

SAN ANTONIO SCHOOL FOR INQUIRY AND CREATIVITY

2010/2011 SCHOOL YEAR

*MONTICIELLO CAMPUS
SERVING GRADES K-2
MAIN CAMPUS
SERVING GRADES 3-12*

The Policy and Procedures Handbook incorporates the procedures which are intended to act as guidelines for implementing policy statements. The San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity Employee Policy and Procedures Handbook will act as the primary source book for all San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity staff and administrators. From time to time, the administration in conjunction with the school's Board of Directors may update and make changes to the handbook.

**EMPLOYEE
HANDBOOK**

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2. EMPLOYMENT

2.1 Nondiscrimination Policy

San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity is an equal opportunity employer, we do not discriminate in our hiring practices. As a recipient of federal financial assistance, San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity does not exclude, deny benefits to, or otherwise discriminate against any person on the ground of race, color, or national origin, or on the basis of disability or age in admission to, participation in, or receipt of the services and benefits of any of its programs and activities or in the employment therein, whether carried out by San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity directly or through a contractor or any other entity with whom the School arranges to carry out its programs and activities.

The District shall not refuse to hire or discharge any individual, or otherwise discriminate against any individual with respect to compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because of an individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The District shall not limit, segregate, or classify its employees or applicants for employment in any way that would deprive or tend to deprive an individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect the status as an employee because of the individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

The District shall not discriminate, as set out above, against a qualified individual with a disability because of the individual's disability in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement, or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. Discrimination includes not making reasonable accommodations to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability, unless the District can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operations of the District. *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* 42 U.S.C. 12112(a),(b); 29 CFR Part 1630: Labor Code 21.051.

The statements as set out above are in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Regulations of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued pursuant to the Acts, Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 80, 84, and 91. (Other Federal Laws and Regulations provide similar protection against discrimination on ground of sex and creed.)

The person designated to ensure equal opportunity employment and to investigate any complaints in this regard is the Superintendent of the school. This individual can be reached at 210-738-0020.

2.2 Instructors

San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity instructional staff are required to be certified or enrolled in an alternative certification program. All teachers must have passed testing in the subject area to which they are assigned in order that be deemed "Highly Qualified" under the NCLB (No Child Left Behind) Guidelines as mandated by the Texas State Board of Education:

2.3 Professional Staffing at Title I Schools

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) currently requires that all teachers teaching in core academic areas on Title I campuses be "highly qualified." To be considered "highly qualified" under NCLB, a teacher must have:

- At least a Bachelor's degree and
- Demonstrate competency in the core academic subject area(s) assigned and
- Full state certification

Full state certification is achieved in one of the following ways:

- Elementary teachers (Texas university/college graduates) who have successfully completed al ExCET or TeXES tests are considered "highly qualified."
- Secondary teachers who have successfully completed applicable ExCET or TExES tests or have an academic major or graduate degree for the subject area(s) assigned (i.e. 24 semester hours, with 12 of the hours being upper division courses) are considered "highly qualified."

In addition, teachers certified in another state are "highly qualified" if they hold a valid out-of-state teaching certificate. And teachers enrolled in an SBEC approved alternative certification program or post-baccalureate program are "highly qualified." If the teacher has successfully completed the following TOPT and/or TExES exams:

1. For math, science, special education: passing of the subject area TexES exam(s).
2. For bilingual education:
 - a. passing of the EC-41 BIL and/or 4-8/Bil TexES dxam(s) and/or
 - b. passing of the TOPT exam.

2.4 Responsibilities of Instructors:

Instructors employed by San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity shall have the responsibility in these areas:

- a. Meet assigned classes regularly or monitor assigned courses.
- b. Submit required records and reports routinely as assigned by Principal.
- c. Teach the prescribed course of study.
- d. Attend to assigned school duties as assigned by Principal/Vice Principal.
- e. Contribute to the development of the program of instruction.
- f. Establish and maintain positive working relationships with colleagues and supervisors.
- g. Establish positive relationships with the students.

- h. Adhere to school policies, procedures and regulations established by the Board of Directors, school Officers, and the Principal.

Criminal History Check

It is the policy of San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity and the board of trustees to comply by Public Education Code Chapter 22, Subchapter C regarding Criminal History Records in order to assure that no person who has been convicted of a felony or a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude be hired either directly or indirectly by the school.

Probationary Period

Each new employee is expected to serve a (90) ninety day probationary period. Employees will be evaluated by Administrative staff at the end of the (45) day period for continuation/termination of employment. During the probationary period, the school employee may end the employer/employee relationship at-will. Employees may be dismissed at any time during term of employment for “good cause” as determined by school management. “Good Cause” is defined as “the failure to meet the accepted standards of conduct for the profession as generally recognized and applied in similarly situated school districts in the state.

Punctuality and Attendance

Employees who are tardy or absent are expected to call the assistant principal at least one hour before the start of the school day. If for some reason, the assistant principal cannot be reached, the employee is responsible for contacting the school administrative office. **NOTE:** It is the employee’s responsibility to ensure that the school is notified in a timely manner so that a substitute can be scheduled.

Repeated tardiness or absence may result in corrective action or, ultimately, in termination.

Supporting Documents for Absences

When an employee is absent, an absence form must be submitted to the campus Business Office for payroll purposes.

Evaluation of Administrative and Other Staff

Evaluation of the school’s staff shall be an integral part of the educational program. Evaluation of all staff shall occur after ninety (90) days of employment and a minimum of annually thereafter).

Performance Evaluation Instructional Staff

Evaluations will be conducted on all teaching staff every 12 weeks. These evaluations will serve as a measurement of professional achievement, growth, and development. They will include positive feedback, recommendations, goals, and development plans.

Non-teaching staff will be evaluated by their immediate supervisor. Pay raises, promotions and stipends will be based upon job assignments and performance evaluations as funding permits.

Staff development

Staff development activities may include a broad range of activities designed to promote staff self-renewal. An annual budget will be established with funds allocated for staff development programming. Staff members will be involved in the program planning, implementation, and development. Each site will designate a committee to identify particular areas of need and develop a plan of action for the Superintendents approval prior to implementation.

Staff Development consists of work at local college/universities, professional memberships, workshops, in-service training, retreats, and conferences. All employees must submit a request to the Assistant Principal in advance of taking any courses if they wish to be reimbursed partially or in full for any staff development.

2.5 Title I –Parent/Teacher Conferences

It is the policy of San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity to implement programs, activities and procedures involving parents of students in programs assisted under Title I, Part A. Parental involvement activities provided with Title I, Part A funds are planned and implemented with meaningful consultation with parents of participating children.

San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity develops jointly with staff, agreed upon policy and procedure, and distributes to parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy that is incorporated into the charter, thereby establishing the expectations for parental involvement. Such policy is updated periodically to meet the changing needs of parents and the charter school.

San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity convenes an annual meeting at a convenient time, to which all parents of participating students are invited and encouraged to attend, to inform parents of their school's participation under Title I, Part A and to explain Title I, Part A, its requirements and their right to be involved. A flexible number of meetings, such as meetings in the morning or evening, are offered. The school provides as needed, with Title I, Part A funds, transportation, child care, or home visits, as such services relate to parental involvement.

School performance profiles and their child's individual student assessment results, including an interpretation of such results of the state's performance standards and local assessments are provided by the charter school. Parents are provided with a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school and are assisted in ways to monitor a child's progress.

All teachers and administrators will be expected to work regularly with parents to improve the performance of the child and provide information on how parents can participate in decisions relating to the education of their child. Training will be provided

for all teachers and administrators involved with the implementation and oversight of Title I and its associated programs.

3. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND WELFARE

3.1 Dress Code

All employees will be expected to dress professionally and appropriately. We ask that you do not wear clothes that could be deemed as too revealing and inappropriate for a work environment or around young children. We expect all staff to use good judgment in this respect. What is considered to be appropriate will be at the discrimination of school management.

3.2 Employee Code of Conduct

All employees are expected to engage in professional behavior with fellow employees, students, and those with whom he/she interacts on behalf of or while representing the school. All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interests of the district, and to ensure the overall success of the school. All employees are expected to be courteous to students, one another, and the general public. Sexual harassment against another employee, parent, student, or visitor, is grounds for dismissal.

San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity shall establish rules and regulations that shall provide for the safety of the students, staff and property of the school. Guidelines are established by a committee of the Principal, Superintendent, and other Staff. The Board of Directors must approve any modifications.

3.3 Rules of Conduct

- Continually strive to understand the inquiry-creativity of students and co-workers and maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and co-workers.
- Recognize and respect the rights and property of students and co-workers and maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and co-workers.
- Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
- Notify their immediate supervisor as early as possible in the event that they must be absent or late. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, and tardiness may be cause for disciplinary action.
- Know and comply with department and district procedures and policies.
- Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately.
- Use district time, funds, and property for authorized district business and activities only.

Both Senior Faculty and Adjunct Faculty are expected to use the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills in the instructional and grading processes in a manner outlined by the Administration.

All employees, as public servants, must follow the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators as follows:

Acts for which employees may be disciplined or dismissed by school officials include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Continued and willful misconduct with staff, students, or parents.
- b. Theft, taking or trying to take another person's property or money by force, fear, or other means.
- c. Willfully causing or attempting to cause damage to school property.
- d. Unauthorized use or possession of firearm, knife, or other weapon on or near school property.

Weapons include, but are not limited to any gun or object designed to propel a missile; any bowie knife, switchblade knife, razor, or slingshot; any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts, which can be swung freely (such as a num-chuck or fighting chain); any object used with the intent of threatening or harming an individual on or near school grounds.

- e. Gambling in any form.
- f. Conduct that endangers the well-being and/or safety of other staff, students, parents, or visitors to the school (to include improper or lack of supervision of students).
- g. Physical assault or battery upon any person.
- h. Cursing or verbally abusing any person, including remarks intended to demean a person's race, religion, sex, creed, national origin, handicapped condition, or intellectual ability.
- i. Vandalism, arson, or any threat to bomb, burn or destroy in any manner a school building or school property.
- j. Forgery, cheating, or plagiarism.
- k. Violation of any regulation of the school.
- l. Substance abuse.
- m. The use of cellular phones at unauthorized times or places.
- n. Leaving campus during work hours without the proper authorization from school management.

3.3.a Cellular Phones

Personal cellular phones are allowed on school property and may be utilized during school hours for work-related calls (i.e. to maintenance, Administration, etc.) or emergencies. No personal calls should be made or received during the employee's work schedule with the exception of limited personal calls which may be made or received during employee's breaks, lunch period, and teacher's conference time. Extended

personal calls during working hours can be considered a misuse of work time and can be cause for termination.

3.3.b Visitors

All visitors are expected to enter the school facility through the main entrance and sign in or report to the building's main office. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees who observe an unauthorized individual on school premises should immediately direct him or her to the building office or contact the administrator in charge. Visitors should be given a visitor's pass at the building office.

3.3.c Smoking Policy

School regulation prohibits smoking in or around school property.

3.3.d Background Checks and Transcripts

All employees are required to have a background check prior to employment by the school. They must submit an official transcript of their diploma and a resume to be put into their personnel file. It is recommended that staff working with the children also be tested for TB, if they haven't done so recently.

School hours are from 8:30 AM to 3:15 PM for Elementary School , 8:30 to 3:30 for Middle School and 8:15 to 3:30 for High School Monday through Friday All teaching and teaching support staff are expected to report to the school campus and sign-in one half hour before school starts. Additional responsibilities include daily debriefings, staff training, and school support, in service functions. All teachers will be required to attend the teacher in service training days as noted on the school calendar, as well as other special training and staffing times and school activities as assigned by the Principal or Vice Principal.

3.3.e Employee Arrests and Convictions

An employee who is arrested for any felony or any offense involving moral turpitude must report the arrest to the principal within three calendar days of the arrest. An employee who is convicted or receives deferred adjudication for such an offense must also report the event to the principal within three days of the event. Moral turpitude includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Dishonesty
- Theft
- Fraud
- Misrepresentations
- Deceit
- Deliberate violence
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor.
- Drug-or alcohol-related offenses
- Acts constituting abuse under the Texas family Code.

3.3. f Child Abuse

State law requires a non-accusatory report of suspected child abuse. A person commits a Class B misdemeanor if the person has cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect and knowingly fails to make a report within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion of abuse or neglect. (Texas Family Code 261.101).

A legal duty to report lies with each person who has cause to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred. It is the responsibility of the individual, not the school district, to make a report.

A person who has cause to make a report, but knowingly fails to do so, commits a criminal offense. (Texas Family Code, Section 261.109). A person reporting or assisting in the investigation of a report pursuant to the law is immune from liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed. Immunity extends to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from the report (Texas Family Code 261.106).

School staff should be alert to signs or symptoms suggesting child abuse (e.g. unexplained bruises, cuts, burns, welts). Student's comments are often the key to discovering suspected neglect or emotional or sexual abuse.

Procedure on Suspected Child Abuse

When an employee first suspects abuse, the employee should take the child to the principal to document suspected abuse.

The employee must then make a report (oral) to the Child Protective Services (CPS) Division of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS). This must be done as soon as possible, but no later than 48 hours after suspecting the abuse. The phone number is 53-ABUSE. The employee and principal then collaborate to complete and file the written report. This report must be done within five (5) days after oral reporting. The original written report must be sent to Child Protective Services. A copy of the report shall be kept on campus.

For reporting life-threatening/emergency situations, the employee should call the CPS hotline at 1-800-252-5400. to report non-emergency situations of child abuse/neglect, PRS has developed a website for school professionals to make a report via the internet. The link to the reporting website is <https://reportabuse.se/>. The login ID is "educator." The password is "report1."

PRS instructs educational professionals not to share the login information with the general public in order to maintain the integrity of this school reporting website.

3.3.g Accountability For Teacher Instructional Materials

All Teacher Resource Materials are the property of the State of Texas or San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity and are issued to the school's program directors, departments, or staff members by the Principal's office or the Business office of the school.

Teacher Resource Materials are any materials purchased by the District or provide to the District by publishers or the state for the purpose of helping guide instructional activities. Teacher Resource Materials can be (but are not limited to) books, teacher editions, workbooks, answer keys, audio or visual aids, resource kits, resource binders, manipulatives, instructional games, computer hardware and software, calculators, and/or other equipment.

Employees may not remove Teacher Resource Materials or any parts of the Teacher Resource Materials from the campus when leaving the District. Employees may check out some materials for home use through the Campus Business Manager with permission of the campus principal.

Requests for Classroom Supplies and Instructional Resources

All employees are required to submit a requisition the school Business office. Requisitions must be signed by the principal or Department Head. If you are a program coordinator, the appropriate grant fund must be identified on the requisition. The Business office will issue a purchase order for approved requisitions only. ***Note: All orders will be unpacked by administrative staff and checked against packing slips. Packing slips will be turned into the Business office for verification against purchase orders before materials are delivered to employee.***

Note: Purchase Orders will not be accepted from teaching staff for supply orders. Purchase orders can only be issued by the finance department or school secretary upon approval of the finance department.

Additional instructional resource materials are kept in the curriculum resource room (i.e. video and audio tape library.) It is the employee's responsibility to fill out a request form for resource materials. A list of the available inventory will be made available to all teachers at the beginning of the year.

Employees are financially accountable for the cost of lost or damaged Teacher Resource Materials or parts thereof to the school. Classroom Resource Equipment will be issued to each teacher at the beginning of the school year and inventoried mid-year and at the end of the year.

Guidelines for Selection of Personal Supplemental Instructional Materials

Please mark all personal supplemental instructional materials with your name before bringing them onto school property. Teachers should exercise care when selecting supplemental materials for the classroom. In particular, they should pay close attention to the manner in which the materials treat profanity and sex, violence, religion, human development, and biased materials.

There are additional specific criteria that apply to the use of movies and videotapes in the classroom. R-rated movies are never to be used. PG and PG-13 movies can not be used in the elementary schools. Written consent from the student's parents or guardians must be obtained to view PG or Pg-13 movies at a secondary level. The use of any

movie during the scheduled school day must be based on educational value and concept.

Note: Any media utilized in classroom that is not part of school inventory must have prior written approval from the principal before being shown in the classroom.

3.3. h Employee Expense Reports and Reimbursements

It is the policy of the school to follow federal grant guidelines in establishing travel, meals and lodging reimbursements. First class airfare is not reimbursable. The school will reimburse for employees only in a non-resort hotel. Individual meals will be reimbursed at cost, based upon the federal cap of \$80.00 per night room charge, .345 cents per mile mileage reimbursement and a per diem allowance of \$30.00 per day. Note: All employees must fill out an expense travel form and have it approved by an administrator prior to reimbursement. All appropriate receipts must be attached to the expense report or reimbursement will not be approved by the finance department.

Reimbursements for supplies will be limited. **Note: If employees takes it upon themselves to purchase goods and services on behalf of school with personal funds and have not received prior authorization, the reimbursement may be denied.**

All reimbursement requests must be submitted on an expense or travel form, and be approved by an administrator prior to being submitted to the finance department for final approval and payment.

3.3. h Field Trips, Educational and Extracurricular Activities

Field trips shall be educational in nature. Field trips and excursions planned by San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity instructors require prior approval by the school's Principal or Superintendent. Field trip requests should be made ten (10) days in advance of scheduled trip. Field trip permission forms shall be completed by the student and parent (if student is under 18 years of age) prior to the scheduled trip. All students shall complete forms to be eligible to participate. Complete forms shall be given to the Principal and put on record. Rental of transportation vehicles shall be coordinated through the schools administrative offices for insurance purposes. The instructor assumes the risk if students are transported in the instructor's private vehicle. Note: All field trips must receive budgetary approval through finance, before arrangements are made for the planned excursions.

Procedure for use of the field trip permission form.

1. Instructors are provided the field trip permission form by the Principal's/Vice Principals office when the trip request is made. All field trips must be planned and request turned in to Principal/Vice Principal at least 4 weeks prior to expected event for coordination through the administration office (This ensures

that the school is fully aware of where the students are and that we are legally covered).

2. Students complete the form for the scheduled trip. Students under the age of eighteen (18) must have a parent or guardian's signature.
3. Instructors will collect the completed forms prior to the scheduled date of the trip. Students who do not have a completed form may not participate in the field trip.
4. Instructors should have the completed forms in their possession during the actual field trip.
5. Upon completion of the trip, the permission forms are given to the program secretary for placement in the student's educational record.

Section 4 Student Issues

4.1 Attendance and Contact Information

All teachers are required to take attendance at 10:00 am each day and to enter daily attendance into their attendance notebook issued by the school. Attendance is to be turned in daily each day to the Curriculum Director no later than 10:15 am for elementary and middle school and by second period for high school. If a student is absent for 2 days (unexcused) or excessively tardy, teachers are required to contact the student's parent or guardian (documented) and file a copy with the front office. If a student is absent 4 days (unexcused), you are required to contact the principal for further action.

All teachers are required to have a "verified" contact list of each student in their class. The school's administrative office must also keep an updated listing of all student contact information.

4.2 Progress Reports and Grading

Progress reports must be sent out at the mid point of the grading period. All teaching staff are required to submit a copy to the administrative office for filing.

Teaching staff are required to submit all student grades no later than 4 days after the end of a grading period. The PEIMS monitor will submit grades no later than 8 days after the close of the grading period.

Teaching staff are required to contact parents a minimum of bi-monthly to communicate both positive and negative progress of the student. Note: Never end the conversation on a negative issued; always end on a positive note.

Blueprint for the school year's lesson plans are to be submitted to the Vice Principal four months in advance. Lesson plans can be flexible but they must cover the objectives and TEKS areas as noted. Lesson plans need to include classroom activities and school

resources used. Ongoing lesson plans need to be completed at least a week in advance. Please keep your lesson plans in a binder so that they are easily accessible for class support, visits or substitute teachers.

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

The following people are the only people 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)
- School officials with legitimate education interests

Materials that are not considered educational records and do not have to be made available to a parent or student include teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher.

Parents or students who want to review student records should be directed to the campus principal for assistance.

Parent and Student Complaints

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 campus principal. The complaint process is outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook.

4.4 Administering Medication to Students

Only designated employees can administer medication to students. A student who must take medicine during the school day must bring a written request from his or her parent and the medicine, in its original, properly labeled container. Contact the principal or vice principal for information on procedures that must be followed when administering medication to students.

4.5 Student Absences

A student absent from school shall provide a note that describes the reason for absence. The note shall be signed by the student's parent or guardian. If the student is 18 or older or has been declared by a court to be an emancipated minor, the student may sign in place of a parent or guardian.

Teachers and other employees responsible for verifying student attendance are responsible for receiving and maintaining this written documentation.

Section 5 Electronic Communications

Employee Agreement for The Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Communication System

District employees will be given access to the District's electronic communications system. ***The electronic communications system is defined as the District's network, servers, computer workstations, peripherals, applications, databases, library catalog, online resources, Internet access, email, and any other technology designated for use by employees.***

With this educational opportunity comes responsibility. It is important that employees read the San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity Administrative Regulations for Acceptable Use and agreement form, and then ask any questions if you need help understanding them. Inappropriate system use of the District's electronic communications system will result in the consequences below, including loss of the privilege to use this educational tool.

You will be asked to acknowledge receipt and understanding of these items as in by completing and returning a copy of the District's Notice of Acknowledgement and Agreement Form to the District's Technology Administrator.

Please note that Internet access is part of the District's electronic communications systems. The Internet is a network of many types of communications and information networks, which are frequently used in classroom assignments. Some material accessible via the Internet may contain content that is illegal, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to employees. It is possible for employees to access (accidentally or otherwise) these areas of content. While the District uses filtering technology and protection measures to restrict access to such material, it is not possible to absolutely prevent such access. It will be each employee's responsibility to follow the rules for appropriate and acceptable use as outlined in the District's Technology Policy.

Section 6. EMPLOYEE RECORDS, COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

6.1 Employee Records

All employees will need to fill out a W-4 and I-9 application prior to being paid by the Payroll Department. Federal Wage and Labor laws mandate that if an employee does not fill out a W-4 form, files it as incomplete (i.e. failure to sign or mark status, or dependents) that the employer cannot withhold the employee's paycheck, but must withhold taxes at the highest rate (i.e. single, claiming zero dependents). If an employee fails to supply a valid social security number, the employer may withhold payment of compensation to employee. Employees that have a change in name, address, or phone must forward this information to the school's Business Office soon as possible. Please obtain a "payroll change form" from the Business Office for any payroll information changes.

All employee records are to be kept personal and confidential. The file contains certificates, service and training records, transcripts, applications, resumes, payroll information, and time out information. Also included in the personnel folder are teacher evaluation forms. All payroll records are also confidential. Employees have the right to request to see what is in their respective files. If an employee wishes to view his/her personnel file, he/she must put in a request with the Principal or Vice Principal. Employees may only view the contents of their file in the presence of a personnel administrator. If access to the personnel file is denied, the employee must file a formal

grievance. Note: Violation of confidentiality with matters of personnel files or payroll is grounds for termination of employment. Note: Access to personnel files is restricted to designated personnel.

6.2 Employee Payroll

Exemption from Withholding

If an employee wishes to claim an exemption from withholding he/she must fill out the qualifying section of the W-4 form. If the Payroll Department determines that the employee does not qualify for an exemption based upon the qualifying statement in the W-4, exemption status may be denied.

Change in Withholding Status

Employees must file a revised W-4 form in order to change withholding status. The Payroll Department will not make changes in an employee's withholding status based upon a verbal request.

Wage Garnishments

The School will follow federal guidelines and wage garnishments of employees. If a state or federal agency notifies the school to garnish an employee's wages, the school will notify the employee. This is in accordance with the guidelines of the 1996 Federal Debt Collection and Improvement Act. Based on this legislation, the federal government can garnish wages for federal debts including defaulted student loans, VHA, VA, or HUD loans. State garnishments come primarily in the form of child support garnishments.

Payroll Deductions

Employees should review their payroll deductions on a monthly basis to ensure that the correct types and amounts are being deducted. If an employee has enrolled in a health plan, term insurance, etc., the deduction should appear on the check stub. Payroll deductions for the Teacher Retirement System (TRS), federal income tax, and Medicare taxes required for all employees who work at least half-time. If there are discrepancies noted or questions about deductions, please contact the Business Department.

Payroll Stub

Employee paycheck stubs provide helpful information to the employee and make the employees' paycheck easier to read and understand.

Paydays

All salaried (i.e. exempt) employees will be paid over a (12) twelve month period. Annual salary is based on a 12 month pay schedule. Employees will be paid monthly on the last day of each month. Hourly (non-exempt) employees will be paid once a week. Please see payroll schedule for payroll dates falling on weekends or holidays.

If you have not picked up your paycheck from the front office within 3 business days after the pay date, it will be mailed. (Please be sure that the front office has your correct mailing address).

Advances

No advance pay will be granted under any circumstances.

6.3 Retirement Plan

All staff working at least half-time are required to enroll in the Teacher Retirement System (TRS). All employees will be subject to TRS4 at the rate of 6.25% of your gross wages. Teacher retirement is non-taxable and is therefore deducted before your withholding. All staff enrolled in TRS will be subject only to the 1.45% FICA withholding and **will not pay** social security. Staff working less than half-time will not qualify for TRS and therefore **will be subject** to the 7.65% social security taxes.

6.4 Group Health Benefits for School Employees

It is the policy of San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity and the board of trustees to provide as per Chapter 172, Local Government Code, a policy of insurance or group contract issued by an insurer, that meets the substantive coverage requirements of Article 3.51-6, Insurance Code, and any other law applicable to group health insurance policies on contracts issued in this state. This insurance coverage shall be comparable to the basic health coverage provided under the Texas Employees Uniform Group Insurance Benefits Act (Article 3.50-2, Vernon's Texas Insurance Code).

San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity offers TRS Active Care Health Insurance. Dental and Vision insurance will be offered to all employees through Alflac. Employees must pay for dental and vision insurance. Employees are encouraged to sign up for the insurance that will be offered, but are not required to do so. The School pays \$150.00 per month toward individual employee health insurance premium. Please see rate schedule for amount paid by employee. The state contributes \$75.00 per month per employee. Employees wishing to add family members will be responsible for the additional premium. (More information on the health insurance will be given out at the orientation).

Extension of Health Benefits After Leaving The District

Health coverage may be extended by employees leaving the district through COBRA. San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity has a COBRA administrator. All employees leaving the district, who participated in the group health insurance coverage will be notified by COBRA upon leaving the district. It is the responsibility of the employee to make arrangement through COBRA to continue coverage.

6.5 Sick Time , Overtime, and Leave

Sick time

All employees are granted five (5) days leave beginning August 1st of each school year. Leave may be taken in the form of personal time or sick time. Leave time does not carry over and must be used by the end of each school year. It will not be paid out in

compensation at the end of the employee's contract period or at termination, however employees with perfect attendance and outstanding performance will be subject to receiving a bonus at the end of the school year.

Time Out

The Fair Labor Standards Act permits reduction in pay for exempt (salaried) employees only in increments of whole days. Due to this requirement, salaried employees will not be allowed to take less than a half day of sick time. Employees will be permitted to use sick time for personal time out at the discretion of the Administration of the school. If the employee does not have sufficient sick time to use for time out, the employee will be docked for time. If an employee needs to leave the work place for less than one half day, the employee may request to make up time out.

Exception To Time Out Ruling

Employees may have deductions in accrued time or pay made in increments of less than one-half day, if the time out is for family and medical leave. Note: This is subject to approval by the school administration not to exceed three incidents per school year.

Overtime Pay

Only non-exempt (hourly) employees are subject to overtime pay. Hourly employees will be paid 1 and their normal rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week. All overtime must be pre-approved by a school administrator.

Vacation Time

The school is not required by law to provide vacation time for employees. San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity does not provide vacation time.

Other Leave

- Requesting Notice-All employees must give notice for foreseeable leave as soon as possible before the beginning date of the leave.
- **Personal Leave** -Requests for personal leave will be granted at the discretion of the Management of the school. Such leave may be granted for extenuating circumstances and will be reviewed by management on a case by case basis. Personal leave will not be with pay.
- **Medical Leave**- Medical leave requests must be accompanied by a physician's statement. Any employee may be granted up to 12 weeks of unpaid medical leave during a 12 month period (per federal statute). An employee may use accrued sick days toward medical leave.
- **Family leave**-Family leave is granted for birth or adoption, medical care of an employees seriously ill child, spouse, or parent. The school does not pay employees for family leave, but they may use accrued sick days toward such leave.

- **Jury Duty**-Upon court notification, the school encourages the employee to report to jury duty, and request a postponement of duty until non-school months. If the request is not granted, school management may establish a maximum time off with no or partial loss of salary.
- **Military Duty**-In the event that an employee of the school is called to active duty, the employee will be released for such duty until the assignment is completed.
- **Bereavement**-This leave is granted to arrange and/or attend the funeral of an immediate family member. If leave becomes it extended, it may extend into a personal leave of absence.

6.6 Unemployment Benefits

San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity reports your wages to the Texas Workforce Commission. If you become unemployed, you may be eligible for employment benefit payments.

Note: Individuals employed by a school district in any capacity are usually not paid benefits for any unemployment during the period between two regular academic years or terms (June and July). If they have been given reasonable assurance of employment for the upcoming school year and have indicated they will be available for employment. In addition, employees are not paid benefits for unemployment during extended holiday periods (winter and spring breaks).

6.7 Temporary Disability

Certified Employees. The purpose of temporary disability leave is to provide job protection to full-time educators who cannot work for an extended period of time because of a mental or physical disability of a temporary nature. Pregnancy and conditions related to pregnancy are treated the same as any other temporary disability. A full time educator may voluntarily request to be placed on temporary disability leave or be placed on leave involuntarily.

Employees must request approval for temporary disability leave. The leave request must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming the employee's inability to work and estimating a probable date of return. If disability leave is not approved, the employee must return to work or be subject to termination procedures.

If an employee is placed on temporary disability leave involuntarily, he or she has the right to request a hearing before the board of trustees. The employee may protest the action and present additional evidence of fitness to work.

When an employee is ready to return to work, the Superintendent/Principal should be notified at least 30 days in advance. The return-to-work notice must be accompanied by a physician's statement confirming that the employee is able to do the job. Professional

employees returning from leave will be reinstated as soon as the appropriate position is available. If a position is not available before the end of the school year, professional employees will be reinstated at the beginning of the following school year.

6.8 Family and Medical Leave

Employees who have been employed by the district for at least 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours during that time are eligible for family and medical leave. All leave is without pay unless otherwise specified by school administration.

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave each year between mid-August and the end of May for the following reasons:

- The birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child.
- To care for a spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition.
- An employee's serious health condition.

6.9 Worker's Compensation

Through a self-insured program, San Antonio School of Inquiry and Creativity provides worker's compensation coverage for its employees. Employees are covered for occupational related injuries and illnesses only. Worker's Compensation pays for medical expenses and loss of wages as related to the injury. Work-related illness or injury cases will be reviewed on an individual basis regarding leave time according to the rules and regulations of Texas Worker's Compensation Insurance Act. Weekly income benefits begin to accrue on the 8th day of disability. Wage replacement benefits have a 7-day waiting period. Temporary Income Benefits are not paid until approximately the 13th day of medically supported disability.

Note: Worker's Compensation does not cover property damage suffered by an employee such as broken glasses, broken jewelry, ripped clothing, etc. In addition, accidents involving horseplay or drugs and alcohol are not covered under the Worker's Compensation law.

An employee who sustains an occupational injury must immediately report the incident to their supervisor. The Employer's First Report of Injury form must be completed by the immediate supervisor and forwarded to the Business Office immediately or at the supervisor's earliest opportunity. Failure to timely report an injury may result in loss of benefits or possible fines. Additionally, the employee is required to report any absence due to a work-related injury to the Business Office and to the immediate supervisor or his/her designee. If absent from work due to an occupational injury, the employee obtains a written release from their physician and reports to the Business Office prior to returning to work. Additional information is available from the Texas Worker's Compensation Commission (210) 593-0070.

Leave For Workers' Compensation

As workers' compensation has a seven-day waiting period, sick pay may be used during this time.

SECTION 7 EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

7.1 Employment Involvement

Professional employees will be requested to serve on committees at various times for curriculum development and general education improvement during each year.

Faculty Meetings

Teachers are required to attend all district-wide faculty meetings and meetings called by the principal of the school. Such meetings are planned to promote educational progress.

Parent-Teacher Association Meetings

Parent-Teacher Association organizations are vitally interested in the welfare of the students in the District. Historically, they have served the public schools of America more than any other organization. Parents and teachers are encouraged to participate in the PTO and to work together for the benefit of the children. An organized PTO in every school, working hand in hand with teachers and principals, can help insure proper educational programs in the District.

School Advisory Teams

Employees may also be elected to serve on a campus level School Advisory Team, which makes recommendations regarding the instructional program on campus. This team is responsible for Site-Based Decision Making. The direct and ultimate purpose of SBDM is the improvement of student learning.

Working with The Media

Positive interaction between the media and the school is an essential component in promoting support for our school. News items for, or interviews with members of the media regarding school activities must have the principal's prior approval.

7.2 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Titles VII and IX of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1972, respectively. It can take two forms: quid pro quo and hostile environment. In quid pro quo, an individual may ask another individual for sexual favors in exchange for privileges (e.g., a teacher asks for favors from a student in exchange for improved grades). A hostile environment is created when the harassment becomes so severe it has an impact on the victim's ability to function in that environment. Harassment can be both initiated by and directed at school employees, students, or visitors.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission states:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment under the following conditions.

- Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions.
- The conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or otherwise offensive work environment.

If an employee feels that a violation of sexual harassment has been committed, he/she must follow the following grievance procedure.

7.3 Grievance Procedure

In the event of a problem or dispute with other personnel, students, or parents, and employee may submit a complaint following the process described below.

1. The employee will make a good faith effort to work with the immediate supervisor to resolve the conflict. This effort will consist of problem identification, possible solutions, selection of resolution, process for implementation of resolution, and scheduling a follow-up. In the event that the complaint involves the immediate supervisor, the employee will work with that individual's supervisor.
2. If the issue is not resolved after a good faith attempt as outlined above, the employee may submit the grievance in writing to the Superintendent of the school.
3. Within one week of receipt of the written complaint, the hearing committee shall schedule a hearing at a mutually convenient time and place for discussion of the complaint with all parties involved. The process is similar to that of the initial good faith attempt at a resolution. If members of the hearing committee have a conflict of interest in the subject proceedings, or are involved in the issue personally, those members shall be excused from their roles on the committee.
4. A decision shall be rendered at the completion of the hearing process. Appeals should be made as soon as possible.

SECTION 8 HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is the policy of San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity and the board of trustees to comply by all the laws required in Public Education Code Chapter 38: Health and Safety Code of Texas State Law.

All employees are expected to work in a safe and prudent manner abiding by all safety related District policies and procedures. A clean, safe and organized work environment is essential. Using good housekeeping practices reduces the potential for and may lessen the severity of fires, which may result in injury and/or property damage. Additionally, good housekeeping practices ensure the best use of space and create a positive and pleasing school environment for the students, staff, parents, and visitors. Each employee is responsible for the safety and care of the building and environment.

Lighted candles or open flames are not permitted for any purpose in the school. Polytechnics in school buildings or on school grounds is strictly prohibited.

Texas Hazard Communication Act

As required by the Texas Hazard Communications Act (revised 1992) codified as Chapter 502 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, the District provides employees with specific information and training on the hazards of chemicals, measures to protect themselves from these hazards, including appropriate personal protective equipment.

The District has Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS's) for chemicals and hazardous materials found at the school location. the MSDS's are available for the employee's use and review at any time.

Asbestos Regulations

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) requires that notification of the availability of Asbestos Management Plans be made to all District employees each school year. As required by Environmental Protection Agency regulation 40 CFR Part 763 Subpart E, San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity hereby notifies District employees that an Asbestos Management Plan is available for review at the school facility.

Pesticides Regulations

In accordance with the Texas Structural Pest Control Act, article 135b-6, San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity hereby notifies District employees that pesticides are periodically applied at campus facilities. Employees should immediately report any evidence of pest activity to school administrators or the facility director. Notices of pest control will be posted in the building forty-eight (48) hours before treatment begins.

Clean Air Act

The Clean Air Act addresses chlorofluorocarbon (CFR) in the atmosphere. San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity conforms to Section 608 of the Clean Air Act

amendments of 1990 and the Environmental Protection Agency recovery and recycling regulations. The district uses only licensed technicians to service and replace air conditioning and refrigeration equipment.

Gun Free Schools

It is the policy of San Antonio School for Inquiry and Creativity and the board of trustees to comply by all terms of Penal Code Chapters 46.11 and 46.12, Penalty if Offense Committed Within Weapon-Free School Zones, in order to insure the safety of our students, staff, and administrators of our school.

Safety Drills

The principal/vice principal shall conduct fire, tornado, or other emergency drills designed to assure the orderly movement of students and school personnel to the safest areas available.

Emergency Plans

The school shall have effective emergency procedures that can be implemented on short notice and that will ensure optimum safety for students and school personnel.

Evacuation Procedures

The Superintendent or a designee shall design and implement a system to familiarize employees and students with evacuation procedures and shall ensure that evacuation diagrams are appropriately posted.

Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers shall be kept in the building and all District employees shall know where to find them and how to use them.

Electrical Heating Appliances in the Classroom

The City of San Antonio has informed schools that reheating and serving food in the classroom on a regular basis violates City health, safety, and fire regulations. Teachers are discouraged from using microwave ovens, hotplates and other electrical heating appliances in their classrooms, unless carefully supervised and used as part of an approved curriculum.

SECTION 9. OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

9.1 Religious Activities in The Classroom

Federal law prohibits teachers and other employees from advancing or promoting a particular religious belief or viewpoint while in the classroom.