

2010-2011

Staff Handbook



Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools

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NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap in its vocational programs, services, or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

It is the policy of Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age in its employment practices as required by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools will take steps to assure that lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in all educational and vocational programs.

PURPOSE

Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools ("the School") have adopted certain employment policies and procedures, which are contained in this personnel handbook. This staff handbook is effective as of the 12th day of August 2010.

The policies in this handbook are a source of information for employees who have questions about the School's personnel practices. These policies are not contractual in nature and may be unilaterally rescinded, revised, or added to by the School from time to time. Additionally, although management generally will follow these policies, the Principal/Director may, in his or her sole discretion, authorize deviations from or exceptions to these policies if, in the Principal's/Director's opinion, such a deviation or exception is warranted under the circumstances. The provisions of this handbook control over any contrary statements, representations, or assurances by any supervisory personnel.

This handbook is not to be construed as or declared to be a contract of employment by any employee of the School. Absent a written contract, Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools ("the School") is an at-will employer. As an at-will employee, any employee may voluntarily leave employment or may be terminated by the School at any time, for any or no reason, with or without notice.

This personnel handbook is the property of the School. All employees and trainees will be provided with a copy of the handbook and will be required to read and abide by it. While the School intends to notify employees whenever there has been a significant modification or addition to any of the policies in the handbook, the policies are subject to change at any time, with or without notice, at the School's sole discretion.

CODE OF ETHICS

An effective educational program requires the services of men and women of integrity, high ideals, and human understanding. To maintain and promote these essentials, the School expects all professional staff members to maintain high standards in their working relationships, and in the performance of their professional duties, to:

Recognize basic dignities of all individuals with whom they interact in the performance of duties;

Represent accurately their qualifications;

Exercise due care to protect the mental and physical safety of students, colleagues, and subordinates;

Understand and apply the knowledge and skills appropriate to assigned responsibilities;

Keep in confidence legally confidential information as they may secure;

Ensure that their actions or those of another on their behalf are not made with the specific intent of advancing private economic interests;

Refrain from using position or public property, or permitting another person to use an employee's position or public property for partisan political or religious purposes. (This will in no way limit constitutionally or legally protected rights as a citizen.);

Avoid accepting anything of value offered by another for the purpose of influencing judgment.

Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

All employees are required by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to a law enforcement agency, Child Protective Services, or appropriate state agency (e.g. state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering a facility) within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. Reports to Child Protective Services can be made to a local office or to the Texas Abuse Hotline (1-800-252-5400). 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.

Please note: 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 prosecution for the commission of a Class B misdemeanor.

Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the campus principal. Employees are not required to report their concern to the principal before making a report to the appropriate agencies. In addition, employees must cooperate with child abuse and neglect investigators. Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report to the appropriate state agency. 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 investigator is prohibited.

Staff Dress and Grooming

The Board of the Governing Body (Riverwalk Education Foundation) (the Board) believes that all staff members set an example in dress and grooming for their students to follow. A professional staff member who understands this precept and adheres to it enlarges the importance of his/her task, presents an image of dignity, and encourages respect for authority. These factors act in a positive manner toward the maintenance of discipline.

The Board retains the authority to specify the following dress and grooming guidelines for staff that will prevent such matters from having an adverse impact on the educational process.

Faculty and staff members are expected to dress in a professional and appropriate manner. The campus principal and/or supervisor will be solely responsible for initially interpreting and enforcing the faculty/staff dress requirements; questions concerning dress requirements may be appealed as provided by Board Policy.

Employees will keep themselves neatly groomed and dressed and will keep their hair neat and clean. Grooming and dress that will disturb, interfere with, or detract from the educational process will not be allowed. "Neatly groomed and dressed" shall be defined as dress and grooming that is standard and conforms to local community and school district etiquette and decorum. It is within these principles that Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools will enforce the following dress code items, specifically but not limited to:

No Shorts, Wind Pants/Shorts, or Warm-Ups may be worn on any school-day (i.e., a day for which a person is being paid) except for:

P. E. class (but not worn in the regular classroom)

Campus Designated Days (designation is done by the administration); and Field-based, Class Activity Days.

No Jeans of any color may be worn on any school-day (i.e., a day for which a person is being paid) except for:

Workdays and Campus Designated Days (designation is done by the administration); and Field-based Activities (but not worn in the regular classroom).

Male Grooming:

Hair length is the same as student grooming code and must be neatly trimmed and no earrings may be worn.

Female Dress:

Skirt and dress length should fall below the knee cap. When seated or having your legs crossed/uncrossed, your thighs should not be exposed. Mini-skirts are prohibited.

Fitted leggings and spandex-type leggings are not permitted as outer wear; they may be worn under a dress, skirt or tunic top provided that outer wear meets the student skirt and dress code length requirements. Loose-fitting stirrup pants and loose-fitting leggings are permitted

Dress culottes, skorts, and split skirts must meet the student dress and skirt code length requirements. These are clothes that have the appearance of a skirt in the front but are split. Dresses and skirts should contain only small slits. Slits shall not be revealing. It should be easy to walk comfortably in your skirt.

Appropriate undergarments must be worn at all times.

Clothing that exposes cleavage, private parts, the midriff or undergarment is prohibited.

Capri pants are not acceptable on any school day except on a workday and field day.

Shirts, Blouses, and Tops

All shirts shall cover the back and stomach areas. You should be able to move freely without exposing any portion of your waist area. Shirts and blouses must be buttoned appropriately and should not be low cut or expose any type of cleavage.

Clothing should never be see-through. Any clothing that reveals cleavage, private parts, the midriff or undergarments is prohibited. Clothing Materials such as spandex are prohibited.

Shoes

No sandals, open toe shoes, high heels/chunky heels, slippers, flip-flops or clogs. Shoes should be polished and clean. Shoes made of leather or microfiber are preferable.

Pants/Slacks

Pants must be worn with a belt, unless designed without belt loops. Pants/slacks must fall at ankle length.

Capri pants are prohibited. Jeans are prohibited unless exceptions are made for Blue Jean Days or special events by your Principal/Administration. Tights and spandex pants are prohibited.

Jewelry and Other Accessories

All tattoos shall be covered and hidden from view.

Jewelry used in conjunction with body piercing (such as nose rings, eyebrow or tongue studs) is prohibited.

Employees who desire exceptions from the dress code for religious reasons should submit their requests to their campus principals.

All employees need to dress in Business Attire on all school days of the year!

Note: Any employee who fails to adhere to this dress code will be subject to first a written warning and then for repeat occurrences will be subject to further disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination.

Drug-Free Workplace

The board believes that quality education is not possible in an environment affected by drugs. It will seek, therefore, to establish and maintain an educational setting which is not tainted by the use or evidence of use of any controlled substance.

The board shall not permit the manufacture, possession, use, distribution, or dispensing of any controlled substance, including alcohol, by any member of the professional staff at any time while on school property or while involved in any school-related activity or event. Any staff member who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Board policy.

The District prohibits the unlawful distribution, possession, or use of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises or as part of any of the District's activities.

Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools are committed to maintaining a drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of illegal drugs in the workplace. Employees who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act during working hours shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Such sanctions may include referral to drug and alcohol counseling or rehabilitation programs or employee assistance programs, termination from employment with the District, and referral to appropriate law enforcement officials for prosecution.

Compliance with these requirements and prohibitions is mandatory and is a condition of employment. Board policy establishes standards of conduct for District employees. (This notice complies with notice requirements imposed by the federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, 20 U.S.C. 3224a and 34 CFR 86.201.)

Liability-Report of Drug Offense:

Teachers, school administrators, or school employees are not liable in civil damages for reporting to a school administrator or governmental authority a student whom the teacher suspects of using, passing, or selling on school property, marijuana or a controlled substance, a dangerous drug, an abusable glue or aerosol paint, a volatile chemical, or an alcoholic beverage.

Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing:

Noninvestigatory searches in the workplace, including accessing an employee's desk, file, cabinets, classroom or work area to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is

unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no legitimate expectation of privacy in those places. In addition, the district reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if the suspected violation relates to drug or alcohol use. The district may search the employee, the employee's personal items, work areas, lockers, and private vehicles parked on district premises or worksites or used in district business.

Employees required having a commercial driver's license:

The purpose of alcohol and drug testing is to ensure safety and prevent accidents and injuries resulting from the misuse of alcohol and drugs by drivers of commercial motor vehicles. Any employee who is required to have a commercial driver's license (CDL) is subject to drug and alcohol testing. This includes all drivers who operate a motor vehicle designed to transport 16 or more people, counting the driver; drivers of large vehicles; or drivers of vehicles used in the transportation of hazardous materials. Teachers, coaches, or other employees who primarily perform duties other than driving are subject to testing requirements when their duties include driving.

Alcohol and drug tests may be conducted when reasonable suspicion exists, at random, when an employee returns to duty after engaging in prohibited conduct, and as a follow-up measure. Testing may be conducted following accidents. Return-to-duty and follow-up testing will be conducted when an employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol or drugs return to duty.

All employees required to have a CDL who are subject to alcohol and drug testing will receive a copy of the district's policy, the testing requirements, and detailed information on alcohol and drug abuse and the availability of assistance programs. Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug policies and related educational material should contact their supervisor.

Policy Statement against Sexual Harassment and Harassment

Because Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools believe in the dignity of each person and values working in conditions that enhance that dignity, Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools view sexual harassment and coercive sexual advances as unacceptable in the school workplace. Such behavior will not be tolerated or condoned.

Sexual Harassment:

Employee-to-Employee: Sexual harassment of a coworker is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct 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.

Employees who believe that they have been sexually harassed by another employee are encouraged to come forward with complaints. The district will promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment and will take prompt and appropriate disciplinary action against employees found to have engaged in conduct constituting sexual harassment of other employees.

Employee-to-Student: Sexual harassment of students by employees is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment of students includes any welcome or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other oral, written, physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature. Romantic relationships between district employees and students are strictly prohibited, regardless of the age of the student. Other prohibited conduct includes the following:

Engaging in sexually-oriented conversations for the purpose of personal sexual gratification

Telephoning students at home or elsewhere and engaging in inappropriate social relationships

Engaging in physical contact that would reasonably be construed as sexual in nature

Enticing or threatening students to get them to engage in sexual behavior in exchange for grades or other school-related benefits

In most instances, sexual abuse of a student by an employee violates the student's constitutional right to bodily integrity. Sexual abuse may include, but is not limited to, fondling, sexual assault, or sexual intercourse.

Employees who suspect a student is being sexually harassed or abused by another employee are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal. All allegations of sexual harassment or sexual abuse of a student will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. Conduct that may be characterized as known or suspected child abuse also must be reported to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. Employees with questions or concerns relating to the alleged sexual harassment of a student should contact their supervisor.

Harassment:

Harassment of a coworker or student motivated by race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or age is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. A substantial charge of harassment against a student or employee shall result in disciplinary action. The term harassment includes repeated unwelcome and offensive slurs, jokes, or other oral, written, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or age that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment.

Employees who believe they have been harassed are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the campus principal or supervisor. If the campus principal or supervisor is the subject of a complaint, the employee shall report the complaint directly to the superintendent. An employee who suspects or knows that a student is being harassed by a school employee or by another student shall inform his or her principal or immediate supervisor.

Any allegation of harassment of students or employees shall be investigated and addressed. An employee may appeal the decision of the principal or supervisor regarding the investigation into the allegations in accordance with the employee complaint and grievance policy and procedures (See Complaints and Grievances section). To the greatest extent possible, complaints shall be treated as confidential. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation. The district will not retaliate against an employee who in good faith reports perceived harassment.

Solicitation and Distribution

Any solicitation of employees by other employees or any person anywhere on School property or any distribution of literature is prohibited at all times. Trespassing, soliciting or distribution of literature by non-employees on School premises is prohibited at all times and shall be in accordance with the School's Literature Distribution Policy.

Intellectual Property Rights

Any materials created by staff members for use by the School, or produced using the staff or resources of the school, are works-for-hire and all intellectual property rights are vested in the school.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The School and its agents, employees or administrators shall not discriminate in the payment of wages on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin or ancestry by paying wages to any employee at a rate less than the rate at which wages are paid to any other employee for equal work on jobs which require equal skill, effort and responsibility and which are performed under similar conditions, unless payment is made pursuant to the following:

a seniority system;

a merit system;

a system which measures earnings by the quantity or quality of production;

a wage rate differential determined by any factor other than race, color, religious, sex, age, national origin or ancestry.

Hiring and Rehiring Standards

The School believes that the quality of the professional staff determines the quality of education offered in the school. It is therefore the responsibility of the school Principal/Director to locate, recruit and rehire the best qualified teachers to meet the school's educational needs.

Staff evaluation and selection shall be based on; •Strong academic preparation, •Professional competence, •Intellectual rigor, •Emotional maturity, •Enthusiastic professional attitude, •Knowledge of instructional practices, •Ability to contribute to the furtherance of the school's educational goals.

Attention shall be paid, among other factors, to the candidate's academic records, and his/her previous relevant experience.

Staff must demonstrate that they are aware that children have many different family circumstances and that they are willing and able to provide the educational support that a diverse student population needs in school.

The School teaching staff members must fulfill their individual responsibilities and work in concert with the other members of the teaching team.

The Principal/Director of the school will be responsible for evaluation of the teachers and also advertising available jobs and soliciting applications from new qualified candidates.

The Principal/Director will evaluate the teachers and screen all applicants for vacancies and make all decisions regarding hiring/rehiring.

The School is committed to hire/rehire the individuals who are best qualified for the job without regard to race, sex, religion, age, nationality or handicap unrelated to the job.

Criminal Record

The School shall not employ an applicant who:

is a convicted felon;

is convicted of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude. "Moral turpitude" is an act of baseness, vileness, or depravity in the private or social duties that a person owes another member of society in general and that is contrary to the accepted rule of right and duty between persons.

is charged with a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, until there is a final disposition of the charge; or

is on probation for any offense (including a deferred adjudication probation) that would otherwise restrict employment.

Persons charged with a criminal offense that was dismissed through deferred adjudication may be considered for employment except when the charge was for capital murder; murder; voluntary or involuntary manslaughter; any felony theft offense; indecency with a child; injury to a child, elderly, or disabled individual; kidnapping; aggravated kidnapping; aggravated sexual assault; aggravated assault causing serious bodily injury; sexual assault of a child; aggravated robbery; any felony where a deadly weapon was used or exhibited; any felony related to the manufacture, delivery, or possession of marijuana, a controlled substance, or a dangerous drug.

Performance Evaluation

Evaluation of an employee's job performance should be a continual process that focuses on improvement. Performance evaluation is based on an employee's assigned job duties and other job-related criteria. All employees will participate in the evaluation process with their assigned supervisor at least annually. Written evaluations will be completed on forms approved by the district. Reports, correspondence, and memoranda also can be used to document performance information. All employees will receive a copy of their written evaluation, have a performance conference with their supervisor, and get the opportunity to respond to the evaluation.

Personnel Files

Personnel File. The School maintains an official permanent record file for each employee.

Contents. Only that information which pertains to the professional role of the employee and is submitted by duly authorized school administrative personnel and the Board may be entered in the official record file. This file should contain the following items and other employment documents and records:

- Job Application;
- Employment At Will Agreement;
- Employee Information Form;
- Retirement registration;
- Applications for health insurance;
- Resume;
- Reference letters;
- Signed Consent Form for Fingerprinting Records Checks;
- Records Check;
- Certificates (copies);
- I-9 Immigration Form (completed after employment);
- W-4 forms;
- Direct Deposit form & Void Check Copy;
- Copy of Disclaimer/Receipt of Staff Handbook;
- Dress Code Acknowledgement;
- Wage Deduction Authorization Agreement;
- Evaluations;
- Driver's License and SSN Copies

Employee Inspection Rights. Upon request, the employee will be allowed to inspect his or her own file. Under state law employee has the right to copy his/her file, except for pre-employment recommendations and records and such other information as may be privileged under law and not subject to employee inspection.

Employees who wish to review their own personnel file shall: request access in writing; review the record in the presence of the administrator designated to maintain said records or designee; make no alterations or additions to the record nor remove any material there from.

Employees who wish copies of material in their personnel file shall: request copies in writing; pay a copying fee of ten (10) cents per page.

Employees wishing to appeal material in their record shall make a request in writing to the Principal/Director and specify therein: name and date; materials to be appealed; reason for appeal. The Principal/Director shall make a determination within ninety (90) days of the appeal.

Employment References: The School provides references regarding former employment only if the School receives written authorization and release from the former employee. Otherwise, the School will only verify dates of employment, the position held, and rate of pay. Requests for references should be directed to the Principal/Director.

Pay and Compensation

Payroll: Professional and paraprofessional staff members receive their pay in twelve (12) equal monthly payments based upon the total contracted salary. All employees are required to be on automatic payroll deposit for the 2010-2011 school year. With direct deposit, an employee's pay is immediately available on the pay date. During the school year direct deposit slips are delivered to school districts.

Payments for substitute teachers, hourly and part-time staff members will cover the period from every 3rd Saturday of the current month to every 3rd Saturday of the next month. Any substitute, extra duty, hourly and overtime (for nonexempt employees) payments accrued after 3rd Saturday of the current month will be included in next month's payroll.

Automatic payroll deductions for the Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS) and federal income tax are required for all full-time employees. Medicare tax deductions are also required for all employees hired after March 31, 1986. Temporary and part-time employees who are not eligible for TRS membership must have their Social Security contributions deducted. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized or unpaid leave.

Retirement: The Board shall not require the retirement of any employee. It is recommended that personnel considering retirement discuss the matter with the Cluster Superintendent of Schools several months in advance in order for the necessary procedures and actions to be completed. Prior planning can be to the advantage of the person who is retiring.

Teacher Retirement: All personnel employed on a regular basis for at least one-half of the normal work schedule are members of the Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS). Substitute teachers not receiving TRS service retirement benefits who work at least 90 days a year are also eligible for TRS membership and to purchase a year of creditable service. TRS provides members with an annual statement of their account showing all deposits and the total account balance for the year ending August 31, as well as an estimate of their retirement benefits.

Employees who plan to retire under TRS should notify their campus Principal and Cluster Superintendent as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available. Additional inquiries should be addressed 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).

Reimbursement upon Retirement: Upon retirement from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS), all employees with five or more years of service with the School and with accumulated state personal leave shall be paid one-half the wellness stipend daily rate for all state leave days accumulated in or out of the School.

Payment shall be made after 45 days from the date of retirement, as verified by TRS.

Overtime: The district compensates overtime for nonexempt (hourly and paraprofessional) employees in accordance with Federal Minimum Wage and Hour Laws. Professional and administrative employees are ineligible for overtime compensation. Nonexempt employees who work in excess of 40 hours per seven day workweek are entitled to overtime compensation at a rate equal one and a half the employee's regular hourly rate of pay. At the School's option, nonexempt employees may receive compensatory time off, rather than overtime pay, for overtime work. The employee shall be informed in advance if overtime hours will accrue compensatory time rather than pay. Employees accrue compensatory time off at a rate of one and one-half hours for each hour of employment in excess of the 40 hour in seven day work week.

Note: 7 day workweek begins 12:01am Sunday and ends at 11:59pm midnight Saturday.

The limit to accrual of compensatory time off is generally 240 hours. If an employee has a balance of more than 240 hours of overtime, the employee will be required to use compensatory time or, at the School's option, will receive overtime pay. Employees who accrue compensatory time off are entitled to payment for unused compensatory time upon termination.

Advance approval from a supervisor is required for overtime work that will result in additional compensation. Unauthorized use of compensated overtime hours may result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including termination. Exceptions are granted for advanced approval if the overtime is in support of unforeseeable or emergency circumstances and approval is obtained within one working day of the event.

Payment for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per seven day workweek is made at a rate equal to one and a half. If the scheduled seven day workweek is less than 40 hours, extra hours up to 40 are paid at the regular rate.

Health Insurance: Health insurance coverage is available to all employees. The district's contribution to employee insurance premiums is determined annually by the Board of Trustees. (Refer to Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools 2010-2011 Benefits Summary). An employee may pay to add his/her spouse, children, or family at group rates.

Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, prices, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet.

The insurance plan year is from September 1st through August 31st. New employees must complete enrollment forms within the first 30 days of employment.

Supplemental Insurance Benefits: At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for Dental, Vision, Disability, Group Life, and Accidental Death and Dismemberment. Premiums for these programs cannot be paid by payroll deduction. Employees have to arrange their payments methods and frequencies on their own (ach debit from a personal checking account, online bill pay, check etc.) Employees should contact the Principal for more information.

Employment after Retirement

Individuals receiving retirement benefits from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be employed in part-time positions without affecting their benefits. The amount of time a retiree may be employed without losing benefits is governed by TRS rules and laws. Service retirees who retire before May 31 may begin working in a Texas public school one full calendar month after the retirement date under strict conditions. Retirees may work in the following capacities:

As a substitute at no more than the daily substitute pay rate. (Individuals receiving disability retirement benefits may not work for more than 90 days in a school year.)

On a half-time or less basis during any month, provided they are not also employed as a substitute in that month. One half-time employment cannot exceed the 50 percent of the position's full-time load or 92 hours in a month.

On a full-time basis during a six-month period during a school year, provided that this is their only employment in a Texas public school. Individuals who retire in August may begin employment in October of the school year following their retirement.

Under this last provision, retirees must submit annual written notice to TRS by the last day of the first month of full employment to avoid a disruption of benefits. Working any part of a month counts as a full month.

Other restrictions apply when a person has retired because of a disability. Individuals retiring because of a disability should contact TRS for details about employment restrictions.

Certain retirees may return to teaching on a full-time basis in acute shortage areas without a reduction in their annuities. To be eligible for full TRS benefits without a reduction while being employed as a classroom teacher in a designated acute shortage area, a retiree must meet the following criteria:

Be a classroom teacher

Have not been subject to a reduction in benefit for retirement at an early age

Have a 12-month continuous break in public school service since retirement

Be certified to teach in the TEA-approved acute shortage areas for the applicable school year

Employees can contact TRS by calling 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. TRS information is also available on the Web (www.trs.state.tx.us).

Employee Leave

Leaves and Absences:

Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools do not participate in State Personal Leave Program; therefore employee's accumulated state personal leave days from other Texas School Districts cannot be transferred in or out.

Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools offer employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need.

Employees who take 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 will be paid by the district as they were when they were working. Otherwise, the district does not make benefit contributions for employees who are not on active payroll status.

Employees must follow the district and campus procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete appropriate leave request form. Any employee who is absent more than two (2) consecutive days because of a personal or family illness must submit a medical certification form from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, the reason for the illness, and in the case of personal illness, the employee's fitness to return to work. Medical certification shall be made by a health care provider as defined by the Family and Medical Leave Act. Upon request for family and medical leave for the employee's serious health condition or that of a spouse, parent, or child, and at 30-day intervals thereafter, the employee shall provide medical certification of the illness or disability.

Local Leave:

The district only grants five (5) local leave days annually to all school employees. The district does not grant any other leave days other than local leave.

Local leave is earned at a rate of one-half a workday for each eighteen (18) workdays of employment. A day of earned local day is equivalent to an assigned workday.

Local leave is earned on an accrual basis. Leave is available for the employee's use as anticipated and unanticipated leave. If an employee leaves the district before the end of the work year, the cost of any unearned leave days taken shall be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

There are two types of local leave anticipated and unanticipated:

Anticipated: Leave that is taken at an employee's discretion and that can be scheduled in advance is considered anticipated leave.

Unanticipated: Leave that is taken for personal and family illness, emergency, a death in the family, or active military service is considered unanticipated leave. This type of leave allows very little or no advance planning.

An employee wishing to take anticipated local leave must submit a written notice of the request (5) days in advance of the anticipated absence to his or her principal or supervisor. The reasons for which local leave may be used shall not be limited by the School. In deciding to approve anticipated local leave, however, the Principal/Director shall consider the effect of the employee's absence on the educational program, as well as the availability of substitutes. Anticipated local leave will be granted on a first-come first-served basis.

Anticipated local leave may not be taken for more than three consecutive days, except in extenuating circumstances as determined by the Cluster Superintendent or Principal.

Anticipated local leave shall not be allowed in the following circumstances except in extenuating circumstances as determined by the Cluster Superintendent or Principal:

The day before a school holiday.

The day after a school holiday.

Days scheduled for end-of-semester or end-of-year exams.

Days scheduled for TAKS tests.

District norm-reference testing days.

Professional or staff development days.

Leave Charts:

The following charts are used to calculate Local Leave for employees who work 100% of the day.

No. Days Employed/Worked	Days Earned (Up to max 5 days)
0-17	0.0
18-35	0.5
36-59	1.0
54-71	1.5
72-89	2.0
90-107	2.5
108-125	3.0
126-143	3.5
144-161	4.0
162-179	4.5
180+	5.0

Posting of Employee Leave:

Leave records for all personnel are posted in eight total periods using the method shown below:

Leave used by personnel working 8 periods/hours a day:

- 4 periods/hours - 1/2 day
- 8 periods/hours – 1 day
- More than 4 periods/hours – (1 day/8) * periods used
- Less than 4 periods/hours – (1 day/8) * periods used

Leave Options for Absences of Less than One-half Day: (Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Employees Only)

Options listed below require the approval of the supervisor:

Employee may “make-up” the time off during the same work week with supervisor’s permission.

Employee may choose, with supervisor approval, to be paid only for hours actually worked, i.e. docked for time of absence.

Family and Medical Leave: Employees who have been employed by any SST district for at least 12 months, and have worked at least 1,250 hours in the 12 months immediately preceding the need for leave are eligible for family and medical leave. Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave each year between August 1st and May 31st 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

Eligible employees who are family members of covered service members will be able to take up to 26 workweeks of leave in a "single 12-month period" to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of duty on active duty.

Eligible employees with a covered military member serving in the National Guard or Reserves may also use FMLA leave for "any qualifying exigency" arising out of the fact that a covered military member is on active duty or called to active duty status in support of a contingency operation. "Qualifying exigencies" include (1) short-notice deployment; (2) military events and related activities; (3) childcare and school activities; (4) financial and legal arrangements; (5) counseling; (6) rest and recuperation; (7) post-deployment activities; and (8) additional activities not encompassed in the other categories, but agreed to by the employer and employee.

Although FMLA leave is generally unpaid, the School provides up to thirty (30) days (6 calendar weeks "1" before and "5" weeks after {1+5}) or "0" before and "6" weeks after {0+6}) of paid maternity leave for the birth of an eligible employee's child, if the employee is the primary caregiver of the child during the planned period of absence. Employees should inform the Principal immediately if they have been placed to bed rest by their health care provider during pregnancy.

A husband and wife who are both employed by the School are subject to limits in the amount of leave that they can take to care for a parent with a serious health condition or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child.

Eligible employees are entitled to continue their health care benefits under the same terms and conditions as when they were on the job and are entitled to return to their previous job or an equivalent job at the end of their leave. Under some circumstances, teachers who are able to return to work at or near the conclusion of a semester may be required to continue their leave until the end of the semester.

Family and medical leave runs concurrently with accrued sick and personal leave, temporary disability leave, and absences due to a work-related illness or injury. The School will designate the leave as family and medical leave, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently.

In some circumstances, employees may take family and medical leave in blocks of time or by reducing their normal weekly or daily work schedule. Intermittent leave may be taken under the following circumstances:

An employee is needed to care for a seriously ill spouse, child, or parent

An employee requires medical treatment for a serious illness

An employee is seriously ill and unable to work

An employee becomes a parent or has a foster child placed in his or her home

When the need for family and medical leave is foreseeable, employees who want to use it must provide 30-day advance notice of their need. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must contact their supervisor as soon as possible.

Employees may be required to provide the following:

- Medical certification should be provided from a qualified health care provider supporting the need for leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or an immediate family member.
- Second or third medical opinions and periodic recertification of the need for leave
- Periodic reports during the leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work
- Medical certification from a qualified health care provider at the conclusion of leave of an employee's ability to return to work

Employees requiring family and medical leave should contact the Principal for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

Extended Sick Leave: An employee who has exhausted earned leave benefits shall be permitted up to 20 calendar days of extended sick leave to be used only for the employee's personal illness or disability, including pregnancy-related disability. The substitute's daily rate shall be deducted from the employee's pay during this time whether or not a substitute is employed.

Extended sick leave is to be used for single, long-term illnesses or conditions. Single is defined as one illness or condition; long-term is defined as an absence of ten or more consecutive days. An employee is eligible for extended sick leave every three years. To be eligible for extended sick leave, an employee must have worked for any SST District for one full school year.

Medical certification from the employee's doctor must accompany the extended sick leave request.

Emergency Leave:

Employees may be granted two local days of emergency leave without loss of pay or accumulated local leave for destruction of their home or domicile, and furniture, and fixtures by flood, fire, or storm. Such leave is subject to the approval of the School Principal or Cluster Superintendent or designee. Any other leaves granted or days of absence must result in a deduction of the daily rate of pay for each day of absence, unless otherwise provided.

Bereavement (Funeral):

Death in the immediate family: The term 'immediate family' is defined as spouse, son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son –or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis, parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee, sibling, stepsibling, sibling-in-law, grandparent, and grandchild, any person who may be residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death. Not more than 5 (five) paid local leave days will be used for this purpose in any one school year unless approved by the School Principal or Cluster Superintendent or designee.

Temporary Disability: 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 nature. A full-time educator may request to be placed on temporary disability leave or be placed on leave. Pregnancy and conditions related to pregnancy are treated as any other temporary disability.

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 approved, the maximum length of leave is no longer than 180 calendar days. 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, their supervisor and the business office 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 to the school to which they were previously assigned as soon as an 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.

Medical Release: The employee's request for reinstatement shall be accompanied by medical certification of the employee's ability to perform essential job functions.

Jury Duty/Other Court Appearances: Employees will receive leave with pay and without loss of accumulated leave for jury duty. Employees must present documentation of the service.

Employees will be granted paid leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding. Absences for court appearances related to an employee's personal business must be taken as local leave or leave without pay (if no local leave is available). Employees may be required to submit documentation of their need for leave for court appearances.

Substitute Teacher's Pay: Substitute teachers/aides should have prior authorization and training from the Principal/Director before being used on the campus level. Substitute's paperwork must be processed by the Principal through the business office in order to be paid. Teachers are not permitted to employ a substitute without the proper authorization and going through the proper procedures. The daily Substitute rate for Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools for 2010 – 2011 School year is between \$80.00 and \$100.00.

Leaving School during School Hours

All staff members should obtain authorization from the Principal when leaving assigned school campuses during work hours. This procedure will prevent many misunderstandings, etc., as well as protect the professional employee.

Discipline and Termination

Absent a written employment contract, employment with the School is terminable at will, meaning that the employment relationship can be terminated by either the employee or the School at any time, with or without notice and with or without cause. The at-will nature of an individual's employment with the School may not be modified except by a written document approved by the School's Principal/Director. Any express or implied agreements or assurances concerning the terms, conditions, or duration of an individual's employment with the School are not binding upon the School unless they are in writing, approved by the Principal/Director. Nothing in this Staff Handbook is intended to modify the at-will employment status of any employees.

With the exception of substitute employees and temporary employees (one year or less), these policies apply to all employees of the School, including certified, classified, and administrative personnel, and apply to all job-related activities of such employees.

Bases for Disciplinary Action: The following acts or omissions, among others which evidence unfitness to perform duties, by an employee in the scope of employment are prohibited and shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action:

Insubordination, including the willful refusal of an employee to perform an assignment or to comply with a directive given by the employee's supervisor.

Unprofessional job-related conduct.

Incompetence or inefficiency in the performance of duties.

Corporal punishment of students.

Improper conduct toward students and other employees.

Conduct in violation of any School policy or established expectation of performance.

Conviction of a felony related to the employee's employment, or which seriously impairs the employee's ability to perform his or her assigned duties.

Serious misconduct related to the employee's job.

Abuse of the School's sick leave policy.

Excessive tardiness.

Excessive absenteeism.

Unexcused absences from work.

Gross negligence or gross carelessness in the performance of duties.

Use of School policy or property for personal gain.

Negligent or willful damage to School property.

Gross waste of School supplies or equipment.

Dishonesty or falsification of any information involving the School, including grades, credits, data on forms, employee records, or any other information involving the School.

Possession of alcohol or other intoxicants or illegal narcotics, or other controlled substances without prescription on school property or at any school function.

The use of or being under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicants or illegal narcotics, or other controlled substances without prescription on school property or at any school function.

Deliberate conduct which has the apparent purpose of exposing the School to censure, ridicule, or reproach (this prohibition is not intended to deprive employees of any free speech rights guaranteed by the United States or Texas Constitutions).

Verbal and/or physical fighting on school premises or at any school related activities.

Falsification of records or data with intent to defraud.

Sexual misconduct which deviates from the ordinary standards of morality prevalent in the area served by the School.

Persons Authorized to Initiate and Carry Out Disciplinary Actions:

Verbal and written warnings may be issued by the Board of Trustees, Cluster Superintendent, Principal/Director, supervisor, administrator, or other supervisory personnel relative to employees under their jurisdiction.

Suspensions with and without pay, final warnings, probation, and dismissal may be administered only by the Principal/Director and the Board of Trustees.

Suspension With or Without Pay. An employee may be suspended with or without pay as a disciplinary technique short of termination. The length of the suspension will depend on the severity of the employee's

misconduct. An employee may be suspended with or without pay for other reasons as well, such as during an investigation and prior to the finalization of a termination.

Termination of Employment

Resignation

Employees who resign from the School should give at least two weeks' notice. The letter of resignation should state fully the reason(s) for leaving and should be turned in to the employee's supervisor.

Resigning employees will be given their final paychecks no later than the next regularly scheduled payday if the resignation date is prior to the 3rd Saturday of the current month. Final paychecks will be given next month if the resignation date is after the 3rd Saturday of the current month. All applicable mandatory and optional, authorized deductions will be made from the employee's last paycheck. The School reserves the right to pay the resigning employee for the notice period and accept the resignation immediately.

Dismissal of Employees

Unless otherwise provided in a written employment contract with an employee, 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 district to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, religion, sex, national origin, disability, military status, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The dismissed employee must follow the district process outlined in this handbook when pursuing the grievance. (See Complaints and Grievances section).

Complaints

The School encourages employees to discuss their concerns and complaints through informal conferences with their supervisor. School supervisors will try to reach a quick and fair solution. Concerns should be expressed as soon as possible to allow early resolution at the lowest possible administrative level.

If an informal conference regarding a complaint fails to reach the outcome requested by the employee, he or she may file a formal grievance as described below. The process described in this section shall not be construed to create new or additional rights beyond those granted by law or School policy, nor to require a full evidentiary hearing or “mini-trial” at any level.

Whistleblower complaints shall be filed within the time specified by law and may be made to the Cluster Superintendent or designee beginning at Level Two. Time lines for the employee and the School set out in this policy may be shortened to allow the Board to make a final decision within 60 calendar days of the initiation of the complaint.

Procedural rules: Grievance forms and appeal notices may be filed by hand-delivery, fax, or U.S. Mail. Hand-delivered filings shall be timely filed if received by the appropriate administrator or designee by the close of business on the deadline. Fax filings shall be timely filed if they are received on or before the deadline, as indicated by the date/time shown on the fax copy. Mail filings 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.

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

“Days” shall mean School business days, unless otherwise noted. In calculating time lines under this policy, the day a document is filed is “day zero.” The following business day is “day one.” If a deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline shall be extended to the following School business day.

An employee may designate a representative through written notice to the School at any level of this process. If the employee designates a representative with fewer than three days’ notice to the School before a

scheduled meeting, the School may reschedule the meeting to a later date, if desired, in order to include the School's counsel. The School may be represented by counsel at any level of the process.

All time limits 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, on written notice to the employee, at any point during the complaint process. The employee may appeal the dismissal by seeking review in writing within ten days from the date of the written dismissal notice, starting at the level at which the complaint was dismissed. Such appeal shall be limited to the issue of timeliness.

Level One. Complaint forms must be filed within fifteen (15) days of the date the employee first knew, or with reasonable diligence should have known, of the decision or action giving rise to the complaint or grievance. The grievance shall be initiated by filing the Level One complaint with the employee's immediate supervisor. The School reserves the right, upon review of the grievance, to require the grievant to begin the grievance process at Level Two, or to assign a different administrator to hear the grievance at Level One.

The employee's supervisor shall serve as the Level One Hearing Officer (unless decided otherwise by the School), and shall investigate the complaint as necessary. The Hearing Officer will then hold a meeting with the employee within ten days after receipt of the written complaint. The Hearing Officer may set reasonable time limits for the conference.

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

Level Two: If the employee is not satisfied with the Level One decision, or if the time for a response has expired, the employee may file in writing, on a form provided by the School, a Level Two appeal 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.) The appeal shall be filed with the Level One Hearing Officer, who shall immediately forward the appeal and any record created at the Level One Hearing to the Campus Principal, who shall serve as the Level Two Appellate Officer. The School reserves the right to assign a different administrator to hear the grievance at Level Two. The employee may request a copy of the Level One record.

The Appellate Officer shall hold a meeting within ten days after the appeal notice is filed. The Appellate Officer may set reasonable time limits for the meeting. The Appellate Officer shall provide the employee a written response within ten days following the meeting. The written response shall set forth the basis of the decision. In reaching a decision, the Appellate Officer may consider the Level One record, information

provided at the Level Two meeting, and any other relevant documents or information the Appellate Officer believes will help resolve the complaint.

Recordings of the Level One and Level Two meetings, if any, shall be maintained with the Level One and Level Two records.

Level Three: If the employee is not satisfied with the Level Two decision, or if the time for a response has expired, the employee may appeal the decision to the Board. The appeal notice must be filed in writing, on a form provided by the School, 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 appeal shall be filed with the Level Two Appellate Officer. The Level Two Appellate Officer shall inform the employee of the date, time, and place of the Board meeting at which the complaint will be on the agenda for presentation to the Board. The Level Two Appellate Officer shall provide the Board the record of the Level Two complaint. The employee may request a copy of the Level Two record.

If at the Level Three hearing the administration intends to rely on evidence not included in the Level Two record, the administration shall provide the employee notice of the nature of the evidence at least three days before the hearing.

The School shall determine whether the complaint will be presented in open or closed meeting in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act and other applicable law.

The presiding officer may set reasonable time limits and guidelines for the presentation including an opportunity for the employee and administration to each make a presentation and provide rebuttal and an opportunity for questioning by the Board. The Board shall hear the complaint and may request that the administration provide an explanation for the decisions at the preceding levels. In addition to any other record of the Board meeting required by law, the Board shall prepare a separate record of the Level Three presentation. The Level Three presentation, including the presentation by the employee or the employee's representative, any presentation from the administration, and questions from the Board with responses, shall be recorded by audio recording, video/audio recording, or court reporter.

The Board shall then consider the complaint. It may give notice of its decision orally or in writing at any time up to and including the next regularly scheduled Board 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.

Prohibition on Retaliation. Neither the Board nor any School employee shall unlawfully retaliate against an employee for bringing a concern or complaint.

Health Services

School Health Services supplement the efforts of parents and personal health care providers to promote, improve, and maintain the health and well-being of students. The School provides care for pupils who become ill or injured while at school and assist with the health policies of Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools. School Health Services are not intended to replace outside health care and should not be viewed as an alternative to seeking medical attention outside of the school.

Teachers should be alert for signs of illness in their students and report such signs immediately to the school nurse and / or Principal/Director. Admission of children back into school following a communicable disease shall be based on the recommendations from TEA Communicable Disease Guidelines for Schools.

The following procedure should be followed in case of serious accidents, injuries, or sudden illness:

Accidents, Injuries, or Sudden Illness: The following procedures should be followed in case of serious accidents, injuries, or sudden illness:

Administer first aid.

Notify parents.

Call school nurse or family doctor if unable to locate parents or others listed in contact information.

If indicated, call an ambulance to transport to the emergency room of local hospital. The School does not assume the responsibility for the payment of ambulance, hospital, or doctor's fees.

Complete an incident form.

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 school nurse for information on procedures that must be followed when administering medication to students.

Lesson Plans

The lesson plan is the basic teaching tool. It is valuable to the teacher because it tells where the learners are going, how they will get there, and when they will arrive.

All teachers are expected to write lesson plans. Lesson plans shall be made available to the supervisor upon request.

Procedure:

1. Overall yearly plan: Provides an overview of the course in harmony with the School Curriculum. It indicates the units to be taught and the time devoted.
2. The daily lesson plan: A written account of what a teacher would like to have happen during a certain lesson or class period. It should contain the concept or objective, the time block, the procedure and the instructional materials needed.
3. Substitute teacher plan: Lesson plans for substitute teachers should be carefully planned and written in detail. Detailed plans give the substitute teacher a feeling of confidence and security. The lesson plans should be placed on the teacher's desk in plain view.
4. Teachers should follow the lesson plan submission format requested by their campus administrator and/or central office curriculum personnel.
5. The degree to which a teacher needs to engage in detailed lesson planning will depend upon the teacher's knowledge of the subject matter and the familiarity with course objectives. The first year teacher must realize that as a general rule, it will be necessary to plan in considerable more detail than the teacher with more experience and training.
6. Depending on the grade level and subject matter, teachers may be required to follow curriculum designated by campus administration and/or by the central office curriculum personnel. The plan should be practical and usable, be economical in terms of teacher time, and strengthen the educational program.

Important Parts of a Lesson Plan:

1. Concept or objectives to be taught (tells the student what they will learn).
2. Time block (approximate time you expect to devote to lesson).
3. Procedure to be used (design for instruction).
4. Materials needed (student/teacher).
5. Questions (to check student understanding).
6. Independent practice (student time on task).
7. Evaluation (student understanding & application).

Grading Policy

Rubrics

It is strongly recommended that students should be informed how they will be assessed on assignments.

Recording Grades

All grades should be recorded in the school database. In the case of K-1st grades, teachers should keep adequate anecdotal records to justify each student assessment.

Grades should be recorded no later than a week after the due date for all homework and other assignments.

Peer Grading

Peer grading is acceptable, however students should not be allowed to write or issue a grade on any assignment.

Students shall not average the grades of their peers, nor should they be allowed to view the final averages of peers.

Conduct

Conduct issues should be designated and communicated by the student's conduct grade.

At no time shall a conduct infraction be used to affect the student's academic grade.

Extra Credit

All extra credit is to be academic.

Extra credit awarded will not account for more than 5% of the reporting period.

Zero Policy

Teachers have the discretion of entering another number instead of a zero if an assignment is not turned in.

Parents/guardians should be notified about the missing assignment.

Grade Level Meetings

During grade level meetings, it is strongly recommended that teachers discuss how much homework they are giving each week in order to avoid student overload.

Weight of Grades

All departments may determine the weight of grades for their department.

Grades K-5 Weight of Grades

K-5 Weight of grades for core academic subjects:

Daily grades – 75%

Major/Assessments – 20%

Homework – 5%

Daily grades include class participation, class work, quizzes, and class assignments.

The above weighting is strongly suggested, but teachers may work with department chairs and administrators to create an alternative system.

K-5 Number of Grades

A minimum of twelve grades should be given in each core academic area per reporting period. Three to five grades per week is the best range.

All teachers are encouraged to have a sufficient number of grades to allow multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery of the TEKS.

K-5 Homework

Homework may be checked for completion or for accuracy.

Homework should count for no more than 5% of the overall six-week grade.

Failure for a six week period should not result based on failure to complete/turn-in homework.

K-5 Maximum Weight of Grades

Maximum weight of grades: When calculating a six-week average, no single assignment/assessment grade may count more than 20% of the total average regardless of the grade category.

Some major projects may comprise more than one assignment.

Grades 6-12 Weight of Grades

Weight of grades for core academic subjects:

Homework/Class Work:	20%
Tests:	30%
Projects:	20%
Quizzes:	10%
Warm-up Activities/Journals/In Class Work:	10%
Participation:	10%

The above weighting is strongly suggested, but teachers may work with department chairs and administrators to create an alternative system.

6-12 Numbers of Grades

A minimum of two grades per week should be given. Three to five grades per week is the best range.

6-12 Maximum Weight of Grades

Maximum weight of grades: When calculating a six-week average, it is strongly recommended no single assignment/assessment grade may count more than 20% of the total average regardless of the grade category.

Parental Notification

Teachers should regularly contact parents / guardians to discuss failing students.

Tutorials

Tutorials should be offered, both to students who request assistance, and to students performing below expectations.

Extra Duties

Each campus has extra duties which must be performed in order to ensure the proper supervision of students outside the classroom. Professional and paraprofessional staff members are expected to assume and perform these responsibilities in a professional manner.

Tutorials: Each professional staff member shall assume responsibility for providing tutorial services to students in his/her classes. Students who are failing or in danger of failing shall be given priority regarding tutorial services. It is the responsibility of the staff member to notify parent(s)/guardian(s) when a student is in need of tutorial assistance. A student whose grade in a subject for a grade reporting period is lower than 70 on a scale of 100 is required to attend any tutorials. Texas Education Code § 29.084.

School Activities

Staff members should attend and participate in as many school activities as possible. A teacher's presence projects support and interest to the students, the school, and the community.

Many staff members will be involved in school related organizations, clubs, etc. No activities may be scheduled by school personnel the night before TAKS.

Staff members should receive permission from Principal regarding the use of school facilities for meetings, etc.

Extracurricular Vehicle Trips: Staff members should initiate with the principal, requests for field trips and excursions. The principal, in turn, may approve or disapprove the request.

Student Attendance

Punctual and regular school attendance is expected. Excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness shall be reported by the teacher to the principal as this problem may not be recognized in the school's office. A student is to be readmitted to class following an absence only after receiving an admission slip from the office. The absence shall be recorded in the teacher(s) grade book. No student should ever be excused from a class or school unless authorized by the principal or his/her designee.

A student shall not be given credit for a class if he or she has been in attendance less than 95 percent of the days the class is offered, unless an attendance committee established according to school policy gives credit because there were extenuating circumstances for the absences. The school shall establish guidelines for determining what constitutes extenuating circumstances and shall establish alternative ways for students to make up work or regain credit lost because of absences for extenuating circumstances.

Bad Weather Make-up

The School may close because of bad weather or emergency conditions. When such conditions exist, the superintendent and principals will make the official decision concerning the closing of The School.

Building Use

The campus principal and superintendent are responsible for scheduling the use of facilities after school hours. Contact the campus principal to request to use school facilities and to obtain information on the fees charged.

Technology Use and Data Management

The School's electronic communication system, including its network access to the Internet, is primarily for administrative and instructional purposes. Limited personal use of the system is permitted if the use:

Imposes no tangible cost to the district

Does not unduly burden the district's computer or network resources

Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student's academic performance

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of the electronic communications systems are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use. All computers used by the School employees are the property of the school, and any and all data stored on those computers likewise becomes the property of the school. The School reserves the right to review all data stored on school computers or software loaded on school computers – including any data showing Internet use – to ensure that school technology is being used for appropriate purposes.

Employees and students who are authorized to use the systems are required to abide by the provisions of the district's communications system policy and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact the district technology director.

Online System Utilization: The School employees use several online systems and forms to accomplish many of their daily tasks. It is the responsibility of each staff member to be aware of these systems, understand their use, and utilize them when appropriate. The list of online systems we employ increase often and currently includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: e-mail, schedules, conferences, substitute request forms, and absence from duty forms.

Telephone Usage at the School: Professional staff members are expected to use reasonable judgment regarding the use of the school phone. When there is an emergency call for a teacher, the teacher will be called to the phone immediately; otherwise, the party will be requested to give a return number and advised that the teacher will return the call. The school phone is for school use only; its use for personal business matters is discouraged.

If a personal long distance call must be made on a school phone, the staff member should charge the call to his/her home number. The Business Office will not honor calls unless authorized and approved by the Principal as school related business. Utilization of cell phones and a regular phone for personal use must not occur during student instructional time and/or assigned duty time with students.

Copyrighted Materials

Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of copyright law relating to the unauthorized use, reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data, web material, and programs, etc.). Rented videotapes are to be used in the classroom for educational purposes only. Duplication or back-ups of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

Criminal History Record Information

The School is authorized by state law to obtain criminal history record information on applicants the School intends to employ (Texas Education Code §22.083). Additionally, the School obtains a report on each employee annually.

The School shall submit to the Texas Education Agency (“TEA”) the name of any person that is employed by the School or that is being considered for a position with the School as a teacher, librarian, educational aide, administrator, or counselor, so that TEA may review the national criminal history record information (“NCHRI”) of the applicant. The School and the applicant shall cooperate in providing to TEA whatever information TEA requires to perform a NCHRI review, which may include fingerprints and/or photographs.

For employees and/or applicants not subject to the NCHRI review described above, the School shall obtain criminal history record information (“CHRI”) from the Department of Public Safety (“DPS”). The employee and/or applicant shall cooperate in providing to the School whatever information needs to be submitted to DPS to perform a CHRI review, which may include fingerprints and/or photographs. The School shall subscribe to the criminal history record information of that employee or applicant. All fees related to obtaining the criminal history record information shall be paid by the employee or applicant. The School shall also provide the name of any employee or applicant to whom this paragraph applies to TEA, which shall perform its own CHRI review of the employee or applicant. TEA shall examine the CHRI of the person and notify the School if the person may not be hired or must be discharged under Texas Education Code § 22.085 (see below).

Student Teachers and Volunteers: This paragraph applies to any person participating in an internship consisting of student teaching to receive a teaching certificate, and any person who either volunteers at, or has indicated in writing an intention to volunteer at, the School, with the exception that it does not apply to volunteers who are parents, grandparents, or guardians or a child at the School; volunteers who are accompanied by an School employee while on school campus; or persons who only volunteer for a single event. The School shall obtain from DPS the CHRI of all persons to whom this paragraph applies. To assist in obtaining this information, the student teacher and/or volunteer must provide the School with a driver’s

license or another form of identification containing the person's photograph issued by an entity of the United States government. Any costs related to obtaining this information shall be paid by the student teacher or the volunteer. A person may not serve as a student teacher or a volunteer until that person's CHRI has been obtained.

Substitute Teachers. This paragraph applies to a person who is a substitute teacher for the School. The School shall send or ensure that a substitute teacher sends to DPS information required for obtaining NCHRI, which may include fingerprints and photographs. The School shall also provide TEA with the names of any substitute teachers. TEA shall examine the CHRI of the person and notify the School if the person may not be hired or must be discharged as provided by Texas Education Code § 22.085.

Conditional Employment. For all of the foregoing categories of employees (other than student teachers and volunteers), the person may begin employment after the required information is submitted, but that employment is conditional upon the review of that person's NCHRI/CHRI by TEA and must be terminated if TEA makes a determination that the employee or applicant is ineligible for employment.

Termination or Refusal to Hire. The School shall discharge or refuse to hire an employee or applicant for employment if the School obtains information through a CHRI review (or otherwise) that:

1. The employee or applicant has been convicted of:
 - a. A felony under Penal Code Title 5;
 - b. An offense requiring registration as a sex offender under Code of Criminal Procedure Chapter 62; or
 - c. An offense under the laws of another state or federal law that is equivalent to an offense under paragraphs a or b; and
2. At the time the offense occurred, the victim of the offense was under 18 years of age or was enrolled in a public school.

However, the School is not required to discharge or refuse to hire an employee or applicant if the person committed an offense under Title 5, Penal Code and

1. The date of the offense is more than 30 years before:
 - a. June 15, 2007, in the case of a person employed by the School as of that date; or
 - b. The date the person's employment will begin, in the case of a person applying for employment with the School after June 15, 2007; and
2. The employee or applicant for employment satisfied all terms of the court order entered on conviction.

The School may also not employ applicants who have been convicted of certain other crimes (see Section "Termination or Refusal to Hire", above).

Confidentiality of Information. NCHRI/CHRI obtained from DPS may not be released or disclosed to any person except the individual who is the subject of the information, TEA, or SBEC. It is an offense to knowingly or intentionally: (1) disclose NCHRI/CHRI to a person who is not entitled to the information; or (2) provide a copy of an individual's NCHRI/CHRI to the individual or any other person.

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

Dishonesty

Fraud

Deceit

Theft

Misrepresentation

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

Dietary Supplements

Texas Education Code, Section 38.001, prohibits employees from knowingly selling, marketing, or distributing a dietary supplement that contains performance-enhancing compounds to students. In addition, it also prohibits school employees from endorsing or suggesting the ingestion, intranasal application, or inhalation of a performance-enhancing dietary supplement to any student.

Emergencies

All employees should be familiar with the evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas. Fire, tornado, and other emergency drills will be conducted to familiarize employees and students with evacuation procedures. Fire extinguishers are located throughout all district buildings. Employees should know the location of the extinguishers nearest their place of work and how to use them.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g (FERPA) is the federal law that sets forth basic privacy requirements for personally identifiable information contained in educational records maintained by schools. Only school employees with an 'educational need to know' are allowed to access an individual student's records; disclosing such information to persons other than the parent(s) or another school employee with a legitimate education interest is a violation of this act.

Instructional Supplies

Staff members should initiate requests for supplies through the Principal's office. The school district will assume no fiscal responsibility for merchandise or services purchased without a purchase order issued through proper channels.

Name and Address Change

It is important that employment records be kept up-to-date. Employees should notify the Principal/Director if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, home telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. Forms to process a change in personal information can be obtained from the Principal/Director.

Outside Employment and Tutoring

Employees who wish to accept outside employment or engage in other activities for profit must submit a written request to the Principal. Approval for outside employment will be determined by the Principal and Cluster Superintendent and based on whether outside employment interferes with the duties of the regular assignment. Teachers are not allowed to privately tutor students of the campus for pay, except during the summer months and not on school property.

Parent/Guardian Communications

Instructional and administrative staff members are expected to notify a parent or guardian when, in his/her opinion, the student is performing or beginning to perform failing academic work or the student is displaying or beginning to display improper school conduct (poor attitude or classroom behavior, poor attendance, excessive tardiness, etc.) which could possibly lead to academic failure and/or serious disciplinary actions.

It is recommended that when communicating with parents/guardians, teachers avoid sending information about grades, descriptions of discipline issues, or any other sensitive matters via e-mail. The teacher may send a request for a phone conference or meeting via e-mail, with a brief and appropriate description of the issue.

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, 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. Once all administrative complaint procedures are exhausted, parents and students can bring complaints to the Board of Trustees.

Upon hearing of parent and student complaints, teachers should notify administration. Unless given specific instruction by administration, a teacher shall not issue written communication to resolve a dispute. In all cases, any such written communication should be approved by administration.

Possession of Firearms and Weapons

Employees, visitors, and students are prohibited from bringing firearms, illegal knives, or other weapons onto school premises or any grounds or buildings where a school-sponsored activity takes place. For the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisors immediately.

Professional Staff Accountability

Teachers

Each teacher is a professional educator and is responsible for the classroom instruction using the established curriculum, time allotments, and educational resources and, therefore, for the learning of each student in the class. It is expected that each teacher will fully utilize all instructional resources, including time, and that students will receive professional supervision when in the charge of the teacher. Each teacher may receive unscheduled walk-throughs during the school year by campus administrators.

Principals/Assistant Principals

The principal and assistant principal are professional educators and are responsible for teachers carrying out classroom instruction using the established curriculum, time allotments, and educational resources and, therefore, for the learning of each student. It is expected that each administrator see that all instructional resources, including time, are fully utilized, and that students will receive professionally adequate or acceptable supervision when in the charge of the teacher and while at school (breakfast, lunch, before/after school).

Other Professional Staff

Other professional staff includes the director of technology, director of special programs, youth officer, librarians, counselors, and nurses. Their responsibilities shall include planning, implementing, and evaluating respective assigned programs; complying with all district and/or campus routines and regulations; communicating effectively with colleagues, students, and parents; and compiling, maintaining, and filing all reports, records, and other required documents.

Director of Curriculum & Instruction

The curriculum and instruction director is a professional educator and is responsible for evaluating and providing leadership for the overall instructional program of the district, which includes curriculum and staff development. Responsibilities include planning, implementing, and evaluating instructional programs with teachers and principals, including learning objectives, instructional strategies, improving the public relations program as it relates to personnel and instructional services, assessment techniques; and facilitating the effective use of computers and other technology in instruction programs district-wide.

Director of Finance & Operations

The director of finance and operations is a professional and shall be of administrative assistance to the Superintendent and shall assume responsibility for the operations of the district in the absence of the Superintendent. Responsibilities shall include implementing organizational and management plans, improving the public relations program as it relates to finances, assisting other administrators, providing direction and plans for maintenance and repair of school facilities and equipment, purchasing of supplies and equipment, preparing bid specifications, assisting with preparation of campus and district budgets, providing direction for the business affairs, maintaining all insurance policies, assisting in complying with all state and federal mandates, and using effective management practices.

Director of Special Programs

The director of special programs is a professional educator and is responsible for evaluating and providing leadership for the overall special programs of the district, which includes, Title I, Gifted and Talented, Special Education, Vocational Education, English as a Second Language, Dyslexia, Migrant, and Section 504 Programs. Responsibilities include planning, implementing, and evaluating special programs with teachers and principals, including learning objectives, improving the public relations program as it relates to personnel and special programs services, assessment techniques, and facilitating the effective use of computers and other technology in special programs district-wide.

Director of Technology

The director of technology is professionally trained, licensed, and certified in the field of technology, and is responsible for providing leadership and evaluation for the overall technology program for the school district. Responsibilities include planning, implementing, and evaluating technology applications with teachers and principals, including learning objectives, assessment techniques, and facilitating the effective use of computers and other technology in technology programs district-wide.

Cluster Superintendent

The Cluster Superintendent is acting Assistant Superintendent who informs the Superintendent of Schools about issues, needs, and operations of the charter. Ensures that schools are getting top-quality service from all Central Office departments (recruitment, budget/finance, operations, curriculum, legal, IT) and understands the concerns and constraints of both the schools and Central office staff in order to facilitate good working relationships. Responsibilities include incorporating procedures and regulations to manage charter operations and applying policies adopted by the board. Following up on if all essential documents are compiled as requested by the Superintendent of Schools, the board, the Texas Education Agency, and other federal and state agencies and any records subpoenaed by a court of law. The Cluster Superintendent serves as the point person/liaison between Central staff and the schools.

Superintendent

The Superintendent is the educational leader and chief executive officer of the district and responsible for the effective execution of policies adopted by the district's Board of Trustees. The Superintendent assumes administrative responsibility for the planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of the education programs, services, and facilities of the district and for the annual appraisal of district staff. The Superintendent has thorough knowledge of school law, school finance, and curriculum and instruction.

Purchasing and Reimbursements

Purchasing Procedures: All requests for purchases must be submitted to the business office on an official district purchase order (PO) form with the appropriate approval signatures. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the district can be made without a PO number. The district will not reimburse employees or assume responsibility for purchases made without authorization. Employees are not permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the district's business office. Contact the business office for additional information on purchasing procedures.

Reimbursement for Purchases, Travel, Expenses, etc.: The School will honor reimbursement requests only if the expenditure has had prior approval and requested according to established procedures. All requests of this nature must have original receipts attached. Staff members should consult with the Principal regarding matters of this nature in order to prevent misunderstandings, assumptions, etc. Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor must give approval. For approved travel, employees will be reimbursed for mileage and other travel expenditures according to the current rate schedule authorized by the Board of Trustees and the Internal Revenue Service. Employees must submit original receipts to be reimbursed for expenses other than mileage.

Staff development

Staff development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and the district. Staff development is predominantly campus-based, related to achieving campus performance objectives, and addressed in the campus improvement plan, which is approved by a campus-level advisory committee.

Professional personnel leave, for reasons other than personal/family illness or death in the immediate family, may be granted permission to be absent from work only by the Cluster Superintendent or designee. A letter requesting prior approval and stating the reasons for the absence should be given to the campus principal and forwarded to the Cluster Superintendent or Director of Curriculum/Instruction (see "Leaves and Absences"). Principals and administrators are responsible for ensuring that their assigned professional personnel are on duty during workdays and are in attendance at staff development activities.

Student Discipline

Students are expected to follow the classroom rules, campus rules, and rules listed in the Student Code of Conduct and Student Handbook. Teachers and administrators are responsible for taking disciplinary action based on a range of discipline management procedures that have been adopted by the district. Other employees that have concerns about a particular student's conduct should contact the classroom teacher or campus principal.

Teachers must file a written report with the Principal or another appropriate administrator when they have knowledge that a student has violated the Student Code of Conduct. The Principal or administrator will send a copy of this report to the student's parents within 24 hours.

Discipline should be handled by the professional staff members to the extent possible. The staff member should confer with the student, principal, and parents in all unusual problems. Cooperation and understanding between the parents and the school can often eliminate problems before they develop into unpleasant situations.

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 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) or attending an institute of postsecondary education

School officials with legitimate education interests

The student handbook provides parents and students with detailed information on student records. Parents or students who want to review student records should be directed to the campus principal for assistance.

Substitute Teachers (Responsibilities of the Regular Classroom Teacher)

1. Upon arrival the substitute will be furnished the following materials in the Substitute Teacher's Folder:
 - a. Daily plans made out in sufficient detail
 - b. Weekly and daily time schedule of classes
 - c. List of pupils' names and seating chart
 - d. Grouping chart
 - e. List of supervisory responsibilities such as days on duty at noon, recess, etc.
 - f. Fire drill and other emergency procedures
 - g. Important or unusual information about any child (physical problems, daily medications, etc.)
 - h. Name(s) of student helper(s) for each class
 - i. Classroom rules and consequences
 - j. Emergency lesson plans are available in the office and classroom; see campus administrator
2. Have on desk copies of textbooks, manuals, and workbooks being used.
3. Three emergency lesson plans are to be filed in the office by the fourth week after school starts.

Textbook Responsibilities

Professional staff members are responsible for the control and use of textbooks by students, including control of classroom sets. Textbooks should be checked regularly for covers, damages, etc. Please notify the principal when a student loses or damages a book. It is the student's responsibility to pay for the lost/damaged book. Do not issue another textbook without authorization from the principal's office.

Tobacco Use

Smoking or using tobacco products is prohibited by law on all School-owned property. This includes all buildings, playground areas, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. Drivers of district-owned vehicles are prohibited from smoking while inside the vehicle.

Workload and Work Schedules

Professional employees: Professional and administrative employees are exempt from overtime pay and are employed according to the work schedules set by the School. A school calendar is adopted each year designating the work schedule for teachers and all school holidays. Notice of work schedules, including required days of service and scheduled holidays, will be distributed each school year.

Teachers and other staff are entitled to a duty-free lunch period of at least 30 minutes. The district may require teachers to supervise students one day a week when no other personnel are available.

Paraprofessional and hourly employees: Support employees are employed at will and will be notified of the required duty days, holidays, and hours of work for their position on an annual basis. Paraprofessional and hourly employees are not exempt from overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor.

Work Hours

Professional and paraprofessional staff members generally shall adhere to the following work hour schedules:

Administrators 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Administrative Assistants 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. or 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

(8 hours a day and 1 hour lunch break)

Nurse 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. or 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

(8 hours a day and 1 hour lunch break)

Teachers 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Please note that these hours are not exclusive, but are simply the hours that an employee is expected to be at work. Employees subject to overtime are required to clock out at lunch and back in when they resume work in the afternoon.

Visitors in the Workplace

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

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Staff Handbook

(Please sign this page and return it to the Principal immediately. A copy of this acknowledgement will be retained in your personnel file.)

I have received a copy of and have read the foregoing Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools ("the School") Staff Handbook and am familiar with its terms. I understand that it is not a binding contract, but a source of information and a set of guidelines for implementation of personnel policies. I understand that Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools can unilaterally rescind, modify, or make exceptions to any of these policies, or adopt new policies, at any time. I also understand that the provisions of this Staff Handbook will control over any contrary statements, representations or assurances made by any supervisory personnel except the Principal/Director.

I expressly authorize the School to withhold funds from my final paycheck upon my resignation or dismissal for debts owed and unpaid to the School and any School equipment I fail to return.

I acknowledge that the School pays its employees in twelve equal payments during any fiscal year (September through August) and expressly authorize the School to spread my salary over the 12 monthly payments.

I understand and acknowledge that all property purchased with public funds, including, but not limited to, computers, telephone systems, furniture, and lockers, are public property held in trust by the School for the benefit of students and that I shall not have any expectation of privacy in my use of such property including, but not limited to, email communications and telephone messages.

I acknowledge that the School is subject to the Texas Public Information Act and that information contained in my personnel file may be subject to disclosure unless I request confidentiality. I elect to deny public access to _____ Home Address; _____ Home Telephone Number; _____ Information that reveals whether I have family members (check any that apply)

I have read and understood this information. I acknowledge that my employment with the School is at-will and may be terminated by myself or the School at any time for any reason or no reason, in accordance with applicable federal and state law. I acknowledge that the School may change the policies and procedures within this Staff Handbook. I acknowledge and understand the School's actions may vary from this Staff Handbook. I have been given the opportunity to ask any questions I have regarding this information.

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE

PRINTED NAME

DATE: _____

Wage Deduction Authorization

(Please sign this page and return it to the Principal immediately. A copy of this acknowledgement will be retained in your personnel file.)

I _____ understand and agree that my employer, Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools ("the School") may deduct money from my pay from time to time for reasons that fall into the following categories:

- i. My share of the premiums for the School's group medical/dental plan; any contributions I may make into a retirement or pension plan sponsored, controlled or managed by the School;
- ii. Installment payments on loans or wage advances given to me by the School, and if there is a balance remaining when I leave the School, the balance of such loans or advances;
- iii. If I receive an overpayment of wages for any reason, repayment of such overpayments to the School; (the deduction for such a repayment will equal the entire amount of the overpayment, unless the School and I agree in writing to a series of smaller deductions in specified amounts);
- iv. The cost to the School of personal long distance calls I may make on the School phones or on the School accounts, of personal faxes sent by me using the School equipment or the School accounts, or of non-work-related access to the Internet or other computer networks by me using the School equipment or the School accounts;
- v. The cost of repairing or replacing any the School supplies, materials, equipment, money or other property that I may damage (other than normal wear and tear), lose, fail to return or take without appropriate authorization from the School during my employment; (except in the case of misappropriation of money by me, I understand that no such deduction will take my pay below minimum wage, or, if I am a salaried exempt employee, reduce my salary below its predetermined amount); the cost of the School uniforms and of cleaning the uniforms;
- vi. The reasonable cost or fair value, whichever is less, of meals, lodging and other facilities furnished to me by the School in connection with my employment; and if I am a salaried exempt employee who takes a full day of personal leave at my own request, the value of such leave may be deducted in eight hour increments.
- vii. Administrative fees in connection with court-ordered garnishments or legally-required wage attachments of my pay, limited in extent to the amount or amounts allowed under applicable laws;
- viii. If I take paid vacation or sick leave in advance of the date I would normally be entitled to it and I separate from the School before accruing time to cover such advance leave, the value of such leave taken in advance that is not so covered;

I agree that Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools may deduct money from my pay under the above circumstances, or if any of the other situations occur. I further understand that the School has stated its intention to abide by all applicable Federal and Texas wage and hour laws and that if I believe that any such law has not been followed, I have the right to file a wage claim with appropriate Texas and Federal agencies.

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE

DATE: _____

Dress Code Acknowledgement

(Please sign this page and return it to the Principal immediately. A copy of this acknowledgement will be retained in your personnel file.)

I have received a copy of and have read the following Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools ("the School") Dress Code, and acknowledge that I am familiar with and will abide by it terms.

I acknowledge that faculty and staff members are expected to dress in a professional and appropriate manner. The campus principal and/or supervisor will be solely responsible for initially interpreting and enforcing the faculty/staff dress requirements; questions concerning dress requirements may be appealed as provided by Board Policy.

I acknowledge that employees are expected to keep themselves neatly groomed and dressed and will keep their hair neat and clean. Grooming and dress that will disturb, interfere with, or detract from the educational process will not be allowed. "Neatly groomed and dressed" shall be defined as dress and grooming that is standard and conforms to local community and school district etiquette and decorum. It is within these principles that Riverwalk Education Foundation, Inc. dba SST Schools will enforce the following dress code items, specifically but not limited to:

No Shorts, Wind Pants/Shorts, or Warm-Ups may be worn on any school-day (i.e., a day for which a person is being paid) except for:

P. E. class (but not worn in the regular classroom);

Campus Designated Days (designation is done by the administration); and Field-based, Class Activity Days.

No Jeans of any color may be worn on any school-day (i.e., a day for which a person is being paid) except for:

Workdays;

Campus Designated Days (designation is done by the administration); and Field-based Activities (but not worn in the regular classroom).

Male Grooming:

Hair length is the same as student grooming code and must be neatly trimmed and no earrings may be worn.

Female Dress:

Skirt and dress length should fall below the knee cap. When seated or having your legs crossed/uncrossed, your thighs should not be exposed. Mini-skirts are prohibited;

Fitted leggings and spandex-type leggings are not permitted as outer wear; they may be worn under a dress, skirt or tunic top provided that outer wear meets the student skirt and dress code length requirements. Loose-fitting stirrup pants and loose-fitting leggings are permitted

Dress culottes, skorts, and split skirts must meet the student dress and skirt code length requirements. These are clothes that have the appearance of a skirt in the front but are split. Dresses and skirts should contain only small slits. Slits shall not be revealing. It should be easy to walk comfortably in your skirt.

Appropriate undergarments must be worn at all times.

Clothing that exposes cleavage, private parts, the midriff or undergarment is prohibited.

Capri pants are not acceptable on any school day except on a workday and field day.

Shirts, Blouses, and Tops - All shirts i.e. shall cover the back and stomach areas. You should be able to move freely without exposing any portion of your waist area.

Shirts and blouses must be buttoned appropriately and should not be low cut or expose any type of cleavage.

Clothing should never be see-through. Any clothing that reveals cleavage, private parts, the midriff or undergarments is prohibited. Clothing Materials such as spandex are prohibited.

Shoes - No sandals, open toe shoes, high heels/chunky heels, slippers, flip-flops or clogs. Shoes should be polished and clean. Shoes made of leather or microfiber is preferable.

Pants/Slacks - Pants must be worn with a belt, unless designed without belt loops. Pants/slacks must fall at ankle length. Capri pants are prohibited.

Jeans are prohibited unless exceptions are made for Blue Jean Days or special events by your Principal/Administration. Tights and spandex pants are prohibited.

Jewelry and Other Accessories - All tattoos shall be covered and hidden from view.

Jewelry used in conjunction with body piercing (such as nose rings, eyebrow or tongue studs) is prohibited.

Employees who desire exceptions from the dress code for religious reasons should submit their requests to their campus principals.

All employees need to dress in Business Attire on all school days of the year.

I acknowledge that any employee who fails to adhere to this dress code will be subject to first a written warning and then for repeat occurrences will be subject to further disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination.

EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE

PRINTED NAME

DATE: _____