

ROOTS PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.

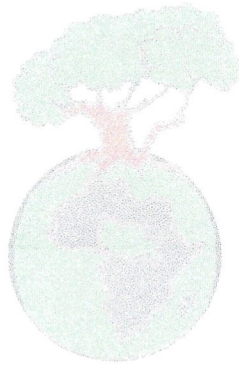


STAFF POLICY HANDBOOK

SY 2022 -2023

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.

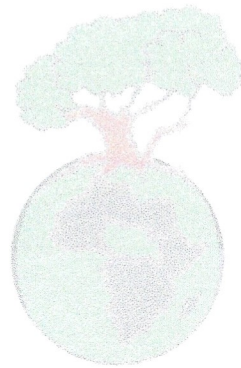
RPCS STAFF POLICY HANDBOOK



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MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

The Mission of the Roots Public Charter School, Inc. (Roots PCS) 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, & political contributions to society.

Staff Policies

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Roots PCS condemns and maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of student or employee sexual harassment and complies with federal and state equal employment opportunity laws and strives to keep the workplace free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment. The commitment to a harassment free environment extends to the hiring process. Roots Public Charter School, Inc considers harassment of all forms to be a serious offense. Employees who have been subjected to prohibited discrimination or harassment should immediately report the incident to the Principal, then to the Board. Any complaint will be investigated immediately and will be handled as confidentially as possible. Roots Public Charter School, Inc ensures that employees following this complaint procedure are protected against illegal retaliation.

Any reported viola of equal employment opportunity laws or this policy will be investigated. Administrators or employees found to have engaged in discriminatory conduct or harassment are subject to immediate disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Roots PCS is committed to providing equal employment opportunity for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, citizenship status, disability, or veterans status, and protected categories that are found in state laws, such as marital status or sexual orientation. Equal employment opportunity extends to all aspects of the employment relationship including recruiting, interviewing, selection, hiring, transfers, promotions, training, terminations, working conditions, compensation, benefits, and other terms.

Any reported violations of equal employment opportunity laws or this policy will be investigated. Administrators or employees found to have engaged in discriminatory conduct or harassment are subject to immediate disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment.

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Staff and Administration Responsibilities

All administrators are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy, which includes, but is not limited to, taking steps to prevent harassment and retaliation;
- Ensuring that all employees under their supervision have knowledge of and understand the policy;
- Promptly reporting any complaints to Human Resources so they may be investigated and resolved in a timely manner;
- Taking and/or assisting in prompt and appropriate corrective action when necessary to ensure compliance with this policy; and conducting themselves, at all times, in a manner consistent with this policy.
- Failure to meet these responsibilities may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

Roots PCS prohibits the use, sale, attempted sale, conveyance, distribution, manufacture, purchase, attempted purchase, possession, cultivation and/or transfer of alcohol or illegal drugs, or any other controlled substances, as defined in the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, while on duty, on the premises of Roots PCS, or on Roots PCS business. "Illegal drugs" means all drugs whose use or possession is regulated or prohibited by federal, state or local law. These include prescription medication that is used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription or for which the individual does not have a valid prescription. Roots PCS also prohibits employees from having illegal drugs or controlled substances in their system when present on Roots PCS premises or conducting business on behalf of Roots PCS.

The use of alcohol or controlled substances while on school property or during the school day is strictly forbidden and is cause for immediate discharge. As a narrow exception to this general prohibition, an employee over age 21 may consume limited quantities of alcohol off school premises in connection with Roots PCS-sponsored activities, provided that the consumption is limited to amounts of alcohol which will not result in the employee's being legally under the influence of alcohol.

If there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is under the influence during the workday, they will be required to undergo an immediate drug test, at the expense of the employee. Failure to undergo the requested test will result in the employee being asked to leave DC Scholars for the day and will not be allowed to return to work until the drug test is completed. A positive drug test or refusal to submit to a drug test is grounds for further disciplinary action, up to and including termination from Roots PCS.

An employee who believes that he or she may have a drug and/or alcohol problem is encouraged to contact the Principal of Roots PCS for assistance. Self-reporting does not excuse an employee from complying with the School's performance expectations or standards of conduct. Possession and distribution of tobacco, alcohol, and illegal drugs by staff and students is strictly prohibited.

Roots PCS reserves the right to require drug testing and police security clearance prior to hiring and/or during employment. Roots PCS 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.

STAFF COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCESS

Roots PCS 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.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. Roots condemns and maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of student or employee sexual harassment.
4. 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.

WHISTLE BLOWER POLICY

Roots PCS requires employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. Employees and representatives of Roots DCPS must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling their responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Reporting Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all employees to report violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy. The types of events that should be reported under this policy, include, but are not limited to, when an employee of Roots DCPS:

- a. becomes aware of a concern regarding the quality and integrity of Roots DCPS' business operations;
- b. believes he/she has witnessed violations of any Roots DCPS' policies; or
- c. has concerns regarding legal or regulatory compliance issues.

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Any employee who submits information under this policy in good faith or who is involved in an investigation under this policy will not be subject to reprisal or retaliation. Retaliation is a serious violation of Roots DCPS' policies and should be reported immediately. Any person found to have retaliated against an individual for making a report under this policy or participating in an investigation of allegations of such conduct may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Furthermore, any person who is found to have knowingly and intentionally made a false report under this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

How to Submit a Report

Employees are encouraged to raise any of the above listed concerns by submitting them in the form of a complaint to the principal who will promptly investigate any such complaints. An individual may also submit such complaints on a confidential, anonymous basis directly to the Board of directors but should be aware that the anonymous nature of the complaint may hinder the ability to investigate the matter in a timely and effective manner.

All complaints, whether submitted to the Principal Head of Roots PCS or the Board of Directors Human, should be in writing and include a full statement of the acts or omissions, along with relevant dates, forming the basis of the complaint. In addition, the complaint should state that it is being made pursuant to this policy.

To facilitate the investigation of a complaint, the complaint should include contact information for the complainant. The receiver of the information will use its best efforts to maintain the confidentiality of the complainant but cannot guarantee it. An employee submitting a complaint on a confidential, anonymous basis is not required to include contact information, but should be aware that the nature of the concerns may lead to the identification of that person as the source of the complaint.

To submit a complaint to the Principal of Roots PCS, send it to the following address:

Bernida Thompson,
Principal of Roots DCPS
55 Kennedy Street NE
Washington, DC 20011
Or email to: bthompson@rootspcs.org

Every complaint submitted pursuant to this policy will be investigated and, if appropriate, Roots PCS will take corrective and disciplinary actions. Additional employees or external consultants to Roots PCS in areas such as legal, accounting, or other advisors, as appropriate, may be retained to conduct any investigation of complaints submitted pursuant to this policy.

Nothing in this policy prevents the School from taking appropriate disciplinary or other legitimate employment action consistent with its usual disciplinary practices and the law.