8 for *spousal maintenance*. The amount withheld shall be remitted to the person or office named in the order or writ on each regular pay date. The Academy will deduct an administrative fee of not more than \$5 from the employee's disposable earnings in addition to the amount withheld as spousal maintenance.
7. The amount designated by an employee for payment of *professional organization membership fees or dues*.
8. The amount authorized by any employee who has made a valid assignment, transfer, or pledge of his or her salary or wages as *security for indebtedness*.
9. Contributions for participation in approved *insurance programs*.
10. Amounts designated by employees for participation in approved *deferred compensation or annuity programs*.
11. Amounts designated by employees for participation in any other *cafeteria plan options* authorized under Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code.
12. Deductions shall be made for *excess leave or time used*.

7. NON-DISCRIMINATION & ANTI-HARASSMENT

UME Preparatory Academy strives to provide students and staff with a school environment free from harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

7.1. Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment

UME Preparatory Academy is committed to honor the laws that explicitly prohibit harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying on the basis of race, color, national origin, military service, sex, disability, age, and/or religion. UME Preparatory Academy prohibits harassment, intimidation, or bullying in any form at school, school-related events, including off-campus events, school-sponsored activities, school buses or any event related to school business. Employees are prohibited from discriminating against other employees, against applicants, or against students based upon the aforementioned protected classes.

Harassment based on any of the aforementioned protected classes may include, but is not limited to, many different types of actions: verbal (e.g. derogatory comment), physical (e.g. assault), or visual (e.g. internet materials). Sexual harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex. Both victim and harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex. The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or someone who is not an employee of the employer.

7.2. Reasonable Accommodation

In the event an employee needs to request a reasonable accommodation or a variance in UME Preparatory Academy's stated policies and/or procedures due to the employee's disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the employee's sincerely held religious belief, the employee should notify his or her supervisor and/or the Human Resources Department.

7.3. Sexual Harassment of a Student

Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and Academy employees are prohibited. Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus Principal or other appropriate school official. All allegations of prohibited harassment or abuse of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. (See *Reporting suspected child abuse* and *Freedom from Bullying* section of this Employee Handbook.)

"Solicitation of a romantic relationship" means deliberate or repeated acts that can be reasonably interpreted as soliciting a relationship characterized by an ardent emotional attachment or pattern of exclusivity. Acts that constitute the solicitation of a romantic relationship may include, *but are not necessary limited to*:

1. Behavior, gestures, expressions, communications, or a pattern of communication with a student that is unrelated to the educator's job duties and that may reasonably be interpreted as encouraging the student to form an ardent or exclusive emotional attachment to the educator, including statements of love, affection, or attraction. When evaluating whether communications constitute the solicitation of a romantic relationship, the following may be considered:
 - a. The nature of the communications;
 - b. The timing of the communications;
 - c. The extent of the communications;
 - d. Whether the communications were made openly or secretly
 - e. The extent to which the educator attempted to conceal the communications;

- f. If the educator claims to be counseling a student, TEA staff may consider whether the educator’s job duties included counseling, whether the educator reported the subject of the counseling to the student’s guardians or to the appropriate school personnel, or, in the case of alleged abuse or neglect, whether the educator reported the abuse or neglect to the appropriate law enforcement agencies; and
 - g. Any other communications tending to show that the educator solicited a romantic relationship with a student.
2. Making inappropriate comments about a student’s body
 3. Making sexually demeaning comments to a student.
 4. Making comments about a student’s potential sexual performance.
 5. Requesting details of a student’s sexual history.
 6. Requesting a date.
 7. Engaging in conversations regarding the sexual problems, preferences, or fantasies of either party.
 8. Inappropriate hugging, kissing, or excessive touching.
 9. Suggestions that a romantic relationship is desired after the student graduates, including post-graduation plans for dating or marriage.
 10. Any other acts tending to show that the educator solicited a romantic relationship with the student, including providing the student with drugs or alcohol.

Note: Although it is not inherently unethical or immoral, being alone with a student in a non-public area without appropriate accountability measures in place (e.g. open doors, windows, witness), leaves employees more exposed to charges of unethical conduct, and it is therefore, imprudent and strongly discouraged. If necessary, employees can discuss appropriate accountability measures with an Administrator.

3. By an Employee

Sexual harassment of a student by an Academy employee includes both welcome and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

1. An Academy employee causes the student to believe that the student must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct; or
2. The conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:
 - a. Affects the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or otherwise adversely affects the student’s educational opportunities; or
 - b. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment.

Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and Academy employees are prohibited. Any sexual relationship between a student and an Academy employee is always prohibited, even if consensual.

4. By Another Student

Sexual harassment of a student, including harassment committed by another student, includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it:

1. Affects a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment;

2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with the student's academic performance; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities.

Examples of sexual harassment of a student may include sexual advances; touching intimate body parts or coercing physical contact that is sexual in nature; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Please Note: Necessary or permissible physical contact such as assisting a child by taking the child's hand, comforting a child with a hug, or other physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature is not sexual harassment.

7.4. Reporting Discrimination and/or Harassment

This section applies to both incidents of harassment and discrimination. As professionals, if an incident of discrimination or harassment occurs, UME Prep desires that the offended party first confront the offender with the inappropriateness of the comment or action, and give the offender the opportunity to rectify the situation. If the offender refuses to correct the situation or continues to repeat the offense, employees should promptly report an incident of discrimination or harassment to the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Superintendent. The employee should not assume that witnesses to the incident will know the conduct is unwelcomed; an employee should not rely on a witness to report the conduct for the employee. Informing the harasser that the conduct is unwelcomed is not a report of harassment since the harasser may not self-report the violation to management or the Human Resources Department.

If the alleged harasser is the employee's supervisor, a manager, or even one of the individuals designated to receive harassment reports, the employee does not have to directly report the incident to that individual, but instead must notify the Human Resources Department in order to ensure that the matter is promptly and appropriately addressed.

Any supervisor/manager who receives information indicating a concern about harassment or discrimination must report it to the Human Resources Department, even if the information comes from someone other than the target of the harassment or discrimination, or even if the person expressing the concern indicates that they do not wish to have the harassment or discrimination reported.

UME Preparatory Academy will promptly investigate any report and take appropriate remedial action if it is determined that harassment or discrimination has occurred. If the harassment or discrimination continues, the employee must immediately report the incident so that the matter can be reopened and addressed.

Retaliation for reporting what an employee believes to be harassing or discriminatory conduct or for participating in an investigation of alleged harassment or discrimination is prohibited. Any retaliation should be reported according to the same procedures as reporting discrimination or harassment.

Any employee engaging in any type of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Any supervisor who has knowledge of such behavior yet takes no action to report it is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

7.5. Equal Educational Opportunities

UME Prep does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Questions or concerns about discrimination of students concerning the admissions process should be directed to the Principal. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to the Special Education Coordinator. All other questions or concerns relating to discrimination based on any other basis should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator.

7.6. Freedom from Bullying

All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying to the Assistant Principal. The administrative policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating bullying of students is below. This policy addresses the *bullying* of Academy students. For provisions regarding discrimination, harassment, and retaliation involving Academy students or for reporting requirements related to child abuse and neglect, please see those particular sections.

Bullying Prohibited

The Academy prohibits bullying as defined by House Bill 1942 and other relevant state statutes, including the Texas Education Code. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of Academy Policy.

Definition

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the district and that:

1. Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.
3. Bullying is not the same as "Harassment" which is defined as: threatening to cause harm or bodily injury to another student, engaging in sexually intimidating conduct, causing physical damage to the property of another student, subjecting another student to physical confinement or restraint, or maliciously taking any action that substantially harms another student's physical or emotional health or safety. The Academy does not condone harassment of any kind and considers all forms of harassment as a breach of the Student Code of Conduct.

Behavior

Conduct is considered bullying if that conduct:

1. exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and
2. interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of the school.

Timely Reporting

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to promptly report may impair the Academy's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

Reporting Procedures

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, Administrator, or other Academy employee. A report may be made orally or in writing.

Notice of Report

Any Academy employee who receives notice that a student has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the Principal. After that, administration will conduct the investigation.

Confidentiality

To the greatest extent possible, the Academy shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

Appeal

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the Academy's grievance process, beginning at the appropriate level.

Records Retention

Retention of records shall be in accordance with all applicable laws.

8. EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

8.1. Texas Educators' Code of Ethics (Effective Dec. 26, 2010)

The Educators' Code of Ethics, adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification, which all Academy employees must adhere to, is reprinted below:

5. Purpose and Scope

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all

members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community. (19.TAC247.1(b))

6.

7. *Enforceable Standards*

1. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices, and Performance

Standard 1.1 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.

Standard 1.2 The educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

Standard 1.3 The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

Standard 1.4 The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

Standard 1.5 The educator shall not accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

Standard 1.6 The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

Standard 1.7 The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other applicable state and federal laws.

Standard 1.8 The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

Standard 1.9 The educator shall not make threats or violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.

Standard 1.10 The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.

Standard 1.11 The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.

Standard 1.12 The educator shall refrain from the illegal use or distribution of controlled substances and/or abuse of prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.

Standard 1.13 The educator shall not consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

2. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues*

Standard 2.1 The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 2.2 The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.

Standard 2.3 The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

Standard 2.4 The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.

Standard 2.5 The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.

Standard 2.6 The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

Standard 2.7 The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

3. Ethical Conduct toward Students

Standard 3.1 The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 3.2 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.

Standard 3.3 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

Standard 3.4 The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status or sexual orientation.

Standard 3.5 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.

Standard 3.6 The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student.

Standard 3.7 The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

Standard 3.8 The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

Standard 3.9 The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

- (i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
- (ii) the subject matter of the communication;
- (iii) whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
- (iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
- (v) whether the communication was sexually explicit; and
- (vi) whether the communication involved discussions(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

*Since, in the UME approach, parents often function as colleagues, ethical standards applying to professional colleagues, shall also apply to parents.

8.2 Discipline and Correction

In an effort to correct employee misconduct or job performance deficiencies at the earliest stage possible, UME Preparatory Academy administration may implement a stair-step disciplinary or corrective procedure. Such procedure may begin first with a verbal warning. The next offense would proceed to a written warning; the next step is suspension; followed by termination of employment.

Though UME Preparatory Academy may utilize such stair-step disciplinary or corrective procedures, UME Preparatory Academy reserves the right to skip any or all steps and immediately discharge the employee if circumstances so warrant.

The stair-step disciplinary or corrective procedure does not forfeit the at-will status of its employees and UME Preparatory Academy preserves the at-will nature of the employment relationship. Accordingly, discharge may be initiated by UME Preparatory Academy at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice.

Given the at-will nature of charter schools, at UME Prep we want our faculty and staff to know that our intention behind corrective procedures is to help support our faculty and staff be the best they can be. Compliance, cooperation, and a desire for continuous improvement are valued at UME Prep.

8.3. Violence in the Workplace

UME Preparatory Academy is committed to providing a safe workplace that is free from violence or threats of violence. Any and all acts of violence in the workplace are prohibited and subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Additionally, any and all threats of violence, direct or indirect, serious or said in jest, are prohibited. All threats will be taken seriously and are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Employees concerned about family violence being brought into the workplace or onto the work parking lot are encouraged to notify their supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Any employee who receives a protective or restraining order that lists UME Preparatory Academy as a protected area is required to provide the Superintendent with a copy of the order and information requested by UME Preparatory Academy to identify the individual subject to the order.

8.4. Drug-Free Workplace

UME Preparatory Academy is committed to maintaining a drug-free work environment and each employee is responsible for the maintenance of such an environment. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of a controlled substance (i.e. drugs) and/or the use of alcohol or tobacco in the workplace, or while conducting UME Preparatory Academy business, are prohibited. Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Drug or Alcohol Test: UME Preparatory Academy may ask an employee to submit to a drug or alcohol test whenever it reasonably believes that the employee may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the work place in violation of this Drug-Free Workplace policy, including, but not limited to the following circumstances: evidence of drugs or alcohol on or about the employee's person or in the employee's vicinity; unusual, bizarre or erratic conduct that suggests the employee is impaired by, or under the influence of, drugs or alcohol; or an

on-the-job accident or injury under circumstances that suggest the possible use or influence of drugs or alcohol in the injury. Failure to submit to a drug or alcohol test is grounds for termination.

Prescription and Non-Prescription Drugs: Nothing in this policy prohibits, or in any way limits, the lawful use of prescription or non-prescription drugs. However, an employee must inform his/her immediate supervisor if he/she is using a prescription or non-prescription drug which could impair work performance or pose a risk of harm to the employee, to others, or to property. It is the employee's responsibility to determine from his or her physician(s) if the medication can impair work performance or pose such a risk. If the lawful use of lawful prescription or non-prescription drugs does limit or otherwise impair the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of his or her position or otherwise creates a safety risk, the Human Resources Department will meet with the employee to determine whether a reasonable accommodation is available.

8.5. Employee Dress Code

As an employee of UME Preparatory Academy, you represent our school to all our students, parents, community members, other visitors, and your co-workers. As an organization, we seek to COMMUNICATE AN IMAGE OF PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALISM to all we come in contact with every day. Therefore, employees' appearance and demeanor should reflect this objective at all times.

Staff dress should be MODEST and characterized by PROFESSIONALISM, PROPRIETY, and GOOD TASTE. By "modest" we mean non-ostentatious and unlikely to provoke inappropriate interest (especially of a sexual nature) in the one wearing the clothing. Teaching can be quite active physically, so staff are further encouraged to consider what will be modest not only when standing in front of the mirror but also when bending over to answer a question or reaching up to take a book off a shelf. "Propriety" and "good taste" point to a style of dress that does not call undue attention to the wearer—we want academic content and activities, not the teacher's attire, to capture our students' interest. These terms also encompass the general PRINCIPLE THAT TEACHERS SHOULD DRESS AS A MODEL TO THE STUDENTS. In short, employee dress should be neat and clean and appropriate for a professional appearance.

While shoes must be worn at all times, house shoes (e.g. slippers), and flip-flops are not allowed. All clothing should be free from significant holes and frays. Except as may be permitted under the explicit direction of the administration, jeans, shorts, and hoodies are not allowed. If an employee is unsure of the appropriateness of a particular item of clothing, the employee should choose not to wear it. Teachers may wear tennis shoes.

For guidance, the following list has been provided:

- For women, suits, skirts, slacks, Capri-length slacks, sleeved or sleeveless dresses are appropriate. Make sure that undergarments are not visible while wearing sleeveless attire.
- Garments shall be appropriate length – the hem of the garment shall come at least to the top of the kneecap.
- For men, dress slacks or khakis, polo shirts, turtlenecks, oxfords, sweater and vests, blazers, sport coats or suits are appropriate.
- T-SHIRTS AND JEANS are not acceptable attire for professional personnel.

- The only exceptions are in assignments such as physical education when professional dress is not appropriate; or on designated spirit days (Fridays), when appropriate t-shirts and shoes are permitted.
- Blue jeans are not appropriate at any time unless previously authorized.
- Employees are required to wear Photo ID Badges at all times (once provided).
- Support staff (custodial, food service, maintenance, and transportation staff) shall be neat, clean, and dressed appropriately, as described in their respective area.
- District staff members' hair shall be clean, neat, and worn in a manner that will not cause disruption or distraction. Neatly trimmed beards and facial hair are allowed.
- Hair color should be a natural hair color (not pink, purple, orange, etc.)
- Male staff shall not wear earrings or other similar facial jewelry.

An administrator may require an employee to cover tattoos and/or remove facial jewelry. Additionally, because it is difficult to establish a specific dress standard, a UME Preparatory Academy administrator may require an employee to change their clothing, if in his or her best judgment, the item(s) is inappropriate.

Exceptions to the dress code may be considered in order to make reasonable accommodations for an employee's disability, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, or an employee's sincerely held religious belief.

Employees' cooperation with these policies will provide all staff with an opportunity to work in a comfortable, professional environment. No dress code can cover all contingencies so employees must exert a certain amount of judgment in their choice of clothing to wear to work. If an employee is uncertain about any item being acceptable attire for work, please refrain from wearing it until you receive approval from your immediate supervisor.

8.6. Outside Employment

UME Prep does not prohibit its faculty from engaging in outside employment. In fact, one of the benefits of working at UME Prep is the freedom and opportunity this model provides its faculty to pursue other interests and careers. However, employees of UME Preparatory Academy are expected to be able to devote the personal resources (e.g., time, energy, effort) needed in order to do their job well. Any outside employment, whether self-employment or working for another employer, should be immediately disclosed to the immediate supervisor, and the Office Manager. Should a staff member or an instructor's outside employment reduce his or her ability to fulfill adequately the relevant job responsibilities, UME Preparatory Academy retains the right to take action to rectify the matter in a way that protects the Academy's legitimate purposes in providing high-quality instruction and school leadership, up to and including dismissal of the instructor or staff member.

8.7. Office Dating

Employees who are in administration/management/supervisory roles are prohibited from dating any employee over whom they have direct or indirect supervision. Also, individuals who work within the Human Resources Department are prohibited from dating any UME Preparatory Academy employee.

If two employees are involved in a dating relationship it will be presumed by UME Preparatory Academy that the relationship is welcomed by both parties unless one or the other notifies UME Preparatory Academy to the contrary. Public displays of affection and favoritism in the course of employment are prohibited.

Conduct that occurs during a disagreement or following a termination of the relationship must not violate UME Preparatory Academy's harassment policy.

8.8. Copyrighted Materials

Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of federal copyright law relating to the unauthorized use, reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data and programs, etc.). Electronic media, including motion pictures and other audiovisual works, are to be used in the classroom for instructional audiovisual works purposes only. Duplication or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

8.9. Associations and Political Activities

The Academy will not directly or indirectly encourage or discourage employees from participating in political affairs or require any employee to join any group, club, committee, organization, or association. Employees may join or refuse to join any professional association or organization.

An individual's employment will not be affected by membership or a decision not to be a member of any employee organization that exists for the purpose of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work.

Use of Academy resources, including work time, for political activities or other activities that do not directly support the Academy's mission or goals is prohibited.

8.10. Suspicious Behavior

Employees are encouraged to report any suspicious behavior observed at school or at any school-related or school-sponsored activity. Strangers or former employees walking unaccompanied in areas not generally open to the public should be pointed out to a supervisor. All visitors should wear a "visitor" badge or other school-related indicator.

8.11. Former Employees

Former employees may not enter areas that are not open to the public after they are no longer employed by UME Preparatory Academy, unless given express permission using appropriate check-in procedures.

8.12. Employee Monitoring

Employees do not have an expectation of privacy in any work areas (e.g. offices, desks, file cabinets, etc.) or in any UME Preparatory Academy property, either owned or leased. Work areas and UME Preparatory Academy property are subject to search at any time. Any of the following may be monitored if they occur during business hours and/or on school property: phone calls, voice-mail, e-mail (work and personal), and internet activity.

8.13. Audio & Video Recordings

An employee is prohibited from making any audio or video recording while acting in the course and scope of his or her employment or while on school property without the written consent of all parties subject to the recording. Employees can ask the admissions office for a list of students who have not given permission to be recorded. School functions such as athletic activities or performances are exempt from this prohibition.

8.14. Workplace Investigations

There are instances when UME Preparatory Academy may wish to investigate personnel matters. Employees are required to cooperate in any investigation. Refusal to participate, or actions taken to compromise the effectiveness of any investigation, may result in termination. If the employee is instructed not to discuss the matter being investigated, failure to abide by this instruction may also result in termination. This restriction excludes the employee's privileged communications with his or her own private legal counsel.

8.15. Traffic Violations

If an employee, during the course of UME Preparatory Academy business, receives a traffic violation, the employee will be personally liable for any expenses incurred from that violation. If during the course of transporting a student(s) an employee receives a traffic violation, that employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

8.16. Allowable Uses of UME Preparatory Academy Property

Employees may use UME Preparatory Academy property only for a purpose that is consistent with applicable law.

An employee may be required to compensate UME Preparatory Academy for any damage and/or destruction the employee causes to UME Preparatory Academy property.

Any violation of this section may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

8.15 Cell Phone/Texting

Cell phone and texting is not allowed during work hours unless it is pertaining to work-related business or an emergency situation.

9. TECHNOLOGY/INTERNET USE POLICY

9.1. Computer & Internet Use

The technology which is available in individual classrooms, in computer labs, and in office areas at UME Prep is for UME Prep educational use *only*. Teachers and staff are responsible for the care and proper use of all technology equipment in each of their assigned work areas. All technology equipment assigned to a classroom or work area is to remain in that assigned area at all times.

Internet use for students and staff is limited to educational purposes, including classroom activities and professional or career development. UME Prep internet access and email may not be used for personal, commercial, or political purposes. While in class, UME Prep faculty and staff members will closely monitor internet use, and will report any incidents of unauthorized or unacceptable computer access or use to UME Prep Administration.

Unacceptable use of the UME Prep internet will include, but is not limited to:

- Transmitting, accessing, printing, downloading, or uploading any material that might be deemed pornographic, obscene, sexually explicit, indecent, or vulgar
- Transmitting, accessing, printing, downloading, or uploading any material that might be deemed abusive, hateful, degrading, demeaning, derogatory, or defamatory
- Vandalizing, damaging, disabling, or gaining unauthorized access to another person's property, files, data, or materials
- Vandalizing, damaging, disabling, or gaining unauthorized access to UME Prep computer systems, files, data, or programs
- Accessing, printing, downloading, or uploading personal web pages
- Engaging in any commercial or business activity online
- Playing games online
- Printing, downloading, or uploading information from personal disks/flash memory without permission
- Accessing chat rooms
- Accessing social networking sites (Facebook, etc.) or other web posting sites (Pinterest, etc.)
- Accessing personal email or any email other than UME Prep email
- Sharing information that provides access to UME Prep's secured network is prohibited

Any violation of the UME Prep Technology/Internet Use policy should be reported immediately to UME Prep Administration.

The use of UME Preparatory Academy's computers and/or Internet system is not confidential and may be monitored by designated UME Preparatory Academy personnel to ensure appropriate use.

Employees who are authorized to use the system are required to abide by the provisions of the Academy's acceptable use policy and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary action.

9.2. Public Use of Electronic Media

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (email), blogs, electronic forums (chat rooms), video sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn.) Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

As role models for the Academy's students, employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting as Academy employees. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee's page, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends, or

members of the public who can access the employee's page, and for web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible to maintain privacy settings appropriate to the content.

An employee who uses electronic media for personal purposes shall observe the following:

- The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the Academy's computers, network, or equipment.
- The employee shall not use the Academy's logo or other copyrighted material of the Academy.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the *Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators*, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. These restrictions include:
 - Confidentiality of student records.
 - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
 - Confidentiality of Academy records, including educator evaluations and private email address.
 - Copyright law
 - Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.

9.3. Use of Electronic Media with Students

All UME Prep employees are prohibited from using electronic media to make personal contact with students. Any correspondence should be conducted via the parent or through Academy-approved media. Employees should not "friend" students on Facebook.

9.4. Email

The following guidelines will apply to all users of the Academy's electronic communications systems:

- Users will be issued only one Academy email account.
- Communications may not be encrypted so as to avoid security review by system administrators.
- Attachments to email messages should include only data files. At no time should program files (e.g. .exe files) be attached due to risk of licensing violations and transmission of viruses.
- Electronic requests for personal information on students or staff members from outside constituents should not be honored via email. This relates particularly to any requests for student grades, discipline, attendance or related information.
- In addition, security information such as usernames or passwords should not be sent via email for any reason.
- Please remember that all email is state record.
- In communication with parents or in documenting discipline referrals, only use the student's name who is being written up or who is the child of the parent. If other students are involved, refer to them as "the other student."
- Teachers are cautioned to be especially careful in sharing information that may be protected under FERPA.

9.5. Communications Etiquette

Faculty and staff, in keeping with a culture of academic professionalism, shall abide by the generally accepted rules of communications etiquette. These *include, but are not limited to*, the following:

- Be polite and refrain from sending any abusive messages.
- Use appropriate language and professional tone. Swearing, use of vulgarities, sexually suggestive language, or any other inappropriate language shall not be indicative of UME Prep culture.
- Exercise caution when using UME Prep communications tools to email or post your opinions. Recipients or other readers may assume that your opinion represents the views of the Academy, whether or not that was your intention.
- Check your email at least once a day. Reply to email from parents or other public members who have legitimate business requests **within 48 hours** whenever possible.
- Share your UME Prep email address with interested parents and community members who request to communicate with you in this fashion.
- Refrain from sending messages to an entire staff when only a small group of people actually needs to receive the message. In accordance with established procedures, using email for commercial enterprises is prohibited.
- Please refrain from forwarding messages that have no educational or professional value (e.g., chain letters.)
- No emails after 6 p.m. or on weekends.

9.6. Off-Site School Computer Use Protocol

All school computers having sensitive school data (e.g., data protected under FERPA) resident on their hard drives must be secured (safely locked away) on school property before the individual responsible for the machine leaves for the end of each day. Staff members who require the use of such machines off-site in order to fulfill their job duties must secure permission from the Superintendent or designee before taking the machines off-site. Also, please secure the Superintendent's permission before storing sensitive school data on privately owned machines, drives, etc. All staff members are strongly encouraged to use different devices for school and personal use; since all school data are state property, devices that store them are subject to state scrutiny (and, depending on the circumstances, seizure). Feel free to confer with the superintendent if there are any questions about this protocol.

Please be sure to completely shut down school-owned computers at the end of the day in order to enhance data security and protect the long-term functionality of the machine. Feel free to confer with UME Prep's IT Director if any questions arise regarding shut-down procedures.

10. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Definitions

For purposes of understanding the General Complains and Grievances process, terms are defined as follows:

The terms “complaint” and “grievance” shall have the same meaning.

The term “day” shall be defined as a school business day, unless stated otherwise in this complaint process. In calculating timelines under these procedures, the day a document is filed is “day zero,” and all deadlines shall be determined by counting the following school business day as “day one.”

Filing

Complaint forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, by electronic communication (including email and fax), or by U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filing shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Filings submitted by electronic communication shall be timely filed if they are received by the close of business on the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the electronic communication. Mail filing shall be timely filed if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline and received by the appropriate administrator or designated representative no more than three days after the deadline.

Scheduling Conferences

UME Prep will make reasonable attempts to schedule conferences at a mutually agreeable time. If the complainant fails to appear at a scheduled conference, UME Prep may hold the conference and issue a decision in the complainant’s absence.

Response

At Levels One and Two, “response” shall mean a written communication to the complainant from the appropriate administrator. Responses may be hand-delivered, sent by electronic communication to the complainant’s email address of record, or sent by U.S. Mail to the complainant’s mailing address of record. Mailed responses shall be timely if they are postmarked by U.S. Mail on or before the deadline.

If the administrator addressing the complaint determines that additional time is needed to complete a thorough investigation of the complaint and/or to issue a response, the administrator shall inform the complainant in writing of the necessity to extend the response time and a specific date by when the response will be issued.

A grievance official who fails to meet a time requirement, without providing written notice of an extended deadline, shall be considered to have denied the complaint as of the date of the missed deadline.

Representative

“Representative” means a person designated to represent him or her in the complaint process. A complainant may designate a representative through written notice to UME Prep at any level of the grievance process. The representative may participate in person or by telephone/video conference. If the complainant designates a representative with fewer than three days’ notice to UME Prep before a scheduled conference or hearing, UME Prep may reschedule the conference or hearing to a later date, if desired, in order to include the school’s counsel. UME Prep may be represented by counsel at any level of the process.

ACCOMMODATION

Any complainant needing a reasonable accommodation due to disability shall request such accommodation for consideration with the Superintendent when filing the grievance or appeal. The Superintendent shall provide accommodations in accordance with applicable law.

Consolidating Complaints

Complaints arising out of an event or a series of related events shall be addressed in one complaint. Complainants shall not file separate or serial complaints arising from any event or series of events that have been or could have been addressed in a previous complaint.

When two or more complaints are sufficiently similar in nature and remedy sought to permit their resolution through one proceeding, UME Prep may consolidate the complaints.

Untimely Filings

All time limits for a complainant to file a complaint shall be strictly followed unless modified by mutual written consent. If a complaint form or appeal notice is not timely filed, the complaint may be dismissed, upon written notice to the complainant, at any point during the complaint process.

Costs Incurred

Each party shall pay its own costs incurred in the course of the complaint.

Complaint and Appeal Forms

Complaints and appeals under this policy shall be submitted in writing on a form provided by UME Prep.

Copies of any documents that support the complaint should be attached to the complaint form. If the complainant does not have copies of these documents, they may be presented at the Level One conference. After the Level One conference, no new documents may be submitted by the complainant unless the complainant did not know the documents existed before the Level One conference.

A complaint or appeal form that is incomplete in any material aspect may be dismissed but may be re-filed with all the required information if the re-filing is within the designated time for filing.

Formal Complaint Process

The formal complaint process provides all complainants with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of administrative management. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, complainants can bring complaints to the Board of Directors, as outlined below.

Level One

Level One complaint forms must be filed:

1. Within ten days of the date the complainant first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint; and
2. With the lowest-level administrator who has the authority to remedy the alleged problem.

In most circumstances, complainants shall file Level One complaints with the Principal of the school in which they work, attend, or have a student in attendance.

If the administrator who has authority to remedy the alleged problem is the Superintendent or designee, the complaint may begin at Level Two following the procedure, including deadlines, for filing the Level One complaint form.

If the complaint is not filed with the appropriate administrator, the receiving administrator will note the date and time the complaint form was received and immediately forward the complaint form to the appropriate administrator.

The appropriate administrator shall investigate as necessary and schedule a conference with the complainant within ten days of receipt of the Level One complaint. The administrator may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

Absent extenuating circumstances, or if there is a need to gather additional information, the administrator shall provide the complainant with a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response will set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the administrator may consider information provided at the Level One conference and any other relevant documents or information the administrator believes will help resolve the complaint.

Level Two

If the complainant did not receive the relief requested at Level One or if the time for a response has expired, or if the complainant is directed to do so by UME Prep, the complainant may request a conference with the Superintendent or designee to appeal. The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by UME Prep, within ten days of the date of the written Level One response or, if

no response was received, within ten days of the Level One response deadline.

After receiving notice of the appeal, the Level One administrator will prepare and forward a record of the Level One complaint to the Level Two administrator.

The Superintendent or designee will schedule a conference within ten days after the appeal notice is filed. The conference shall be limited to the issues and documents considered at Level One. The Superintendent or designee may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the complainant a written response within ten days following the conference. The written response will set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the Superintendent or designee may consider the Level One record, information provided at the Level Two conference, and any other relevant documents or information the Superintendent or designee believes will help resolve the complaint.

Level Three

If the complainant did not receive the relief requested at Level Two or if the time for a response has expired, the complainant may appeal the decision to the Board of Directors. The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by UME Prep, within ten days of the date of the written Level Two response or, if no response was received, within ten days of the Level Two response deadline.

The Superintendent or designee shall inform the complainant of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the complaint will be on the agenda for consideration by the Board. The Board of Directors will consider the grievance and may, at its discretion, require the appearance of the complainant and administration.

Board members hearing a grievance shall be free of any actual conflict of interest with respect to any grievant. A board member having a conflict shall remove themselves voluntarily, or if they have a concern, they should consult with the Board chair and legal counsel. If the board as a body corporate determines there is a conflict with an individual board member and a complainant, the Board may vote to exclude any such conflicted member at an open meeting, should the board member not voluntarily recuse themselves.

The Board of Directors will determine whether the complaint will be presented in open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law. Generally, complaints involving the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of the complainant bringing the complaint may be heard by the Board of Directors in a closed meeting. Complaints involving a complaint or grievance against another UME Prep employee, director, or officer shall be heard in a closed meeting unless an open meeting is requested in writing by the employee, director, or officer against whom the complaint or grievance is brought.

After considering the appeal, the Board of Directors may subsequently take action or no action. If the Board of Directors takes action, it may make and communicate its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting. If the Board

does not make a decision regarding the complaint by the end of the next regularly scheduled meeting, the lack of a response by the Board upholds the administrative decision at Level Two. A decision by the Board of Directors, if any, is final and may not be appealed.

11. SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

At UME Prep, our desire is that we enter into long and productive partnerships with high quality faculty and staff members. We want each employee's experience to be a fruitful one while at UME Prep and to end on good terms for the employee and the school, as often as possible. The following will provide direction on how to conclude employment at UME Prep when necessary.

11.1. Resignation

An employee is encouraged to give as much advance notice as possible regarding his or her resignation from UME Preparatory Academy. Administration (Categories 3 and 4) and Teachers should provide 30 days notice. Typically, two weeks (10 business days) is considered sufficient notice time, especially if the employee has worked diligently to secure backups for his or her position(s). A longer lead time is appreciated, when possible, so that a proper replacement can be found. Employees are encouraged to include the reasons for leaving in the letter of resignation but are not required to do so. UME Preparatory Academy requests that employees submit their resignation in writing to their supervisor; the document should include the employee's anticipated last work day.

UME Preparatory Academy reserves the right to require the employee to resign immediately rather than work during the notice period, if deemed necessary and prudent by the administration. However, in most cases, UME Prep will honor the notice period and be grateful for sufficient notice so that a proper replacement can be found.

11.2. Dismissal of Employees/Termination

Employees are employed at will and may be dismissed without notice, a description of the reasons for dismissal, or a hearing. It is unlawful for the Academy to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Non-contract employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The dismissed employee must follow the Academy process outlined in this handbook when pursuing the grievance (See *Grievance Process*).

Before any action is taken to terminate an employee, the supervisor must submit in writing a review to the Director of Office Management and Human Resources. Human Resources will be responsible for reviewing the situation and determining if termination is warranted. The Superintendent will make the final determination regarding termination. All payment to the departing employee must receive prior approval from the Superintendent.

11.3. Discharge

In the event that UME Prep administration deems it necessary to discharge an employee, administration may request that an employee leave the facility immediately upon separation from employment in an effort to reduce the risk of employee violence or vandalism. If accompanied by a UME Preparatory Academy administrator, the employee will be permitted to gather his or her personal belongings before being escorted to the exit.

The exiting employee is prohibited from taking any UME Preparatory Academy property or information with him or her; the employee is not to retain in hard copy or soft copy any proprietary UME Preparatory Academy information. UME Preparatory Academy reserves the right to examine any boxes, briefcases, or other receptacle of an exiting employee to ensure these rules are being followed.

An existing employee who has been discharged is not to return to the premises of UME Preparatory Academy without prior written approval from the Human Resources Department or the chief administrator of the school campus.

Any resignation will only receive a favorable reference if they have given adequate notice which is:

Professional/Exempt status: teachers and administrative staff must give 30 days notice.
Support/Non-Exempt Staff: At least 10 days notice

11.4. Exit Procedures

Information on the continuation of benefits, release of information, and procedures for requesting references will be provided at the time of final employment separation. Separating employees shall provide the Academy with a forwarding address and phone number.

All employees may be asked to complete an Inventory Checklist Form to return all Academy keys, books, property, equipment, etc. Employees may be asked to participate in an Exit interview upon departure.

11.5. Reports to the State Board for Educator Certification

If a certified employee resigns or is dismissed due to any of the following reasons, the SBEC will be notified.

- A reported criminal history
- Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or any other illegal conduct with a student or a minor
- Soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor
- The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance
- The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of school property or funds
- An attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle the individual to a professional position or to receive additional compensation associated with a position
- Committing a crime on school property or at a school-sponsored event
- Violating assessment instrument security procedures

11.6. Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding

The Academy is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance to the court and the individual receiving the support (Texas Family Code §8.210, 158.211). Notice of the following must be sent to the court and support recipient:

- Termination of employment not later than the seventh day after the date of termination
- Employee's last known address

- Name and address of the employee's new employer, if known

12. GENERAL PROCEDURES

12.1. Bad Weather Closing

The Academy may close schools because of bad weather or emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the Superintendent will make the official decision concerning the closing of the Academy's facilities. When it becomes necessary to open late, to release students early, or to cancel school, Academy officials will post a notice on the Academy's Website, Facebook, and Twitter accounts.

In the case of inclement weather such as snow or ice, due to the large nature of UME Prep's enrollment boundary and a large portion of the student body coming primarily from six districts, UME Prep will largely make its decision to cancel school based on conditions in the following districts: Arlington ISD, Cedar Hill ISD, Dallas ISD, Duncanville ISD, Grand Prairie ISD, and Mansfield ISD. Decisions to close school for the day are expected to be made by 6:00 a.m. so that families and staff can plan accordingly.

12.2. Emergencies

All employees should be familiar with the safety procedures for responding to a medical emergency and the evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas. Emergency drills (Fire Drill, Tornado Drill, Lock Down Drill) will be conducted to familiarize employees and students with safety and evacuation procedures. Each campus is equipped with an automatic external defibrillator (AED). Fire extinguishers are located throughout the school building. Employees should know the location of these devices and procedures for their use. For more information, please contact the Principal or UME Prep's School Nurse Consultant and Trainer.

12.3. Updated/Current Employee Information

Employees are required to regularly update:

- A change in home address or telephone number;
- A change in marital status or in the number of dependents;
- A change of insurance beneficiary;
- A change in the number of exemptions claimed for income tax purposes;
- The driving record or status of an employee's driver's license, if the employee operates any UME Preparatory Academy vehicle or operates his or her own vehicle for work-related duties, not including driving to and from work.
- A legal change of name (A new social security card will need to be provided.)
- The Public Information Act form indicating whether certain personal information may be released to the public.

Updates should be made by completing the Employee Information Change form located on the Staff drive and submitting to the Office Manager.

12.4. Personnel Records

Most Academy records, including personnel records, are public information and must be released upon request. Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

- Address
- Phone number
- Social Security number
- Information that reveals whether they have family members

New or terminating employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information will be released to the public. Individuals will have the opportunity to complete this form at the onset of their employment.

13. FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

13.1. Purchasing Policy

Purpose of the Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the faculty and staff concerning purchasing timelines and the process for ordering supplies so that UME Prep can obtain necessary supplies to serve its students while remaining fiscally responsible.

Content:

Budget Areas: For the 2016-2017 School Year, we have the following budget areas:

- **Academic departmental budgets:** Math, Science, English, History, Foreign Language, Robotics, Art, Music, and Theater.
- **Program Budgets:** Athletics, Counseling, Testing, At-Risk, ESL, Title I, and Special Education programs.
- **School Operational Budgets:** Business, Child Nutrition, Security, Information Technology, Instructional Technology, Maintenance and Grounds, Staff Development, Student Life, Parent Programs, and School Leadership.

Ordering Supplies From Staples:

- UME Prep's Purchasing Coordinator will continue to collect requests for ordering supplies from Staples. The Purchasing Coordinator will utilize the following process:
 1. For any items needing to be purchased by Staples, all requests will need to be funneled to the department head or supervisor, who will consolidate the list, and then email the Purchasing Coordinator. A Purchase Request Form is not necessary for Staples.
 2. The accountant will provide department heads with a detailed expenditure report by the 10th of the month.
 3. All purchase requests from Staples need to be made by the 15th of the month.
 4. The Purchasing Coordinator will have the Department Heads or direct supervisors review and either approve or deny the requests prior to her placing the order on the 20th of each month.

Ordering Other Items for Departments:

- Any other items needing to be purchased from various vendors will need to be obtained by doing the following:
 1. Complete the *Purchase Request Form* found on both the faculty and staff drive and submit to Principal or direct supervisor.

2. The Principal or direct supervisor will need to collect requests and either approve/deny the request prior to submitting it to the Principal or supervisor, depending on to whom they report. They will need to have prioritized items based on the expenditure report (provided by the 10th of the month), and can work with their supervisor for assistance.
3. Principal will collect requests and submit to Accountant.
4. Accountant will review budget, discuss with the Principal, at which time he or she will approve/deny the requests.
5. Request Forms will then be submitted to Purchasing Coordinator.

Federal Programs: For programs utilizing Federal funds (Special Education, Title I Instructional Program, Title II Staff Development Program, Title III ESL Program, and Child Nutrition Program), additional approvals will need to be obtained by the Program Compliance Coordinator. These programs will need to review the Federal Programs Purchasing Policy for additional guidance.

Avoid Purchasing without Prior Approval: UME Prep is not obligated to reimburse any purchasing requests made without prior approval. If schools funds are necessary for a particular purchase, please make sure to utilize the process described above. A *Check Request Form* is available for instances where a reimbursement is necessary (example: pre-approved request, emergency situations, or travelling expenses for a trip that was pre-approved).

Budget Thresholds:

So that UME Prep can continue to be fiscally responsible, the following guidelines have been put into place to ensure fiscal management of funds throughout the academic year.

- **50% of Budget:** 50% of a department’s budget can be spent from the beginning of the fiscal year (September 1) through December 31st.
- **25% of Budget:** 25% of a department’s budget can then be spent from January 1st through April 30th.
- **Remaining 25% of Budget:** The remaining 25% of a department’s budget will be held from May 1st through August 31st for the purposes of retaining funds so that a department may use if needed at the beginning of the next academic year or for emergency purposes.

Budgeting Process: Budgets are meant to be a tool to help the organization obtain its goals and mission. We want our faculty and staff to be empowered to utilize these funds and work together to be fiscally responsible in the management of these funds. If you have questions about the process, please see your supervisor, so that they can assist you in understanding or direct you to who can help you.

13.2. Fraud and Financial Impropriety

All employees should act with integrity and diligence in duties involving the Academy’s financial resources. The Academy prohibits fraud and financial impropriety, as defined below. Fraud and financial impropriety *includes, but is not limited to*, the following:

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the Academy
- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or Academy assets, including employee time
- Impropriety in the handling of money or reporting of Academy financial transactions
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of Academy information or activities
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or proprietary information to outside parties
- Unauthorized disclosure of investment activities engaged in or contemplated by the Academy

- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or other persons providing services or materials to the Academy
- Destroying, removing, or inappropriately using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment
- Failing to provide financial records required by state or local entities
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by policy
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the Academy

13.3. Conflict of Interest

Employees are required to disclose to their supervisor any situation that creates a potential conflict of interest with proper discharge of assigned duties and responsibilities or creates a potential conflict of interest with the best interests of the Academy. This includes the following:

- A personal financial interest
- A business interest
- Any other obligation or relationship
- Non-school employment

13.4. Gifts and Favors

Employees may not accept gifts or favors (valuing more than \$50 from any one person) that could influence, or be construed to influence, the employee’s discharge of assigned duties. The acceptance of a gift, favor, or service by an administrator or teacher that might reasonably tend to influence the selection of textbooks, electronic textbooks, instructional materials or technological equipment may result in prosecution of a Class B misdemeanor offense. Educational materials that are provided as a component for staff development or as samples, such as maps or worksheets that convey information to students or contribute to the learning process, are not considered gifts under this policy.

14. STUDENT ISSUES

14.1. Student Records

Student records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. Employees should take precautions to maintain the confidentiality of all student records.

The following people are the only individuals who have general access to a student’s records:

- Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes;
- The student (if 18 or older or attending an institute of postsecondary education);
- School officials with legitimate educational interests.

The student handbook will provide parents and students with detailed information on student records.

Parents or students who want to review student records should be directed to UME Prep’s admissions or attendance coordinator for assistance.

14.2. Parent and Student Complaints

In an effort to hear and resolve parent and student complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted orderly processes for handling complaints on different issues. Any campus office or the superintendent’s office can provide parents and students with information on filing a complaint. This process is the same as that mentioned in “Section 10: Grievances.”

Parents are encouraged to discuss problems or complaints with the teachers or the appropriate administrator at any time. Parents and students with complaints that cannot be resolved should be directed to the appropriate campus Principal.

Referring to Administration: As a general rule, complaints regarding the instructional program or instructional activities, or the handling of student conduct issues, should be addressed to the Principal. Complaints regarding the conduct of parent programs or teacher-parent interactions should be addressed to the Principal. Complaints regarding student activities or athletics should be addressed to Athletic Director, and complaints regarding facilities management or other business management issues should be addressed to the Superintendent. A complaint against the Superintendent shall begin at the board level of review.

The formal complaint process provides parents and students with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with Administration's response.

14.3. Administering Medication to Students

Only staff members designated by administration will be allowed to administer medication to students and must adhere to the guidelines described in the UME Medication Administration Policy.

A student who must take medicine during the school day must bring a written request from his or her parent and health care provider and the medicine, in its original, properly labeled container. Contact the Superintendent or school health services coordinator for information on procedures that must be followed when administering medication to students.

14.4. Dietary Supplements

Academy employees are prohibited by state law from knowingly selling, marketing, or distributing a dietary supplement that contains performance-enhancing compounds to a student with whom the employee has contact as part of his or her school duties. In addition, employees may not knowingly endorse or suggest the ingestion, intranasal application, or inhalation of a performance-enhancing dietary supplement to any student.

14.5. Psychotropic Drugs

Academy employees are prohibited by state law from doing the following:

- Recommending that a student use a psychotropic drug
- Suggesting a particular diagnosis
- Excluding from class or school-related activity a student whose parent refuses to consent to a psychiatric evaluation or to authorize the administration of a psychotropic drug to a student

14.6. Child Sexual Abuse

A school employee should seek assistance immediately from the Principal and/or Superintendent, as soon as he or she becomes aware of facts giving rise to the suspicion of child sexual abuse. As an employee, it is important to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a

legal responsibility under state law for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Employees are required to follow the procedures described below in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

14.7. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

A UME Preparatory Academy employee, volunteer, or agent that suspects a child, or a student with disabilities who is no longer a minor, has been adversely affected by physical or mental abuse or neglect *shall make a report within 48 hours after learning of facts giving rise to that suspicion.*

The report shall be made to law enforcement or the Department of Family and Protective Services, Child Protective Services, or appropriate state agency (e.g.: state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering a facility) within 48 hours of becoming aware of the event or facts that led to the suspicion.

Abuse is defined by the SBEC and includes the following acts or omissions:

- Mental or emotional injury to a student or minor that results in an observable and material impairment in the student's or minor's development, learning, or psychological functioning;
- Causing or permitting a student or minor to be in a situation in which the student or minor sustains a mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the student's or minor's development, learning, or psychological functioning;
- Physical injury that results in substantial harm to a student or minor, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the student or minor, including an injury that is at variance with the history or explanation given and excluding an accident or reasonable discipline; or
- Sexual conduct harmful to a student's or minor's mental, emotional, or physical welfare.

Reports to Child Protective Services can be made to 2355 N. Stemmons Freeway, Dallas, Texas 75207 or to the Texas Abuse Hotline (800) 252-5400. State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person to make this report.

Under state law, any person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent. In addition, the Academy is prohibited from retaliating against an employee who, in good faith, reports child abuse or neglect or who participates in an investigation regarding an allegation of child abuse or neglect.

An employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. In addition, a certified employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Educators Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.

Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the campus administration. Employees are not required to report their concern to the administration before making a report to the appropriate agencies.

Reporting the concern to the administration does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report to the appropriate state agency. In addition, employees must cooperate with investigators of child abuse and neglect. Interference with a child abuse investigation by denying an interviewer's request to interview a student at school or requiring the presence of a parent or school administrator against the desires of the duly authorized investigator is prohibited.

15. KEY TOPICS FOUND IN STUDENT HANDBOOK

Information regarding the following key topics can be found in the Student Handbook:

- 15.1. Attendance Policy
- 15.2. Cell Phone Policy
- 15.3. Discipline Policy
- 15.4. Grading Policy
- 15.5. Parent Observation Policy
- 15.6. Student Code of Conduct
- 15.7. Tardy Policy
- 15.8. Work Ethic Policy and Procedures

16. FINAL REMARKS

We are glad to have you as part of the UME Preparatory Academy team, and look forward to partnering with you as we strive to make a difference in the hearts and minds of the students and families involved at UME Prep. Thank you for choosing to serve alongside us as we build an organization that will have a tremendous impact on education and the families involved. We hope you find your time at UME Prep a very rewarding experience.