

ROOTS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.



STAFF POLICY HANDBOOK

SY 2019 -2020

When necessary, *Roots* reserves the right to make changes, with or without notice, in the policies and practices described in this Handbook. Moreover, because it is impossible to anticipate every situation that may arise, *Roots* reserves the right to address a situation in a manner different from that described herein if, in *Roots*' judgment, the circumstances so warrant.

MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

The Mission of the Roots Public Charter School is to offer a culturally relevant (African Centered) and academically stimulating curriculum. We believe by giving youth an appreciation of their land, history, and culture they are inspired and motivated to maintain high academic and social goals. Therefore, the Roots Public Charter School seeks to:

1. Provide students with a strong African Centered learning environment;
2. Promote and secure the connection of Mother Africa within our children;
3. Prepare students to break the chains of psychological conditioning that attempt to keep them powerless in all phases of society;
4. Guide students toward academic excellence, exemplary character, and social responsibility;
5. Encourage success leading to self reliance, economic, social, and political contributions to society.

INTRODUCTION

Roots Public Charter School will hire and keep teachers who meet the following expectations:

1. Have an educational background and experience in Early Childhood Education or Elementary Education and pass the Praxis II in Elementary Education.
2. Display a proud and positive attitude toward the school.
3. Enjoy and energetically work creatively to improve the school.
4. Effectively team-teach, conduct individualized instruction, and practice behavior modification techniques.
5. Effectively operate an open-space, multi-level classroom arrangement.
6. Establish a very good record of attendance and punctuality.
7. Attend all PTA meetings, all inservice staff development workshops and support all fund-raisers.
8. Extraordinary educators whose mission is to go the extra mile with an enthusiastic desire to serve on the Roots team.

Roots Public Charter School will be supportive of its staff and vows to do everything in its power to provide a pressure free, enjoyable and fulfilling environment in which to work. We will supply equipment and supplies for the staff's access, solicit their involvement, suggestions and input on all levels, and provide advancement for the staff in the way of workshops, resource persons, raises and benefits to the best of our budget.

Roots is an equal opportunity organization committed to non-discriminatory practices in hiring & services rendered based on race, color, or national origin. Also, the District of Columbia Human Rights Act, approved December 13, 1997 states the following: It shall be unlawful discriminatory practice to do any of the following acts, wholly or partially for a discriminatory reason based upon the actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identify or expression, **family responsibilities, genetic information, disability, matriculation, or political affirmation of any individual.** To file a complaint alleging discrimination on one of these bases, please contact: the District of Columbia's Office of Human Rights@ (202)727-4359 or ohr@dc.gov. Roots PCS participates in the National School Breakfast, Lunch & Afterschool Snack Program and accepts responsibility for providing nutritious meals that benefit all eligible children under the school's jurisdiction. *In accordance with Federal civil rights law and US Dept of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and*

policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs, are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign language, etc) should contact the agency (state or local) where they applied for the benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay services at 800-877-8339. Additionally program information may be made available in languages other than English.

Roots condemns and maintains a zero tolerance policy toward any form of student or employee sexual harassment.

Roots reserves the right to require drug testing and police security clearance prior to hiring and/or during employment. Roots, also employs zero tolerance toward any alleged abuse of alcohol or drugs on school property. Failure to comply with these mandates can be cause for immediate suspension or dismissal.

PROFESSIONALISM

"A perverse man stirs up dissension, and gossip separates close friends." PR 16:25. Professionalism is:

1. Performance on job being high quality
Five P's - "Proper Planning Prevents Poor Performance"
2. Being approachable (a positive attitude about constructive criticism and suggestions.
3. Being a team player (putting the success of the team as the most important goal) individual interests and needs are important as they relate to the success of the goal.
4. Properly approaching others with requests, suggestions or criticism (tone of voice, choice of words, and body language).
5. Dress appropriately.

PROBATIONARY STATUS - New staff members hired on a full time status will be considered on probationary status for the first two (2) months of employment. Within this period, they are not eligible to take sick or vacation leave.

TIME SHEETS - Every staff is required to arrive daily on time. Upon arriving at school, you are to immediately sign in at the office. Every staff member is responsible for daily signing in time of arrival and time of departure. No staff is allowed to sign out for the day upon arrival or sign for someone else. Whether arriving five (5) or twenty-five (25) minutes late, records to the next ½ hour. Falsifying your time of arrival or departure or days of attendance is cause for immediate termination of employment.

CLASS PLANING TIME - Teachers of K students to 5 grade have work hours of 8:00am-5:00pm and they should arrange to take an hour lunch period as their class is covered by their teammate. They are required to use the half hour from 8:00 to 8:30am and the hours from 3:30 to 5:00pm as class planning and preparations. No lunch break should be taken at end of staff's working hours. The lunch period is not a part of the paid day.

BI-WEEKLY PAYROLL - A forty-hour (40) basic work week, consisting of five (5) eight-hour days from Monday through Friday shall be observed. Payroll week begins on Sunday and end on Saturday. Staff will be paid bi-weekly on Friday following the end of payroll period. With prior permission, time can be made up within that payroll period. Upon termination, the final check is received at the end of the normal payroll cycle.

STAFF CLASSIFICATION All administration personnel are exempt and work year round (twelve (12) months) The teaching staff may or may not work up to 12 months depending on their qualifications and employment contracts.

DRESS CODE- Teachers should come to school in a clean, neat, comfortably dressed manner, which will allow the teacher to work with the children without restriction. Clothing should not be overly revealing.

HOLIDAYS AND SNOWDAYS- Roots Public Charter School will follow the DC Public School schedule Snow days. The following are paid holidays:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 1. Martin Luther King's Birthday | 2. President's day |
| 3. Memorial Day | 4. Independence Day |
| 5. Labor Day | 6. Columbus Day |
| 7. Easter week | 8. Veteran's Day |
| 9. Thanksgiving Day & Day After | 10. Winter Break, December 24- January 1 |
| 11. DC Emancipation Day April 16 th - | |

DRUGS/ALCOHOL/WEAPONS - Possession and distribution of tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs by staff and students is strictly prohibited. There are no weapons allowed on and around the premises of Roots Public Charter School.

JURY DUTY - Staff may use their leave for the first day of Jury Duty as long as the administration has been shown the summons in advance. If assigned a case, by law, Roots will pay full pay per days on duty after the first.

BEREAVEMENT POLICY -

Funeral Leave for an Immediate Family Member:

When a death occurs in an employee's immediate family, all regular full-time employees may take up to three (3) days off with pay to attend the funeral or make funeral arrangements. The pay for time off will be prorated for a part-time employee if the funeral occurs on a scheduled workday. RPCS may, in unusual circumstances, require verification of the need for the bereavement leave.

Immediate Family Defined for Bereavement Leave:

Immediate family members are defined as an employee's spouse, parents, stepparents, sisters, brothers, children, stepchildren, grandparents, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, or grandchild.

Non-family Member Funeral Leave:

All regular, full-time employees may take up to one (1) day off with pay to attend the funeral of a close, non-family member. This time off will be considered and granted by the Principal on a case-by-case basis. The pay for time off will be prorated for a part-time employee if the funeral occurs on a scheduled workday. The administration should confirm that the time is recorded accurately on the time sheets. RPCS may require verification of the need for the leave.

Additional Time Off:

Roots PCS understands the deep impact that death can have on an individual or a family, therefore additional non-paid time off may be granted. The employee may make arrangements with administration for an additional four unpaid days off in the instance of the death of an immediate family member.

Additional unpaid time off may also be granted depending on circumstances such as distance, the individual's responsibility for the funeral arrangements, and the employee's responsibility for taking care of the estate of the deceased.

Individual employee circumstances may be discussed with the Administration to determine whether additional considerations are needed. It is Root's intention to support employees during their times of grief and bereavement.

HEALTH & DENTAL INSURANCE

As part of a benefit package, an employee can elect Group Health insurance with selected insurance company. RPCS and full time employees may or may not share equally the premium cost for individual coverage. Staff members are totally responsible for their family member's coverage premium cost. The administration reserves the right to change the nature of the benefits, the deductibles, premiums or other features of the Benefit Package. If for any reason, RPCS decides to discontinue any benefit; covered employees will be notified of such changes as soon as applicable.

LIFE INSURANCE & PENSION PLAN

As part of a benefit package, Life insurance, long/short term disability and a pension plan can be elected by an employee after three (3) years of service. After three years, a full time employee is eligible to participate in the Life insurance & long/short term disability plan. After three (3) years, a full time employee is eligible to participate in the pension plan as follows: \$20.00 a month. After five (5) years, the pension benefit changes to \$40.00 a month and after eight (8) years, the benefit increases to \$60.00 per month. RPCS reserves the right to change the nature of the benefits, the deductibles, premiums or other features of the Benefit Package. If for any reason, RPCS decides to discontinue any benefit; covered employees will be notified of such changes as soon as applicable.

SICK LEAVE - Sick leave shall be regarded as insurance for the employee's loss of pay due to sickness. It can be used as a personal day off. Sick leave can be taken at the end of an employee's probationary period. Sick leaves are earned for ten (10) months only. Sick leave hours per month can be increased as an incentive for staff to continue dedicated service over the years. Full time employees will earn four (4) hours per month of sick leave. After three (3) years, it changes to six (6) hours per month, and after five years, it becomes eight (8) hours per month. At the end of each contract year, employee's sick leave balance is cashed out. Administrators and office Staff (other than teachers) with less than ten (10) years of service receive one (1) week of sick leave and staff with ten (10) or more years of service receive two (2) weeks of sick leave.

VACATION/ANNUAL LEAVE - Full-time employees will earn four (4) hours vacation each month except for degreed teachers. Degreed teachers work ten months in order to accrue eight (8) weeks vacation/annual leave. Their annual salary is paid spread over the entire year. Terminated employees will not be paid for accrued vacation. Except for degreed teachers, vacation hours per month can be increased as an incentive for staff to continue dedicated service over the years. After three (3) years of service, it changes to six (6) hours per month; and after five (5) years, it will be eight (8) hours per month. At the end of each contract year, employee's vacation leave balance is cashed out. Administrators and office Staff (other than teachers) with less than ten (10) years of service receive two (2) weeks of vacation leave and staff with ten (10) or more years of service receive three (3) weeks of vacation leave.

RESIGNATION, TERMINATION, GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES - Upon the resignation of an employee before the end of the school year; all sick and vacation leave is forfeited. If an employee is terminated "with cause", the employee forfeits all accrued leave. If an employee is terminated "without cause", the employee will be compensated for accrued leave. However, No teacher will receive two

months' vacation without working the entire ten months. Employee grievance can be taken to the Roots Board of Directors, who has the final decision.

EXPENSES -Staff must obtain the advance consent of the Principal before incurring expenses for which they seek reimbursement. Receipts must document approved expenses.

BONUSES- Bonuses are not guaranteed. Merit bonuses are subject to availability of funds. However, Kwanzaa bonuses for excellent work and an end of the year staff appreciation dinner are the intent of the Board of Directors. Bonuses can range from \$50 to a maximum the budget allows. Both End of the School Year and Kwanzaa Bonuses are subjected to availability of funds and at the discretion of Board of Directors after reviewing the financial statements presented by the CFO. Both bonuses are awarded for excellent work. There may be in form of End-of-the-year *Staff Appreciation Lunch*.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Staff evaluation serves as a history of performance, feedback to let staff know how their performance is perceived, and criterion for administrative decisions (to keep or terminate personnel, and a salary judgment tool to determine service value). The evaluation process includes:

1. Daily informal observations.
2. In November and June, there are two (2) formal evaluations of first and second year teachers and assistants; in June, one (1) formal evaluation of teachers with three (3) years or above.
3. A written checklist - first filled out in pencil by employees, then reviewed and revised in ink by the supervisor

CRITERION FOR RAISES

- Raises are based on longevity with school, cost of living, educational degree, merit, and the school budget.
- a. Each full year that an employee stays with school raises his/her hourly rate pay or salary by 1% (one) to 3% (three) cost of living.
 - b. Upon receiving a new degree (CDA, AA, BS, or BA, MA, ED.D. or Ph.D), hourly rate of pay or salary will be increase by 1% (one).
 - c. Overall performance rating: raises are as follow
 - Excellent 2%(two) to 4% (four).
 - Good 1%(one) to 3% (three).
 - Satisfactory only allows the employee's contract to be renewed.
 - Improvement Needed - contract may not be renewed.

EXPECTATIONS OF ALL TEACHERS

- A. Give love, attention, quality care, and educational stimulation as specified in the Roots curriculum. Reading and math instruction should be done each day. The teacher should keep the children's names, addresses, phone numbers, and birth dates in a notebook. Documentation of children's behavior, lesson plans, class schedule, and substitute plans should also be available.
- B. Keep names neatly on lockers so parents & children as well as co-workers know where each child's locker is. Check each child's locker for cleanliness and order each day, as well as keep the center clean, orderly, and attractive. Your center, shelves, etc. shouldn't be cluttered. Kitchens including cabinets and refrigerator should be kept tidy and clean. Every Friday, refrigerator

should be cleared of personal items, cleaned, and defrosted if needed. Let students assist in weekly responsibilities. One sign of professionalism is keeping a clean and organized workspace.

- C. Use the Performance objectives to test your children before planning instructional lessons. Use the block method to chart what each child needs to learn. Individualize instruction so as to work with one child or small group while the rest are constructively working on something they need and can do independently. The most important to individualize are language Arts & math
- D. Keep a record of Performance objectives each child is achieving. There should be a copy of the behavioral objectives, grade report sheet & subjective report for the office file as well as the parent copy (report card). Upon a child's promotion out of the division, the file copy should be kept on file.
- E. Greet parents & children in a friendly way each morning, and keep communication open, positive, and continuous with parents through written weekly reports, phone conversations, and person-to-person contact.
- F. Teachers are to cooperatively team on situations, which will make their jobs easy and more efficient in handling. Teaming encompasses planning and organization; not random, spur of the moment reactions. Examples of teaming are morning opening, birthday parties, and various other activities that lend themselves to it.
- G. Have children make birthday cards for each child's birthday. Discuss the Black hero/heroines of the month each morning. Have a picture posted of the person. Do hands on activities in celebration of his/her birthday.
- H. Children should not be without the teacher's supervision at any time. This includes the restroom. Teach toileting habits, and schedule toileting time instead of sending children to the bathroom unsupervised. Teach girls the correct way to wipe themselves, boys to lift the seat before urinating, both to pull off only a moderate amount of toilet paper and one paper towel; and to flush the toilet and wash hands, turning off faucet when finished.
- I. Use behavior modification to discipline. Use lots of praise, activity reinforcement, hugs, etc. Avoid criticism trap and verbally attending to unacceptable behavior. For the misbehavior use facial-eye communication, touches on the shoulder, and praising the good behavior. Serious or continuing misbehavior warrants time-out. Make sure child knows criteria for re-entry into class activities.
- J. Limit the use of Xerox practice sheets and do more hands-on manipulative activities such as computers, games, arts and crafts, life experience simulation, dramatic role-play, and field trips. Do pre and post activities with all trips.
- K. Be responsible for the care of school property. Report anything broken or missing immediately, as well as who and how the incident happened.
- L. Explain all federal holidays. Do creative, hands on activities. Make sure children realize July 4th was the independence of Euro-Americans from Great Britain. Though Blacks helped them get free, we were not freed from slavery. It is not a celebration of our independence.
- I. In **SEPTEMBER**, a teacher is assigned a certain number of children for direct responsibility. The salary remains constant, even if a child is absent or withdraws. Similarly, a teacher may be asked to help out by taking their teammate's class if a substitute is not available.

- II. In **OCTOBER**, we do not celebrate Halloween. It is not relevant to Black heritage. It is also tainted with racism since the subliminal message is that Black is bad and evil. Furthermore, the candy industry uses this time to exploit our children. However, celebrate the fall with the children. Show and tell them about colored leaves, pumpkins, gourds, Indian corn, etc. Make a jack-o-lantern, roast pumpkin seeds, & bake pumpkin pie.
- III. In **NOVEMBER**, teach the truth about Thanksgiving. The first thanksgiving was the beginning of the genocide and massive take over of Native Americans as well as the seeds of slavery of Africans. Native Americans protest Thanksgiving by fasting.
- IV. In **DECEMBER**, explain that Christmas is a holiday that the major religious groups in America - Christians celebrate. They believe it is the day that the Son of God, Jesus, was born. Not everyone at Roots has that belief, so Roots doesn't celebrate religious holidays. We celebrate the winter season and Kwanzaa (December 26 - January 1)- a U.S. African holiday because we are all U.S. Africans. Use hands on activities to celebrate winter (songs - Frosty the Snowman; make cut-out snowflakes, decorated winter pine trees, etc.). Use arts and crafts to celebrate Kwanzaa. Teach Kiswahili, do Kwanzaa activities, and everyone is to wear traditional African clothes throughout the week. Play down the *white* Santa and commercialism. Help children make presents for parents.
- V. In **JANUARY**, do extensive hands on and discussions and freedom songs around Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Teach children to celebrate January 1st, because it was the day of our emancipation from slavery.
- VI. In **FEBRUARY**, promote Black Love Day. Let children make cards for parents. Play down the commercialism and boyfriend/girlfriend angle, while emphasizing love for our brothers and sisters.
- VII. In **MARCH**, prepare a class science fair project for the science fair.
- VIII. In **APRIL**, explain, "Easter is a holiday that the major religious group in America celebrates. They believe it is the day that the Son of God, Jesus, rose from the dead. Not everyone at Roots shares that belief, so Roots doesn't celebrate religious holidays. We celebrate the spring season." Do many hands on activities around spring, new birth of plants and animals, dyeing spring eggs, and making baskets. Sex education is done this month also.
- VIII. In **MAY**, do career development throughout the month. Have students make Mothers' Day cards and presents.
- X. In **JUNE**, have students make Fathers' Day cards and presents.

ASSISTANT TEACHER DUTIES

1. Assist teacher with class and participate in planning;
2. Assume responsibility in teacher's absence;
3. Attend in-service workshops offered;
4. Assist in preparing bulletin boards and written reports to parents;
5. Preparing functional level work at the teacher's supervision;
6. Keeping learning centers clean, neat, and attractive;
7. Grading and sorting papers of children;
8. Kitchenette duty.

FIELD TRIPS - Field trips that make the subject matter being taught come alive are encouraged. Teachers can plan them as long as the office is informed, and the plans are made well enough ahead of time. Roots would like for students to take at least one field trip per month during the school year if money permits. Teachers are expected to do PRE and FOLLOW UP educational activities for all field trips.

PARENT TEACHER ADMINISTRATION MEETINGS

(6:00 - 8:00pm)

PTA Meetings will be scheduled as follows:

- September - Introduction and Welcome
- January - Parent Meeting Report cards
- March - Resource Information
- June - Recital and Report cards

Staff is expected to attend all PTA meetings as a part of their duty.

IN-SERVICE STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS - One whole Holiday each semester and one/two whole weeks in August will be set for in-service staff training/development. The first semester's day will be the day before Veteran's Day, and the second semester's day will be Easter Monday. All staff members are required to attend. No leave may be taken. Absences will be deducted from the pay week.

BIRTHDAYS OF FAMOUS BLACKS - Each month teachers are to teach the children about a famous Black person born in that month. The people Roots will commemorate are:

January	January 15, 1929 January 17, 1942 January 3, 1919	Martin Luther King, Jr. Muhammad Ali Johnie Wilson Michelle Obama
February	February 14, 1817 February 18, 1939	Frederick Douglass Toni Morrison Alice Walker
March	March 10, 1913 March 18, 1935	Harriet Tubman Frances Cress Welsing
April	April 5, 1856 April 22, 1947	Booker T. Washington Cathy Hughes
May	May 19, 1925 May 11, 1933	Malcolm X Louis Farrakhan
June	June 27, 1872 June 6, 1939	Paul L. Dunbar Marian Wright Edelman
July	July 10, 1875 July 5, 1946	Mary McLeod Bethune Bernida Thompson
August	August 17, 1887 August 22, 1933	Marcus Garvey Asa Hilliard III Barack Obama
September	September 21, 1909 September 8, 1954	Kwame Nkrumah Ruby Bridges

October	October 8, 1941	Jesse Jackson
	October 13, 1902	Fannie Lou Hamer Mae Jemison
November	November 9, 1731	Benjamin Banneker
	November 1, 1935	Mama Aziza Jones Guion Bluford
December	December 7, 1955	Albert Kamau Robinson
	December 19, 1954	Cecily Tyson

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

Roots' mission is designed to meet specific needs of U.S. African youth. The discipline policy objective is to provide positive reinforcement and encouragement. Our goal is to groom productive Black leaders for tomorrow. Our expectation of each student is to be respectful and obedient. There will be no corporal punishment. Any student involved in an altercation will be counseled and given an opportunity to explain their story to the teacher before a decision is made to call parents.

1. We will provide clear rules in a nurturing, learning environment.
2. We will find many instances to praise and will try to ignore little misbehavior we wish to weaken.
3. We will provide a clear warning in case of disruptive behavior and "time-out" if the warning goes unheeded.
4. In case of persistent disrespect, disobedience, or dramatic disruption within a day, we reserve the right to have the child picked up immediately by his/her parent for at least a one-day (1) suspension. It will be left to the judgment of the teacher and approved by either the Principal or the Vice Principal as to when the child can return. A rule of thumb would be twenty-four (24) hours, but as many as five (5) days suspension can be given. Cooperation, confidence, and mutual respect between teachers and parents will ensure the positive behavior modification of our children.

NO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT POLICY

If any employee, full-time or part-time, strikes any child enrolled at the Roots Public Charter School, that employee will be *immediately suspended*.

Roots reserves the right to suspend the employee (without pay) for a minimum of three (3) working days, not to exceed five (5) working days unless otherwise noted. Upon return, the employee will be placed on probation for a period of sixty (60) days.

Also, Roots Public Charter School reserves the right to require the employee to take anger or stress management courses either prior to the employee's return or during the time of probation.

ROOTS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION POLICY

The ROOTS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL (RPCS) requires directors, officers and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of the RPCS, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY

This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns internally so that RPCS can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. It is the responsibility of all board members, officers, administrators, employees and volunteers to report concerns about violations of RPCS's code of ethics, school policies, or regulations that govern the school's operations.

NO RETALIATION

It is contrary to the values of RPCS for anyone to retaliate against any board member, officer, administrator, employee or volunteer who, in good faith, reports an ethics violation, a violation of school policy, or a suspected violation of law, such as a complaint of discrimination, or suspected fraud, or any regulation of the RPCS. Any employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

RPCS has an open door policy and suggests that employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with the school's principal or vice principal. If you are not comfortable speaking with the school's principal or vice principal, or you are not satisfied with either person's response to your concerns, you are encouraged to speak with the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Supervisors and administrators are required to report complaints or concerns about suspected ethical and legal violations in writing to the RPCS Board of Trustees, who have the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints. Employees with concerns or complaints may also submit their concerns in writing directly to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, who has the responsibility as the RPCS whistleblower protection policy compliance officer.

COMPLIANCE OFFICER

The RPCS's compliance officer is responsible for ensuring that all complaints about unethical

or illegal conduct are investigated and resolved. The Compliance Officer will advise the Board of Trustees of all complaints and their resolution and will report, at least annually, to the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees on compliance activity relating to accounting or alleged financial improprieties.

ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING MATTERS

The RPCS's Compliance Officer shall immediately notify the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees of any concerns or complaint regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing and work with the committee until the matter is resolved.

ACTING IN GOOD FAITH

Anyone filing a written complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

HANDLING OF REPORTED VIOLATIONS

The RPCS's Compliance Officer will notify the person who submitted a complaint and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

Roots Public Charter School
15 Kennedy Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011
(202) 882-8073

Policy approved by the Board of Trustees on

Gilda Sherrod-Alli

ROOTS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL
15 Kennedy Street, NW
Washington, DC 20010

Staff Legal Orientation Sexual Harassment and Inappropriate conduct with Students

INTRODUCTION

This legal orientation workshop is to familiarize staff and teachers with RPCS Policy regarding inappropriate and/or illegal sexual harassment of and contact with students, other staff and parents. This includes either the commission of an act by a RPCS staff member or the omission of some necessary action by a RPCS staff member. The RPCS Board of Trustees, chairperson and the school legal advisor is conducting this staff orientation to make sure all members of the RPCS staff and members of the RPCS Administration know the rules regarding their roles, legal obligations, and duties as RPCS personnel.

ROLES

First and foremost, each of you are a professional and as such your interaction with both children and parents should be that of a professional at ALL times. This does not mean that you shouldn't be friendly and cordial, being friendly and cordial is a very important part of being professional; however, as a professional, you must know where to draw the line.

As a teacher, you are not to become *too* familiar with either students or their parents. You are not any child's "best friend" or confidant. Report any problems a child confides in you to both the school principal and the child's parent or legal guardian. Immediately report any inappropriate contact that a student makes toward you to both the school principal and the child's parent. You are not to engage in any kind of inappropriate contact or time alone with a student that is not authorized by the school as both a school related and sanctioned activity. If you do, you will be operating on your own.

It is illegal for any teacher to engage in any inappropriate touching of a student and/or to engage in any inappropriate conversation with a student. Examples would be hugging and touching of a romantic and/or sexual nature; private and intimate conversations either at the school or by telephone after school hours. If you do, you will be immediately reprimanded and placed on administrative leave without pay until a full

investigation is completed. If the investigation reveals that the Roots employee engaged in inappropriate conduct with a student, that employee will be terminated immediately.

You are not to engage in inappropriate contact with another staff member or parent unless that person is your spouse or significant other. Inappropriate contact would be contact of a sexual and/or romantic nature. It would also include, but not be limited to language and/or actions meant to sexually harass another RPCS employee or parent. If you do, you will be immediately reprimanded and placed on administrative leave without pay until a full investigation is completed. If the investigation reveals that the Roots employee engaged in said inappropriate conduct with a parent or other RPCS employee, that employee will be terminated immediately.

DUTIES

In addition to the duties spelled out elsewhere in this handbook and your individual contracts, you each have the following duties:

1. Always be on time and prepared to teach each day, and take attendance so that you can record each child who comes in late or is absent;
2. Report each absence and late attendance to the school administrator;
3. Keep a written record of any child's disruptive behavior and report a particularly disruptive child to the administration immediately;
4. DO NOT USE PHYSICAL DISCIPLINE on any child at any time;
5. Make sure parents receive prompt reports regarding their child's classroom behavior;
6. Do not send or take any child home until a parent and/or legal guardian has been contacted and you have been given permission to send or take the child home AND you have been assured there will be an adult in the home when the child gets there;
7. Do not go to a child's home to pick up a child without first getting written consent from the parents or legal guardians, and getting clearance from the RPCS administration;
8. Do not leave any child unattended in a classroom, recreation room, outside or for too long a period of time in a bathroom. If a child is missing from your direct supervision for more than 10 minutes, get someone to watch your class, and go check on that child immediately.
9. Do not use any profanity when addressing children even when angry!!!
10. Remember, what you do reflects on the RPCS; therefore don't do anything that will bring shame, bad reputation or legal action back to the school.

LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

1. As a RPCS staff member, you are legally obligated to guide and protect the minor children placed in your care each day.

2. You cannot use corporal punishment.
3. You cannot molest or have any kind of sexual contact with a child.
4. You cannot remove a child from the school premises without the express permission of a parent or legal guardian.
5. You cannot leave a child unattended for such a long period of time that he/she will either be harmed or cause harm to another.
6. You must report a child's disruptive and/or inappropriate behavior to the RPCS administration immediately.
7. You must contact emergency medical assistance for any child who is injured while in your care, give emergency first aid to that child until emergency medical assistance arrives, and contact that child's parent or legal guardian at the first opportunity you have.
8. You cannot harass, molest, or have sexual contact with another employee or parent. Keep and have appropriate, professional relationships with all adults you come into contact with and interact with on a daily basis.

I attended the Roots Public Charter School special staff orientation on _____, and I read and reviewed all of the roles, duties and obligations as herein described. I am fully aware that if I elect not to adhere to these roles, duties and obligations as well as those more particularly described in the employee handbook and in my contract, the Roots Public Charter School, its staff, administration and Board of Trustees will not be held legally responsible for my actions.

_____(Seal)
RPCS Staff Member

Dated: _____

_____(Seal)
Witness

Dated: _____

Roots PCS Sexual Violation Policy& Procedures

It is the policy of **Roots PCS** to ensure the safety and well-being of every student. When a concern of possible abuse/neglect arises, the expectation is that we as a school will act swiftly and in an organized manner to respond. The following steps are taken as preventative measures:

1. ALL staff members and personnel are to participate in a Mandated Reporter training at least one time during each school year. Sign-in sheets will be used to track attendance to ensure full participation.
2. In order to minimize risk in the school environment, it will be shared with every staff member that one-adult/one-student situations should be avoided if possible. If they are to occur, it is to be made sure that the activity is observable and can be interrupted at any time.

The following procedures shall be followed when a staff member has a concern that a child is being/in danger of being harmed:

1. When a staff member receives a disclosure of abuse or neglect from a student, or is a witness to something (incident, marking on child, etc.) concerning, they are to IMMEDIATELY report their concern to their immediate supervisor, who shall then report to the *Principal*, (Dr. Bernida Thompson) *Assistant Principal*, (Rasheki Kuykendall- Walker) or Principal's Designee. (Winifred Wright)
2. The staff member who originally initiated the response shall complete an incident report (incident report form can be found in the incident file); the report will include the circumstances around the disclosure/incident, the specific words of the student, and steps taken in response (i.e. reported the concern to the AP, brought the student to the counselor's office, etc.).
3. The Principal, Asst. Principal, or Principal's Designee will meet with the student to obtain additional information about the concern. *No other staff member should question the student about the concern/disclosure.*
4. The Principal, Asst. Principal, or Principal's Designee shall determine next steps (call to parent, report to CFSA or other jurisdiction, etc.). *A parent should be notified if, in doing so, no further harm will come to the student.*
5. If a call to CFSA or other Child Protection agency is warranted, the staff member who originally initiated the report will call to make the report with the Principal, Asst. Principal, or Principal's Designee.
6. After a call is placed, it should be documented: when the call was made, the Agent number of the hotline worker who you spoke with, what the response was from the hotline worker (accepted the report, did not accept the report, etc.), and what follow-up can be expected (CFSA will investigate report, CFSA to come see the student at the school, etc.)

Note: If a staff member reports a concern and their supervisor, Principal, Asst. Principal, or Principal's Designee does not think a call to CFSA is warranted or for some reason cannot be contacted, it remains the responsibility of that staff member to make the report if they feel it should be done. Reporting is an individual responsibility and failure to report can lead to a penalty.

ROOTS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL SEXUAL VIOLATION PROTOCOL POLICY

Procedures for Responding to Child Abuse and/or Neglect Concerns

It is the policy of Roots Public Charter School to ensure the safety and well-being of every student. When a concern of possible abuse/neglect arises, the expectation is that we, as a school, will act swiftly and in an organized manner to respond. The following steps are taken as preventative measures:

1. ALL staff members and personnel are to participate in a Mandated Policy training at least one time during each school year. Sign-in and training verification sheets will be used to track attendance to ensure full participation.
2. In order to minimize risk in the school environment, it will be shared with every staff member, and outlined in the Employee Handbook, that one-adult/one-student situations should be avoided if possible. If they are to occur, it is to be made sure that the activity is observable and can be interrupted at any time.

The following procedures shall be followed when a staff member has a concern that a child is being/in danger of being harmed:

1. When a staff member receives a disclosure of abuse or neglect from a student, or is a witness to something (incident, marking on child, etc.) concerning, they are to IMMEDIATELY report their concern to the Principal, Dr. Bernida Thompson, or the Student Support Team (SST).
2. The staff member who originally initiated the response shall complete an incident report (incident report form can be found...); the report will include the circumstances around the disclosure/incident, the specific words of the student, and steps taken in response (i.e. reported the concern to the Principal/SST, etc.).
3. The Principal or SST will meet with the student to obtain additional information about the concern. *No other staff member should question the student about the concern/disclosure.*
4. The Principal or SST shall determine next steps (call to parent, report to CFSA or other jurisdiction, etc.). *A parent should be notified if, in doing so, no further harm will come to the student.*
5. If a call to CFSA or other Child Protection agency is warranted, the staff member who originally initiated the report will call to make the report with the Principal.
6. After a call is placed, it should be documented: when the call was made, the Agent number of the hotline worker who you spoke with, what the response was from the hotline worker (accepted the report, did not accept the report, etc.), and what follow-up can be expected (CFSA will investigate report, CFSA to come see the student at the school, etc.)

Note: If a staff member reports a concern and their Principal or the SST does not think a call to CFSA is warranted or for some reason cannot be contacted, it remains the responsibility of that staff member to make the report if they feel it should be done. Reporting is an individual responsibility and failure to report can lead penalty.

The following procedures shall be followed when a staff member has a concern that a child is being/in danger of being harmed:

1. If a student accuses a staff member of alleged abuse, the student's parent/guardian must be contacted immediately by the principal or the SST.
2. A meeting must take place whereby the principal, the parent, child, the accused staff member, the Board of Directors, and the SST are all in attendance.
3. If it is determined that abuse has been committed by the staff member, he/she will be terminated immediately.
4. If it is determined that the allegation is false, the student will be recommended for counseling.