

# Uncharted Shores Academy Charter School

# EMPLOYEE MANUAL

Personnel Policies & Procedures



Uncharted Shores Academy  
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**2015-2016**

***Welcome to Uncharted Shores Academy  
Charter School***

*Charting Respect, Responsibility, & Resourcefulness  
through  
Thematic, Interactive, Family-Style Education*

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## **INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION**

This Manual has been designed to acquaint you with the policies, procedures and philosophy of Uncharted Shores Academy. This Manual is intended to serve as a guide for the Charter School's employment policies, benefits and other general information about the Charter School's operation. For simplicity of terminology, Uncharted Shores Academy will be referred to as USA. The preceding terms are interchangeable.

### ***THIS MANUAL IS NOT A CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT***

Only the USA Charter School Director/Administrator/Principal has the authority to enter into an employment agreement with any employee, with the exception of the Director/Administrator/Principal position itself. The Director/Administrator/Principal will be hired by the Uncharted Shores Academy Governing Board. Policies, practices and benefits described in this Manual may change from time to time. Uncharted Shores Academy, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to amend, supplement or rescind any provisions of this Manual as it deems appropriate. Only written employment agreements executed by USA will be recognized. Employment agreements are provided to indicate the salary and terms of employment, not to rescind the at-will status of the employee.

**STATUS OF EMPLOYEES:** USA is an at-will employer. What this means is the employee or USA is free to conclude the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, with or without cause. Employment is for no specified period of time. Nothing contained in this Manual is intended to alter this fact.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT**

As employees of USA, employees agree that all staff and student information is confidential and should not be discussed with any person(s) outside of USA. Copying, removing, allowing unauthorized access to any USA documents, files, or student lists, or any type of distribution of student, staff, or school information, is not allowed. Sensitive information shared between employees, staff and parents, or administration and staff should be treated as confidential and not shared outside the school setting. Care should be taken to prevent unauthorized parties from hearing a sensitive discussion concerning any student or staff member, even in casual conversation, and all student matters of concern should be referred to a credentialed teacher. IEP records and other confidential information should be protected from unauthorized access at all times.

Child Protective Services reports shall be retained in strictest confidentiality. Employees shall refrain from discussing or disseminating information concerning CPS reports, and relegate all further action to the authorities given the responsibility to investigate such reports. Any breach of this Confidentiality Requirement may result in immediate termination.

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

USA is an equal opportunity employer. USA's policy is to recruit, hire, promote and compensate without regard to race, age, religion, sex, national origin, creed, handicap or color. Employment opportunities are open to all qualified applicants on the basis of their experience, aptitude and ability. USA will make a reasonable effort to accommodate staff with disabilities. However, USA may be

unable to accommodate all disabilities, and may request assistance from the disabled person to arrive at a solution.

### **HARASSMENT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Harassment of any type will not be tolerated by any employee or third-party individual. USA will not tolerate sexual harassment of any employee, student, or parent by a supervisor, fellow employee(s), or by any third party individuals on the USA premises or while working at student job sites. Some of the prohibited acts are: sexually abusive jokes, sexually graphic literature, horseplay with sexual overtones, sexual advances, demands for sexual favors for advancement reasons or other acts that could be construed as harassment. Training in identification and reporting of sexual harassment will be required of employees prior to the commencement of every year.

If any employee feels that he/she is a victim of any form of harassment, a written complaint must be filed with the Director at USA for prompt investigation. This method will help to promptly answer and resolve any problems that may exist. It is the school's intent to investigate the complaint promptly and to take whatever action is deemed appropriate.

### **LOYALTY TO THE SCHOOL**

Staff are hired with the expectation that they want to work for USA because they agree with our philosophy and method of education. It is expected that staff will remain loyal to USA and publicly exhibit at all times, in all actions, words, and behaviors, strict loyalty to Uncharted Shores Academy. This includes maintaining a positive attitude concerning the school with all co-workers, parents, and community members. This also includes treating all people involved with the school with the utmost respect and consideration, striving to keep gossip and contention out of the workplace.

### **SUPPORT OF USA REGULATIONS**

Without exception, employees will comply with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations. They will promptly report any illegal or unethical conduct to the Director, the Governing Board President, or other appropriate authorities. Obviously, not all appropriate conduct for staff has been covered in this section, and it is expected that USA employees will follow appropriate work place conduct and work habits at all times. Totally inappropriate acts such as insubordination, falsification of records, or abusive conduct will result in termination.

It is expected that all USA employees will positively represent the school both in the classroom and in the community. Grievances should be taken to the appropriate authorities for discussion and resolution rather than aired inappropriately with parents, students, other staff members, or the general community. All staff should endeavor to model exemplary behavior both at work and in the community.

### **REFERENCE CHECKS/CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS**

As a normal course of business, past employers and other references that are supplied to USA will be contacted to verify all information written on the employment application and provided during the interview process for accuracy. USA also requires a criminal background check as a condition of employment. Falsification of any of this information or not reporting a criminal conviction may be immediate grounds for termination.

## **EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

### **SCHEDULING AND DUTIES**

The normal business hours of operation for employees at USA are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Credentialed Teacher Duty Day is 7 hours, 8 AM – 3 PM, but additional duties may require work at school until 4:30. However, most teacher planning and prep may be completed at home. All full time office and administrative staff should expect to be available to work during these hours, with a half hour lunch break. Non-credentialed full-time staff will also receive two 10 minute breaks daily. Part time staff will work according to the hours indicated in their employment agreement, with a 10 minute break allowed for every 3.5 hours worked for non-credentialed staff.

### **TIMEKEEPING AND PAY DAYS**

All staff, excluding administrative, operational, and office staff, will be hired on a ten month basis, from mid-August through mid-June (180-195 school days), with salaried employees receiving their paychecks on the last Friday of the month from September through June. Hourly employees are paid every other Friday. Absences must be reported to the Administrative Assistant, and deductions for absences will take place per the absentee policy. Paychecks will be available for pick-up at the USA office location, directly deposited into the employee's bank account, or mailed to the employee's home. For everyone's protection, paychecks will be released only to the employee.

### **ABSENTEE POLICY**

Staff absentees can negatively affect our program at Uncharted Shores and substitutes for absent instructors are difficult to obtain, as they must be fingerprinted prior to employment. All staff have professional responsibilities outside of the regular student contact hours that must be performed in order to ensure the smooth operation of the school (staff meetings, adjunct duties, etc). However, we realize that there may be times when staff members may be unable to perform their jobs adequately due to illness or a family emergency arises which makes it impossible to come to school. If a staff member finds that he/she will be unable to attend school, we ask that he/she notify the school Administrator as soon as possible. Staff will receive the home phone number and/or cell number of the Administrator in order to facilitate this communication. The administrator will be responsible for making arrangements to ensure that the daily program will continue despite the employee's absence. Excessive absences by any staff member, regardless of the reason, may be grounds for termination.

All staff will receive an attendance bonus in June. Certificated staff will receive an attendance bonus of \$1,000, with \$100 subtracted from the bonus for every day absent. Classified staff will receive an attendance bonus equal to 24 hours of pay at their hourly rate. For every hour of absence, the hourly cost of a sub will be subtracted from the attendance bonus, but the employee will receive his/her normal pay for the time absent. Hourly employees will not be paid for absences after the 24 hours of attendance bonus has been used up. Pay equal to the cost of a sub will be subtracted from the monthly pay of salaried employees for additional absences after the attendance bonus has been used. Employees will receive the remaining amount, if any, of the attendance bonus with their final June paycheck.

In the following instances, employees will continue to be paid even if their attendance bonus has been used, and there will be no subtraction of pay from their attendance bonus:

1. Bereavement Leave: An employee is entitled to three (3) days paid leave of absence for the death of any member of their immediate family..
2. Jury Duty, Court Subpoena, Official Orders, Military Duty, Maternity Leave, or Legislative Leave: All employees will be provided with appropriate leave as required by law with no deduction in their in pay, if so required by law.

#### **COST OF LIVING INCREASES**

Instructional and support staff at Uncharted Shores Academy may receive an increase proportional to the COLA (cost of living adjustment) which has been approved by the state for the ADA (average daily attendance) apportionment for the year. If there is no increase in the school income, there will be no corresponding automatic increase in teacher salaries and/or benefits. Other than this cost-of-living increase, neither instructional staff nor administrative staff will receive automatic step increases in salaries, whether based upon years of service or education. Salary increases will be based upon employee performance and the available budget.

## **EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

### **EMPLOYEE EMPLOYMENT DEFINITIONS**

- A. **Regular Full-Time Employees**  
An employee who is paid a specified monthly amount to work a regularly scheduled full teaching day or work regular full day office hours for a period of indefinite duration is referred to as a regular full-time employee. Two or more positions may be combined to equal full time status.
- B. **Regular Part-Time Employees**  
An employee who is regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours a week for a period of indefinite duration is referred to as a regular part-time employee.
- C. **Credentialed Teacher Employees**  
An employee with an appropriate teaching credential who fulfills a particular teaching assignment and oversees a designated number of students is a credentialed teacher employee.
- D. **Temporary Employees**  
Persons hired to work on special assignment for a specified project or period of time. Temporary employees do not become regular employees as a result of the passage of time.
- E. **Hourly Employees**  
Hourly employees are all those employees whose wages are paid by the hour. Wages may fluctuate according to the number of hours.
- F. **Salaried Employees**  
Employees who receive an annual salary. Salaries will be divided into the designated number of months appropriate for the position.
- G. **Administrative Staff**  
Employees hired to perform administrative functions for the school, including all support staff whose main function concerns administrative operations.
- H. **Instructional Staff**  
Employees whose main function is direct student instruction.
- I. **Operational Staff**  
Employees who accomplish jobs pertaining to the daily operation of the school facilities.

## INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF CLASSIFICATIONS

- 1. Director Teacher or Educational Director:** Salaried 12 month position (for an agreed number of work days) for a professional credentialed veteran teacher. Administrative teaching position involves training, supervision, and evaluation of all instructors under supervisor's jurisdiction; planning and implementation of the educational program for assigned age grouping; and auditing compliance review of all independent study documentation. Additionally, director teachers offer professional development for instructional staff, instructional training for parents, specialized instruction for targeted learning groups, and maintain student discipline. Director teachers calculate anticipated educational needs; order necessary books and supplies; design and evaluate appropriate curriculum; plan, organize, and implement appropriate student progress evaluations; and ensure alignment of program with state standards. This position involves additional designated administrative duties along with the direct teaching of designated student groups.
- 2. Credentialed Teacher:** Full-time salaried 10 month position (180-200 total work days, as designated in the agreement) for a professional experienced credentialed teacher. Plans the learning stations and home study work for a specified group of students, monitors attendance credit, and maintains records for independent study documentation. Trains and supervises instructional staff teaching within the teacher's assigned group of students. Completes annual curriculum planning and pacing for assigned student group. Ensures lessons align to standards and student evaluations are implemented regularly. Maintains contacts with all assigned students and assists parents with home studies as needed. Additionally, instructs an academic learning station and oversees the classroom atmosphere and physical environment of all the students under the teacher's responsibility. Responsible for students from the time the first student arrives until the last student leaves each day.
- 3. Instructional Assistant:** Part-time hourly 10 month position (185-195 total days) for a teacher's aide with proven abilities. Instructs a specific academic learning station with the planning assistance of a credentialed teacher. May be additionally responsible for independently planning, preparing, and instructing a non-academic learning station. Assists with credentialed teacher prep and record keeping as requested.
- 4. Teacher's Aide:** Part time hourly 10 month position (total days may vary depending upon need) for a novice assistant to the teacher. Assists teacher with clerical duties, tutors a group of students at an academic learning station, and/or monitors students at lunch, recess, or computer stations.



## ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF CLASSIFICATIONS

- 1. Administrator (or Principal/Director):** This position may be a full-time position, part-time position, or split between more than one individual as the needs of the school dictate. Salaried 12 month position. (215-225 days). Responsible for management of personnel, student services, operations, and the finances of the school. Responsible for hiring and firing of staff as well as student and employee discipline. Directs the overall educational program and daily school operations, policies, and procedures. Initiates and implements strategic school plans for current and future years. Completes all reports, records, and documentation as required by the state and district. Interprets student and financial data to improve the progress and direction of the school. Maintains contacts with state, district, and school governing board to ensure compliance with all objectives and requirements for school operation. Directs and regulates the school atmosphere and environment. Directs public relations, registration, and school activities. Attends all required administrative meetings.
- 2. Administrative Assistant:** Full-time hourly 12 month position. (215-225 days). Office management position. Acts as front-desk receptionist, secretary to the director, and file clerk. Performs financial processing, human resources, recordkeeping, and secretarial functions. Ensures internal compliance with all procedures. Assists administrator with a myriad of duties, including event coordination and office support functions necessary for the effective operation of the school. Facilitates the correct completion of attendance records, student files, data input, and orders. Responsible for procurement and dissemination of student files.

## OPERATIONAL STAFF CLASSIFICATIONS

**Custodian:** Part-time hourly or full-time salaried 10 to 12 month position. Maintains the cleaning of the building on a daily basis, especially carpets and restrooms. Maintains building in good, working order, including washing windows and repairs as needed. This position may be allocated to several part-time individuals or outsourced to a professional company as needed.

## CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION

USA may change the employment classification of any employee at any time based on the nature of the employment assignment. All employment classifications have been approved by the USA Governing Board prior to hiring for that position.

## **STAFF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ENTIRE USA STAFF**

1. USA is a cooperative learning environment for both staff and students. Instructional, administrative, and operational staff must all function as a part of a team and work together in the educational setting.
2. All staff are responsible for monitoring student behavior and safety (before & after school, in class, on field trips, etc)
3. All staff will focus on positive student character growth as a major emphasis: respect, responsibility, resourcefulness
4. All staff will participate in the planning and execution of field trips, presentation fairs, and other student events held within the regular work day
5. All staff must report their absences and tardies to the administrative assistant
6. All *instructional* staff will provide input into end of term evaluations and reports for each assigned student as appropriate to their position.
7. All *instructional* staff will attend monthly staff planning and training meetings.
8. All *credentialed instructional* staff will attend weekly staff planning and training meetings.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CREDENTIALLED TEACHERS**

Credentialed teachers may be allowed to prepare lessons at home during the hours of operation if their classes are not in session and other onsite school duties have been completed. However, each teacher must be fully prepared for class instruction each day and be present to welcome students at least a half hour before class begins. Teachers are expected to stay onsite every day until their last student has gone home or another instructional staff member has taken over the student responsibilities and their learning station is ready for the following day. Specific time commitments for credentialed teachers are as follows:

1. The teacher's work year will extend from approximately two weeks before the start of school until one week after school is out (usually 190-195 work days, according to the teacher's agreement). The additional time at the beginning and end of the school year will involve preparation of reports, planning for classes, preparation of facilities, and professional development. Teachers must be prepared to be present onsite during the entire teacher work year.
2. The length of the regular full time teacher duty day will be 7 hours (8 AM – 3 PM), including a duty-free half-hour lunch. Part-time teachers will work according to their annual agreement. It is recognized that teachers work beyond their duty day in planning, preparation, and professional duties involved with teaching, and this work may be performed at home or at school. Teachers are salaried and need to be aware that their position may require flexible time commitments that extend beyond regular student contact hours.

3. Professional duties required of teachers which may need to be completed beyond the regular student contact day, but are part of the regular teacher duty day, include the following:
  - Phone calls to parents concerning students
  - Parent/Teacher conferences
  - Faculty meetings (normally 2 hrs per week)
  - Student Study Team and Individual Educational Plan Meetings
  - Curriculum planning
  - Extended day field trips
  - Recordkeeping tasks such as:
    - i. Processing of student papers in a timely manner
    - ii. Completion of report cards at the end of each term. Reports must be completed within one week following the end of each term.
    - iii. Attendance reports. Student final attendance reports for the state must be completed by credentialed teachers within one week following the end of each term, according to the state approved Period-1 and Period-2 attendance reporting schedule (at the end of each term).
    - iv. Weekly Progress Reports
    - v. Collection and labeling of assignment samples for the audit file and student permanent record portfolios.
    - vi. Audit file check at the end of each term.
4. Adjunct duty activities may also be required of teachers. Full time certificated staff are required to complete up to 15 hours per year of adjunct duties. The number of required hours is pro-rated for part-time teachers. (1.5 hours for every daily hour of class) An adjunct duty is defined as an activity performed after the teacher duty day or an activity performed during lunch or prep periods. The following are examples of adjunct duties:
  - Presentation nights, graduation, awards ceremonies, open house, parent orientation or other event which involves parents and students
  - Annual fundraising events
  - Student competitions
  - Student activity chaperone duties (such as student dances)
  - Planning school activities

<b>REGULATIONS CONCERNING STAFF DUTIES</b>
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**A. School Procedures**

1. All letters written on school letterhead must be approved by all entities who are listed on the letterhead. Employees will use school letterhead and logos only if they have the approval of the director(s) of the school.
2. Although teachers may send home notes concerning student progress or behavior to parents, any official correspondence should be approved by the director prior to parent or community notification. Coaches, parent club representatives, club leaders, and any other entity desiring to contact families of the school should ensure that the correspondence has been approved by the school director. All informational postings,

fliers, brochures, etc. must be approved by administration before being posted at the school or sent home with students.

3. Instructional Assistants should be careful to address verbal concerns from parents in a brief manner, referring the matter to the credentialed teacher in charge.
4. All religious and political information stressing a particular point of view will not be disseminated at school, promoted by the teacher, or displayed in the classroom.
5. All meetings or events which are organized in the name of USA or for the benefit of the school must be approved by the administration. No staff member may organize school meetings, use the school building for activities, conduct activities in the name of the school, or order school supplies prior to obtaining *official written* authorization. (Use the *Activity Request* form or *requisition* form)
6. Credentialed teachers must sign all official correspondence and records for which they are responsible, including attendance reports. Credentialed teachers must get their attendance records to the administrative assistant by the due date indicated on their school calendar. The administrative assistant will complete the reports within three days of receiving the teachers' attendance. It is the credentialed teacher's responsibility to check the records for accuracy and get them back to the administrative assistant by the following work day.
7. The term "teacher" will refer only to credentialed teacher, and station instructors or instructional aides will be designated with the title "instructor," "IA" or "aide." All staff will endeavor to use this distinction in order to avoid misrepresenting any position to the auditor, charter authorizing agency, parents of the students, or to the community.
8. When an employee finds it necessary to implement a disciplinary action for a group of students which includes a child related to the employee, a director should be involved in the disciplinary action to avoid any allegations of preferential treatment.

#### **B. School Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies**

1. Employees will protect all school assets and use them only for appropriate school approved activities.
2. Employees will protect their keys and only allow authorized access to the facilities.
3. Employees will use good judgment in the care and use of all equipment.

#### **C. School Operations**

1. All employees must support the requirement for complete and accurate financial records, reporting, and other record keeping.
2. All employees must keep in full compliance with USA schedules, reporting periods, and audit regulations.

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

### **Health Plans:**

Group plans for medical, dental, vision, and life insurance will be offered for employees who work at least 30 hours a week or as a .75 employee. A combination of positions which equals full time will be counted as a full-time employment for purposes of coverage. Employees will be notified during the annual open enrollment period as to the amount of the cost of this coverage which will be covered by Uncharted Shores Academy. All or part of the insurance coverage will be paid by the employer, and employees may elect to pay for additional insurance coverage for themselves or their immediate family. The employee will be responsible for the remaining cost of the coverage.

The annual Open Enrollment period each year allows for changes to employees' health carrier selection. All employees eligible for health benefits must enroll in a benefits program within 30 days from date of hire if they wish to have coverage, or enroll during the annual open enrollment time. Benefit coverage will commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month following the employee's hire date provided that the employee is enrolled within the specified time frame. Employees who do not enroll in a benefits program as outlined above must then contact the USA Administrator for a new date to enroll. Benefit eligibility will be delayed as a result.

Any premiums paid by the employee will be divided into ten equal payments for the year so that insurance coverage for ten month employees will continue throughout the summer, unless otherwise requested by the employee. All insurance coverage ends the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month following an employee termination or resignation. Upon termination of employment, an employee may be able to continue his/her insurance coverage at his/her own expense through COBRA. Contact the insurance carrier for a full explanation and current costs.

### **STRS:** State Teachers Retirement System

Credentialed teachers and credentialed administrators will contribute to STRS, and USA will pay the employer share into STRS, crediting each employee according to their full time equivalency (FTE) status.

**Vacation Days:** All school employees will not work on the scheduled vacation days for the school year, and the office will be closed. However, administrative staff will be available for work as needed. Twelve month employees will work during the summer months, but according to the planned summer schedule for the year.

**Leave of Absence:** A temporary leave of absence without pay may be requested by any employee, and may be approved according to the discretion of the Director as long as it does not impact the school.

**BTSA Program:** Teachers who need to clear their credential may take advantage of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program at no cost to themselves and may be required to do so in order to continue with the school.

## EMPLOYEE EVALUATIONS

**Classified Staff Evaluations:** Classified instructional staff and support staff may be evaluated by their direct supervisors each year. The evaluation form will be shared with the employee prior to the evaluation, and the final evaluation will be shared with the employee subsequent to the evaluation. All staff will be re-hired only if warranted by sufficient student enrollment and a positive evaluation.

**Credentialed Teacher Evaluations:** The USA Director(s) will endeavor to evaluate the credentialed teaching staff prior to April 15 each year. Additionally, teachers will set goals for themselves early in the year and evaluate their progress towards meeting those goals as part of their final evaluation. Evaluations will be used to determine the recommendation for rehiring, promotions, and pay for the following year. The USA Director(s) may take into consideration input from parents, other staff members, and the teacher under evaluation in making the final decision. The Director(s) will meet with the teacher under review to discuss the recommended status and pay before forwarding it to the USA Governing Board for final approval. Teachers may request a hearing by the board to appeal the decision of the USA Director(s). Full-time credentialed teachers with a positive evaluation may expect to continue with employment the following year. It is important to remember, however, that final status will depend upon student enrollment and instructional needs for the following year. Teachers will be informed of re-hire status as soon as practical after April 15.

### EMPLOYEE IMPROVEMENT POLICY

Employees whose performance is not in accordance with professional standards of conduct and proficiency will be alerted to the need for improvement through the following performance discipline plan. This plan does not preclude immediate termination of the employee if the Director or Governing Board deems that to be necessary, especially in the case of unprofessional or unethical behavior, as listed in the Rules of Conduct. This plan for employee discipline also does not alter the at-will status of the employee. All of these steps do not need to be conducted in order to terminate an employee. However, to facilitate annual evaluations and performance expectations, the following plan will generally be followed by all supervisors:

1. Informal discussion with the employee, citing the offending behavior and delineating the behavior which is expected. Follow-up with a documentation of discussion memo.
2. Written Memo of Expectations documenting previous discussion and reminding employee of the importance of the issue and what the expectations are.
3. Formal Letter of Reprimand, documenting continued problems and steps taken to remediate the problem.
4. Bring employee before the USA Board or Director, as applicable, for a personnel performance review and to determine appropriate disciplinary action. (cut in pay, suspension without pay, warning of risk of termination, non-renewal of employment) This action may be taken in conjunction with the formal letter of reprimand, or may be eliminated altogether, depending upon the classification status of the employee.
5. Termination of employee.

## **TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

An exit interview may be conducted for USA informational purposes. An employee must return all keys, equipment, manuals, or any other property of USA prior to receiving his/her last paycheck. If the items are not returned, the cost of these items (and in the case of keys, the cost of re-keying the locks) will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

## **RIGHT TO APPEAL**

Any action taken against an employee may be appealed to the USA Governing Board for review. The request for a review must be submitted in writing to the Board of Directors within ten (10) working days of the action. All pertinent information and facts about the action in question should be included, allowing for a true and factual review of the action in question.

Each employee will have the opportunity to respond to his/her annual evaluation. Disagreements concerning the evaluation may be taken to the Director of Uncharted Shores Academy for resolution, who will be responsible for ultimate determinations concerning hiring, pay status, discipline, and dismissal of staff. Complaints concerning the decision of the Director may be appealed to the Uncharted Shores Academy Governing Board. If termination of employment is involved, the termination will stand unless a final determination is made by the Board that an adjustment is needed.

## **Grievances and Uniform Complaint Procedure**

A staff member who has a complaint, grievance, or concern should contact the director. The director will follow the Grievance Procedure or Uniform Complaint Procedure as warranted. If a conference with the director does not resolve the issue, the matter may be taken before the Governing Board at a regular board meeting. A request to the USA Governing Board President for an agenda item must be made 10 days prior to the next scheduled board meeting. Alternatively, any individual may address the board for up to three minutes at the beginning of each regularly scheduled board meeting without prior notice. If the matter warrants further consideration, the board will put the matter on the agenda for discussion at the subsequent board meeting. Issues not resolved by the director which involves state regulations may be directed to the California Department of Education, as described in the Uniform Complaint Procedure.

### **Grievance Procedure**

USA shall follow the following grievance procedure:

1. Voice grievance at an official meeting with the Director. The Director will make a written memo of your complaint and try to resolve the issue.
2. If the issue requires an investigation, the investigation will be conducted within 5 working days of the meeting.
3. You may have a chance to meet with others to resolve the issue, if appropriate.
4. You will receive a written report regarding the disposition of the grievance within 20 working days of voicing an official grievance, including whether the grievance was directed to the USA Governing Board. Confidential personnel matters will not be discussed in the

report, but the steps taken by the Director to investigate and resolve the issue will be enumerated.

5. You may take the grievance to the USA Governing Board if unresolved after receiving the report.

### **Uniform Complaint Procedure**

USA shall follow uniform complaint procedures pursuant to state regulations when addressing complaints alleging unlawful discrimination or failure to comply with the law in consolidated categorical aid programs, migrant education, vocational education, child care and development programs, child nutrition programs and special education programs (cf /Ed. Code 35160.5, Title 5, Section 4600-4671). If any of these programs are being contracted out to the Del Norte Unified School District or the Del Norte County Office of Education, the complaint will be directed to the appropriate party at the district or county level.

**The Director is the Uniform Complaint Officer for USA, and all complaints regarding state regulations should be brought to the Director's attention first.**

The Uniform Complaint Procedures steps are described below:

1. Voice complaint at an official meeting with the Director. The Director will make a written memo of your complaint and try to resolve the issue.
2. If the issue requires an investigation, the investigation will be conducted within 5 working days of the meeting.
3. You may have a chance to meet with others to resolve the issue, if appropriate.
4. You will receive a written report regarding the disposition of the complaint within 20 working days of voicing an official complaint.
5. A written report of the findings shall include:
  - a. Findings and disposition of the complaint, including corrective actions.
  - b. Rationale for disposition;
  - c. Notice of complainant's right to appeal within 15 days the decision to the California Department of Education or USA Governing Board, as applicable;
  - d. Detailed statement of all specific issues that were brought up during the investigation and the extent to which these issues were resolved.
6. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, you may appeal the decision to the California Department of Education (CDE) (within 15 days of receiving the final written report. In your CDE appeal, you must specify the reason(s) for your appeal, include copies of your original complaint and letter, and a copy of USA's decision. Contact information for CDE is below:

Contact information for California Department of Education: (916) 319-0929  
Categorical Programs Complaints Management Unit, CDE

1430 N Street, Suite 5408; Sacramento, CA 95814

7. The complainant has the right to pursue any civil law remedies that may be available under state or federal discrimination laws, if applicable.



## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

All employees of USA are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner. Since USA is a school, all employees may have contact with students and, therefore, are a role model for them. Any complaints of abusive or unprofessional behavior will be investigated fully by the administrator, and findings of such behavior may result in immediate disciplinary action.

Uncharted Shores Academy will conduct its business & educational program fairly, impartially, in an ethical and proper manner, and in full compliance with all laws and regulations. In the course of conducting any Uncharted Shores Academy activities, integrity must underlie all relationships, including those with students, parents, staff, business/community relationships, governance and among employees. The highest standards of ethical business conduct and compliance are required of all Uncharted Shores Academy employees in performance of their responsibilities. Employees or governing board members must not engage in conduct or activity that may raise questions as to the Uncharted Shores Academy's honesty, impartiality, or reputation or otherwise cause embarrassment to the school. Furthermore, conduct that is prohibited or does not comply with community laws and regulations will not be tolerated. All employees are provided with this employee Manual and must sign that they understand the ethical conduct policies and will abide by the ethical standards required of employees. It is their duty to ask questions, seek guidance, report suspected violations, and express concerns regarding compliance with this policy and the related procedures as needed.

USA observes the following policies to assure that USA is a pleasant environment for its employees and an appropriate environment for students:

### **ALCOHOL/TOBACCO/DRUGS**

USA is an alcohol, tobacco, and drug-free workplace.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All staff and student information and records are confidential and should not be discussed with persons outside the Charter School, as delineated in the Confidentiality statement under "Introductory Information" in this Manual.

### **DIGITAL MESSAGING**

Students and staff may not share or post, by any means whatsoever (including cell phones), images of or personal information concerning any student or staff member without permission from that student or staff member. This includes postings and sharing of information that take place outside of the school campus or outside of school hours.

Employees should not be involved in cell phone texting or other electronic message systems during work hours unless it is work-related. Cell phones should be off during student contact hours, but may be checked during breaks unless permission for cell phone use during class hours has been approved by the administrator

School computer systems are for use by authorized individuals only. Individuals using these systems are subject to having all activities on these systems monitored by system or security personnel. Anyone using these systems expressly consents to such monitoring.

### **GOOD HOUSEKEEPING**

Each employee is responsible to do his/her part in keeping work areas as clean, neat and organized as possible. All employees are expected to assist with duties such as cleaning white boards and tables, sharpening pencils, and taking out trash as needed.

### **DRESS CODE**

USA employees have contact with school-age students and must maintain a presentable image for the USA. For these reasons, clothing with slang or derogatory slogans, words, or pictures/graphics will not be tolerated. Safety must be a consideration as well, and all employees must refrain from wearing clothing, shoes, or jewelry that could pose a safety hazard to themselves or others.

All employees shall maintain a clean, neat appearance with suitable clothing appropriate for the job for which they were hired. This includes good grooming and personal hygiene habits. Employees are encouraged to wear clothing with the USA logo, especially on field trips.

Additionally, employees should look professional while school is in session, and distracting jewelry, body piercings, tattoos, or unusual make up should be avoided or covered up. Revealing or sexually provocative clothing should be avoided. The employee's appearance may be the only impression some parents will ever have of the employee as many parents may never take the opportunity to get to know each employee. Therefore, employees should make every effort to ensure their appearance expresses the professional, respectful attitude which is expected of every employee.

### **LANGUAGE**

Offensive or abusive language is never appropriate in the workplace. USA recognizes this and prohibits the use of words or phrases that would be considered inappropriate around minors regardless of whether a minor is present.

### **TELEPHONE CALLS**

Discretion should be used in making or receiving personal phone calls during scheduled work hours. Personal long distance and toll calls are the financial responsibility of the employee. Calls which interfere with the employee's performance of his duties are not acceptable. .

### **VISITATION**

USA reserves the right to request any personal visitor to leave when the employee's supervisor deems the visit is distracting to the employee or when visits are excessive. Employees should be aware that their primary responsibility is to the students of the school and should curtail unnecessary chatting with friends, family, or other employees when students are present. Furthermore, the school office is a public place of business and employees should refrain from using the office as a place to socialize, air grievances, or for conferences which need to be conducted in private.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Employees will ensure that they do not engage in any activity that might create a conflict of interest for the school or for themselves individually. They will not take advantage of their position to seek personal gain through the inappropriate use of goods, materials, or non-public information. They will observe that fair dealing is the foundation for all transactions and interactions. They will protect all school assets and use them only for appropriate school approved activities.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

USA is very concerned that employees are working in as safe and as healthy an environment as can be provided. USA believes that safety is every employee's responsibility. Every employee must make a conscious effort to be aware of safety and health hazards and procedures to avoid these hazards at all times. The goal is to avoid accidents altogether.

Most accidents can be prevented. The rules themselves do not make a safe workplace, but the constant and diligent awareness of all employees is necessary to provide a safe work environment. All OSHA standards and safety requirements must be complied with. These rules are specific. In the event that an employee is unsure of the rules or has taken on a new responsibility, the employee should contact his/her supervisor for additional training.

The following are safety rules established to prevent accidents and injuries. These are safety regulations that must be complied with at all times:

- All accidents or injuries, no matter how slight, must be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor, and an accident report must be submitted to the Administrative Assistant. In the case of a student accident, the employee in direct supervision of the student should submit the report after copying the report and sending a copy home with the student. Accident reports will be kept in a file for reference as needed.
- All unsafe conditions or practices must be reported immediately to the employee's supervisor.
- All work areas must be kept clean and free of hazards; aisles should be kept free.
- Horseplay and practical jokes are prohibited.
- Safe and protective work clothing and shoes must be worn as it pertains to the type of job performed or class conducted (such as science labs), including safety glasses as needed.
- Tools and equipment must be used correctly as specified by the employee's supervisor. If the employee is not familiar with the tools or equipment, he/she should ask his/her supervisor for instruction.
- When lifting, bend knees and keep the back straight. If the item is too heavy, get help before proceeding.
- Guards or safety devices are not to be removed or tampered with on any equipment where they are present.

### **TB CLEARANCE**

USA requires that the employee submit to the USA Administrator, upon initiation of employment and every four (4) years after the first test, evidence of a chest X-ray, skin test, or physician's statement that the employee is free of tuberculosis.

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

- USA plans to evacuate the building or perform an indoor emergency drill on the first Tuesday of each month, following the tsunami siren emergency alarm.
- Students and staff will evacuate to the designated emergency shelter (the recreation center) on H street following the posted emergency evacuation route..
- Teachers will lead the students out the door and down the sidewalk to the park. All students will walk down D St for evacuation drills, but teachers must use their best judgment in the case of a true emergency to determine the best alternate route if the designated route is blocked.
- Each station will carry with them an emergency kit with all student emergency information when they leave the building unless an emergency kit has not yet been procured for that station.
- Teachers will grab their attendance binders and emergency kits located in the wall file or on a hook at the door as they leave.
- The Principal/Director will check the kitchen, the computer lab, the storage room, and rooms 3, 4, 5, & 6, and playground prior to evacuation. The secretary will check rooms 1-2, and the bathrooms prior to evacuation.
- If evacuating from the gym, one teacher will lead the students out while another checks the restrooms prior to evacuation.
- Students will be checked against the attendance list at the safety destination before returning to the school.
- Additional unannounced emergency evacuation drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown drills will be practiced using the school bell as the emergency signal for all evacuation drills and the phone intercom system for all indoor emergency drills.

### **ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

- A first aid kit will be kept in the front office and outside the kitchen.
- First aid backpacks with emergency supplies will also be placed at each room or learning station.
- All employees must know the location of fire extinguisher(s).
- Tampering with fire extinguishers is forbidden.
- Fire extinguisher(s), sprinklers, or fire exits must not be blocked at any time.
- Open flame is prohibited in areas where flammable materials are used or stored.
- Fires should be reported immediately to the front office so the alarm can be sounded.
- A fire exit map must be posted in every classroom. Staff will be made aware of the exit procedures for the employee's assigned work station.
- A copy of staff and student emergency forms will be kept in the emergency kits. The kit will be kept for easy retrieval by the designated individual, who will take the kit on all emergency drills and actual emergency situations.

**Uncharted Shores Academy  
Employee Acknowledgment Document**

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**Initial:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Employee Manual:** I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Uncharted Shores Academy Employee Manual and that I agree to its policies and procedures, including appropriate ethical and professional conduct, accurate record keeping, and acceptable work habits. I also understand that receipt of this Manual is not to be construed as a contract of employment.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Loyalty Affidavit:** I agree to publicly exhibit at all times, in all my actions, words, and behaviors, strict loyalty to Uncharted Shores Academy. This includes maintaining a positive attitude concerning the school with all co-workers, parents, and community members, as delineated in the Employee Manual.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Confidentiality:** I understand that all staff and student information and records are confidential and should not be discussed with persons outside the Charter School. I understand this policy of confidentiality extends to the furnishing, releasing, or sending Charter School records, information, materials or supplies to unauthorized persons.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Harassment:** I understand that harassment of any type, including sexual harassment, racial harassment, or gender bias harassment, will not be tolerated by Uncharted Shores Academy. I agree to follow all policies related to preventing any type of harassment in the workplace. Furthermore, I understand that any incidents of harassment should be immediately reported in writing to the Uncharted Shores Academy Administrator. I have received training concerning these regulations.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Safety Policies and Procedures:** I agree to observe all safety rules as set forth in the Employee Manual and by my supervisor. I understand that any work-related injuries must be reported immediately to the Administrator of Uncharted Shores Academy. I know where my emergency backpack and first aid kit is located. I have received training concerning safety procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Mandated Reporting:** I understand it is my responsibility to report to my supervisor and the proper authorities any suspicions of abuse or neglect of any of the children under my care. I have received official mandated reporter training.

I understand the policies above and acknowledge receipt of the employee Manual. I have reviewed the employee manual and acknowledge that the manual along with state and federal employee policies are available for viewing in the staff break room.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Distribution:**

- (1) Employee: Copy of this form may be found in the Employee Manual which is distributed to each employee.
- (2) Personnel File: Official signed copy of the Manual acknowledgement document must be on file in the employee's personnel file prior to the first day of student contact.