



# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

2019-2020

*New Frontiers Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex or disability in providing educational services, activities and programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.*

Board Approved: July 24, 2019



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ALAMO COLLEGES

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## Section 1: About Your School

### **Mission Statement**

New Frontiers Public Schools is dedicated to educating and growing our students and their character. By compassionately reaching out to people in our own community, we give students a sense of pride and purpose, inspiring them to become tomorrow's leaders.

### **Vision**

We are the school of choice in the minds of the people in our community and those that extend beyond it. To be recognized by the city at large as the institution that cares just as much about enriching the community by providing educational excellence to our students.

### **Introduction**

This handbook is designed to acquaint you with New Frontiers Public Schools, Inc. and provide you with information concerning what you can expect from the School and what the School expects from you. New Frontiers Public Schools believes that an honest, open relationship with each employee is vital to our mutual success.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. This handbook clarifies the School/Employee relationship and provides general information on the policies and procedures of New Frontiers Public Schools. Nothing in this handbook is meant to imply, create, or constitute a contract of employment or limit the School's discretion to discipline or terminate employment. Also, no employee, agent, or representative of New Frontiers Public Schools has the authority to authorize an employee to engage in any conduct or behavior that conflicts with New Frontiers Public Schools employment policies and procedures or to offer an expressed or implied contract of employment unless that authorization is set forth in writing and signed by an Officer of the School.

As the School continues to grow, the need may arise and New Frontiers Public Schools reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the handbook from time-to-time, as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. At this same time, New Frontiers Public Schools' employment-at-will policy dictates that the employee or New Frontiers Public Schools, as the employer, may end the relationship for any reason at any time.

Employees will be notified of any policy changes to the handbook in a timely manner.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

*Title IX Statement* - "No person in the United States, shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX).

New Frontiers Public Schools does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment or advancement opportunities with regard to race, color, religion, national origin, national ancestry, age, sex, gender, disability, military status, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

### **Employment At Will**

Employment with New Frontiers Public Schools is voluntary and the employee is free to resign at will at

any time, with or without cause. Similarly, New Frontiers Public Schools may terminate the employment relationship at will at any time, with or without notice or cause, so long as there is no violation of applicable Federal or State law. Policies set forth in this handbook are not intended to create a contract, nor are they to be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind or a contract of employment between New Frontiers Public Schools and any of its employees. The provisions of the handbook have been developed by the School "Administration" and approved by the School "Board of Trustees" and, except for its policy of employment-at-will, may be amended or canceled at any time, at the sole discretion of New Frontiers Public Schools.

These provisions supersede all existing policies and practices and may not be amended or added to without the express written approval of the Chief Executive Officer and Board of Trustees of New Frontiers Public Schools, Inc.

### **Employment Applications**

New Frontiers Public Schools relies upon the accuracy of the information contained in the employment application, your resume, I-9 Form and W-4 Form as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the School's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or if the person has been hired, termination of employment. To ensure that individuals seeking employment with New Frontiers Public Schools are well qualified, a thorough background/fingerprinting and reference checks will be conducted.

### **Employment References/Verification Requests**

The Human Resources Department is authorized to respond to legitimate employment references/verification requests of current and former employees. All responses to such inquiries must be forwarded to your Supervisor or the Human Resources department who will only confirm dates of employment and position(s) held. No further employment data will be released without a written authorization by the individual who is subject to the inquiry.

### **Education Background and Teacher Certification**

For organizational or School positions where proof of graduation from a college or university is necessary, employees will be required to provide documents supporting their degree(s) upon employment with New Frontiers Public Schools. Additionally, all teaching positions will require documentation to support either a Statement of Eligibility or Certification in the state of Texas. All Instructional Aids/ Assistants are required to show documentation that they have completed the required training or hold an Associate's degree.

It is the responsibility of the individual employee to achieve and maintain re-certification and/or renewal of licenses as appropriate and to provide copies of such documentation to the Human Resources Department. Failure to remain in compliant with a qualified certification is subject to corrective action up to and including termination.

Employees who earn a graduate level degree that will enhance their contribution to the school's educational environment while employed with NFPS are eligible for additional \$1,000.00 of compensation. The degree must be specific to the area of employment. Compensation adjustments will be applied to the following school year. Employees must submit proof of completion/certification to the Human Resources Department to be considered for adjustments.

### **Drug Free Workplace**

New Frontiers Public Schools is committed to maintaining a drug-free work environment and each employee is responsible for the maintenance of such an environment. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of a controlled substance (i.e. drugs) and/or the use of alcohol or tobacco in

the workplace, or while conducting New Frontiers Public Schools business, are prohibited. Violations will result in termination of employment with New Frontiers Public Schools and may have legal consequences.

Additionally, an employee must notify New Frontiers Public Schools of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace, or while conducting New Frontiers Public Schools' business, no later than five days after such conviction. A report of a conviction must be made to the Human Resources department.

For the safety of our students and employees, New Frontiers Public Schools does random drug and alcohol testing through an outside medical facility.

NFPS will conduct drug and/or alcohol testing under any of the following circumstances:

- **RANDOM TESTING:** Employees may be selected at random for drug and/or alcohol testing at any interval determined by the Company.
- **FOR-CAUSE TESTING:** NFPS may ask an employee to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test at any time it feels that the employee may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, including, but not limited to, the following circumstances: evidence of drugs or alcohol on or about the employee's person or in the employee's vicinity, unusual conduct on the employee's part that suggests impairment or influence of drugs or alcohol, negative performance patterns, or excessive and unexplained absenteeism or tardiness.
- **POST-ACCIDENT TESTING:** Any employee involved in an on-the-job accident or injury under circumstances that suggest possible use or influence of drugs or alcohol in the accident or injury event may be asked to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test. "Involved in an on-the-job accident or injury" means not only the one who was or could have been injured but also any employee who potentially contributed to the accident or injury event in any way.

Nothing in this policy prohibits, or in any way limits, the lawful use of prescription or nonprescription drugs. However, an employee must inform his/her immediate supervisor if he/she is using a prescription or nonprescription drug which could impair work performance or pose a risk of harm to the employee, to others, or to property. It is the employee's responsibility to determine from his or her physician(s) if the medication can impair work performance or pose such a risk. If the lawful use of lawful prescription or nonprescription drugs does limit or otherwise impair the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of his or her position or otherwise creates a safety risk, the Human Resources Department will meet with the employee to determine whether a reasonable accommodation is available.

Employees are encouraged to report any suspicious behavior observed at school or at any school-related or school-sponsored activity. Strangers or former employees walking unaccompanied in areas not generally open to the public should be pointed out to a supervisor.

Former employees may not enter areas that are not open to the public after they are no longer employed by New Frontiers Public Schools.

New Frontiers Public Schools is committed to providing a safe workplace that is free from violence or threats of violence. Any acts of violence in the workplace are prohibited and subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Additionally, any and all threats of violence, direct or indirect, serious or said in jest, are prohibited. All threats will be taken seriously and are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Employees concerned about family violence being brought into the workplace or in the work parking lot are encouraged to notify their supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

Any employee who receives a protective or restraining order that lists New Frontiers Public Schools as a protected area is required to provide the HR Dept. with a copy of the order and information requested by New Frontiers Public Schools to identify the individual subject to the order.

## **Anti-Harassment**

New Frontiers Public Schools is committed to providing a zero tolerance, harassment-free work environment whether sexual or discriminatory in nature in which its employees and students are treated with courtesy, respect and dignity. It is illegal and against District policy for any employee to make unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature; or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment through physical or verbal conduct relative to an employee's gender, religion, age, national origin, disability or sexual preference or any other characteristic protected under law.

New Frontiers Public Schools strongly discourages non-business relationships between employees with supervisory or evaluative authority and the employees that they supervise or evaluate. These relationships can lead to the appearance of exploitation and can impair the trust and integrity of the employment relationship. Further, those individuals upon whom New Frontiers Public Schools has entrusted managerial, supervisory, or evaluative responsibilities carry a special responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical and professional standards and to avoid any actions that may appear to undermine the mission of the School.

Any employee engaging in harassing activity will be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and/ or termination. Employees who believe that they are being subjected to harassment must immediately report the incident to their Supervisor to investigate. Supervisors must notify the HR department for a proper investigation and determine what action will be taken. The identity of the employee making a report will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible.

Any employee, supervisor or manager who becomes aware of possible harassment is required to promptly advise the Human Resources Department.

This policy has been established to ensure employees that the issue of harassment will be dealt with in a prompt and confidential manner. Employees will not be penalized for reporting an incident or for participating in the investigation.

## **Workplace Dating**

Employees who are in administration/management/supervisory/leadership roles are prohibited from dating any employee over whom they have direct or indirect supervision.

If two employees are involved in a dating relationship, it will be presumed by New Frontiers Public Schools that both parties welcome the relationship unless one or the other notifies their supervisor and the Human Resources department to the contrary. Public displays of affection and favoritism in the course of employment are prohibited.

Behavior that occurs during a disagreement or following a termination of the relationship must not violate New Frontiers Public Schools' harassment policy.

## **Social Media**

Material that employees post on social networks that is publicly available to those in the school community must reflect the professional image applicable to the employee's position. The material must not impair the District's or employee's capacity to maintain the respect of students and parents/guardians or impair the employee's ability to serve as a role model for children. NFPS employees are personally responsible for the content they publish online. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long

time—protect your privacy.

Engaging in social-networking friendships on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, or other social networking sites is prohibited with students, and strongly discouraged with parents or guardians of students. The District recognizes that because of the tight-knit community of NFPS, many staff members may have students or parents of students, who are family members or close personal friends. However, the District cautions staff members against engaging in such social-networking friendships with these individuals.

When contributing online do not post confidential student information and do not post pictures of any students on your personal sites.

### **School values**

Represent the District values and respectfully express ideas and opinions. All communications should be done in good taste to build trust and responsibility in your relationships. Do not denigrate or insult others including students, staff, administrators, parents, or other districts. Any online contributions must be in accordance with policy, building handbooks or other guidelines provided by the District. Consider carefully what you post through comments and photos. A violation of these guidelines could be regarded as a form of professional misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

### **Build Community/Positively Represent School**

Represent the District and the students and parents you serve in the best light. Respect the privacy and the feelings of others. Under no circumstance should offensive comments be made about students or colleagues (including administrators) nor the District in general. Negative comments about people may amount to cyberbullying and could be deemed a disciplinary offense. Your posts and comments should help build and support the school community. Do not comment on nor forward unsupported information, e.g. rumors. You are responsible for what you and others post, even if on a personal page, be certain it is accurate and supports your organization. It is a good idea to monitor your profile page to ensure that all material posted by others does not violate these guidelines.

## **Employee Complaints, Concerns, and Grievances**

Employees are entitled to fair and objective consideration of their concerns. All employees shall first bring their work-related complaints or concerns to their immediate supervisor. Most problems can be resolved satisfactorily through early identification and discussion. Complaints or concerns which are not resolved at the supervisory level may be addressed using the grievance procedure outlined below. If the grievance involves any member of the grievance resolution process the employee may seek redress at the next level of the process.

An employee who has a grievance shall submit it in writing to their Supervisor/ Principal within 15 school days of the date that the employee knew or should have known of the alleged harm. The complaint must be specific, and where possible, suggest a resolution. The Supervisor/ Principal will meet with the employee and will review and assess the grievance. The Supervisor/ Principal will attempt to remedy the grievance in the best interests of the affected parties and document the outcome. The Supervisor/ Principal must respond to the employee and issue a final decision in writing within ten school days of the Supervisor's/Principal's receipt of the complaint. If the employee is not satisfied with the result, or if the Supervisor/Principal does not respond in writing to the employee within the required timeframe, the employee may file a written appeal to the CEO/ Superintendent. This written appeal shall be filed with the CEO/ Superintendent's office within ten school days of the employee's receipt of the Principal's written decision. The written appeal must be specific, and where possible, suggest a resolution. The written appeal shall NOT include any new issues or unrelated complaints not contained in the original complaint submitted to their Supervisor/Principal. The grievance shall be considered concluded if the employee does not appeal within the required timeframe.

The CEO/ Superintendent or the designee shall meet with the employee; review and assess the complaint, and issue a final written decision within 15 school days of the receipt of the written appeal. If any of this 15-day period occurs during the summer months when employees involved in the complaint are not on duty, the review of the appeal will be conducted as soon as possible following the return of all parties to duty or earlier when agreed by all parties involved.

If the employee is dissatisfied with the response from the CEO/ Superintendent or his designee, the employee may make their complaint known in writing to the Board of Trustees. The complaint to the Board of Trustees shall be delivered to the CEO. The written complaint shall NOT include any new issues or complaints not contained in the original complaint submitted to the Principal. The complaint shall be delivered to the President of the Board of Trustees by the Chief Executive Officer and shall include a copy of the written complaint to the CEO and the CEO's or his designee's response. The President of the Board of Trustees shall, at the next regular meeting of the Board, distribute a copy of the complaint record to all Trustees for their consideration. The Board of Trustees shall review the written presentation from the complainant as well as the response(s) previously provided. Individuals who are dissatisfied with the response of the CEO/ Superintendent or his designee may present their complaint to the Board of Trustees during the time of Citizen's Presentations at the next regular meeting of the board of trustees. The board shall "stop, look, and listen" to the complaint. The Board of Trustees may **NOT** deliberate or act on the complaint except in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Failure of the Board to act on the complaint has the effect of upholding the CEO/Superintendent's or his designee's decision.

### **Gifts and Gratuities**

New Frontiers Public Schools employees may not accept gifts, entertainment, alcohol, favors or other types of gratuities from parents, students, vendors, consultants, contractors or suppliers other than promotional and/or other items of value in excess of \$25 to include holiday gifts and end of year gifts from students and parents.

Employees may not use their position to obtain favorable pricing on personal purchases.

Any offers of gifts or special favors of a personal nature are to be reported to the employee's supervisor.

Violators will be subject to the Employee Standards of Conduct as noted in Enforceable Standards section of this handbook.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

It is essential that all personnel act appropriately and professionally when dealing with others.

Employment with New Frontiers Public Schools imposes a responsibility to act in the school's best interest. Transactions with individuals or organizations outside of New Frontiers Public Schools must be conducted within a framework established and controlled by the District Office of the Schools.

As an employee of the School, it is imperative that business dealings with outside firms or individuals will not result in unusual or personal gains for the employee, the individual or the said firm. Unusual gain refers to bribes, product bonuses, special fringe benefits, unusual, price breaks, and other windfalls designed to ultimately benefit either party, or both. Personal gain may result not only in cases where an employee or relative has a significant ownership in a firm with which New Frontiers Public Schools does business, but also when an employee or relative receives any kickback, bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving New Frontiers Public Schools. Promotional plans that could be interpreted to involve unusual or personal gain require specific District-level approval. For the purpose of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage. No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, it is imperative that they disclose to an Officer of the School as soon as possible the existence of any actual or

potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

### Hiring of Relatives

The employment of relatives in the same area of an organization may cause serious conflicts and problems with favoritism and employee morale. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried into day-to-day working relationships.

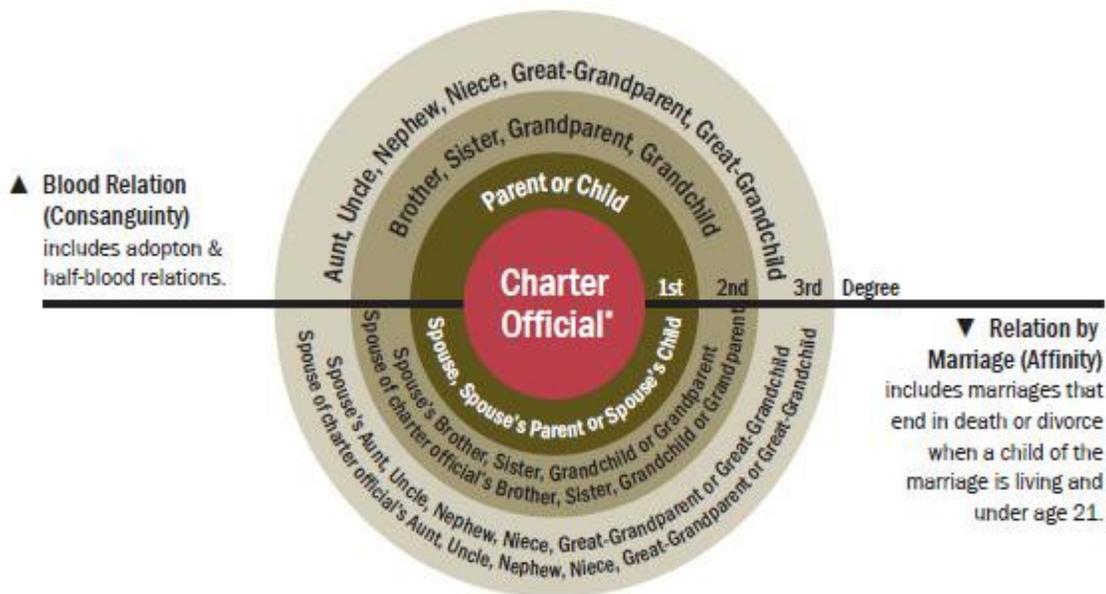
Relatives of persons currently employed by New Frontiers Public Schools may be hired only if they will not be working directly for or supervising a relative. This policy applies to any relative, higher or lower in the organization, which has the authority to review employment decisions. New Frontiers Public Schools employees cannot be transferred into such a reporting relationship.

If the relative relationship is established after employment, the individuals concerned will decide who is to be transferred. If that decision is not made within thirty (30) calendar days, the Chief Executive Officer/Superintendent will make the final determination. Every effort will be made to provide an opportunity that is similar in scope and salary to their existing position; however, no guarantee of employment can be offered.

In other cases, where a conflict or the potential for conflict arises, even if there is no supervisory relationship involved, the parties may be separated by reassignment or termination of employment.

For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is within the third degree of consanguinity (see following diagram).

200.100 Nepotism Diagram



## **Outside Employment**

Employees may hold outside jobs as long as they meet the performance standards of their job with New Frontiers Public Schools. All employees are judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to New Frontiers Public Schools' scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements.

If New Frontiers Public Schools determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the requirements of the Schools as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he or she wishes to remain with New Frontiers Public Schools.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside New Frontiers Public Schools for materials produced or services rendered while performing their jobs.

## **Non-disclosure**

The protection of confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to the interests and the success of the Schools. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

Active projects and proposals	Marketing Strategies
Budgets and forecasts	New materials research
Pending projects and proposals	Proprietary production processes
Customer lists	Research and development strategies
Customer preferences	Student health records
Facility prototypes	Student lists/ demographics
Financial information	Student records/ addresses
Instructional methodology	Technological data and systems
Labor relations strategies	

All employees are required to sign the handbook and doing so you understand that a non-disclosure agreement is a condition of employment. Employees who improperly use or disclose trade secrets or confidential business information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and legal action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

## **Disability Accommodations**

New Frontiers Public Schools is fully committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ensuring equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons with disabilities. All employment practices and activities are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis.

Reasonable accommodation is available to all disabled employees, where their disability affects the performance of job functions. All employment decisions are based on the merits of the situation in accordance with defined criteria, not the disability of the individual.

This policy is neither exhaustive nor exclusive. New Frontiers Public Schools is committed to taking all other actions necessary to ensure equal employment opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with the ADA and all other applicable Federal, State, and local laws.

## **Immigration Law Compliance**

New Frontiers Public Schools is committed to employing United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States. The School does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of

citizenship or national origin.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with the School within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid.

## Section 2: About Your Job

### **Introductory Period**

Although New Frontiers Public Schools works closely with employees throughout their employment, the first ninety (90) days are regarded as especially important in determining a mutual work relationship. Throughout this introductory period, the school will be evaluating the employee's capabilities, work habits and overall progress as described in the employee's job description.

Any significant absence/ leave during this period will automatically extend an introductory period by the length of the absence/ leave.

During the introductory period, new employees are eligible for those benefits that are required by law, such as workers' compensation insurance. Refer to Section 4 of this handbook for further information regarding your benefits.

Upon satisfactory completion of this introductory employment period, employees are considered "regular" employees. The introductory period may be extended if additional time is needed for effective demonstration of an employee's skills and work habits. Either the employee or the School may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the introductory period, with or without cause or advance notice.

### **Position Classifications and Status**

Each New Frontiers Public Schools position is classified as either Non-Exempt or Exempt in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time, but rather determine specific provisions as outlined in the FLSA laws.

Exempt employees are salaried employees and are exempt from the payment of overtime. These are employees who serve in an executive, administrative or professional capacity and the exempt classification is dependent on the type of work the individual performs.

Non-exempt employees receive 1.5 times their regular hourly rate for all hours physically worked more than forty (40) in the School's scheduled work week, and detailed records must be kept of the employee's daily and weekly hours worked. Employees can be required to work overtime anytime management determines overtime is necessary. Scheduled work week starts on Sunday and ends on Saturday.

See following Position Classifications and Status Matrix for more details.

Status	Position Classification	No. Months Work/Year		Overtime Eligibility	TRS	Workers Comp	Vacation Eligible	Personal Days
Full Time	Exempt	10		No	Yes	Yes	No	6
Full Time	Exempt		12	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Full Time	Non-Exempt	10			Yes	Yes	No	6
Full Time	Non-Exempt		12	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Part Time	Exempt	10		No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Part Time	Exempt		12	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Part Time	Non-Exempt	10		Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Part Time	Non-Exempt		12	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Full Time	Introductory Exempt	10		No	Yes	Yes	No	6 after 90 days
Full Time	Introductory Exempt		12	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	6 after 90 days
Part Time	Introductory Exempt	10		No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Part Time	Introductory Exempt		12	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Full Time	Introductory Non-Exempt	10		No	Yes	Yes	No	6 after 90 days
Full Time	Introductory Non-Exempt		12	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	6 after 90 days
Part Time	Introductory Non-Exempt	10			Yes	Yes	No	No
Part Time	Introductory Non-Exempt		12	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Full Time	Temporary Exempt	10		No	No, Social Security	Yes	No	No
Full Time	Temporary Exempt		12	No	No, Social Security	Yes	No	No
Part Time	Temporary Non-Exempt	10		Yes	No, Social Security	Yes	No	No
Part Time	Temporary Non-Exempt			Yes	No, Social Security	Yes	No	No
Full Time or Part Time	Substitute	N/A	N/A	No	No, Social Security	Yes	No	No

## **Status Definitions**

**REGULAR FULL-TIME** employees are those who are not in a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work New Frontiers Public Schools' full-time schedule. Generally, they are eligible for the School's benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

**PART-TIME** employees are those who are not assigned to a temporary or introductory status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than eighteen (18) hours per week. While they do receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Workers' Compensation insurance), they are ineligible for all of the School's other benefit programs including, but not limited to, insurance benefits and paid vacation.

**INTRODUCTORY** employees are those whose performance is being evaluated to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with New Frontiers Public Schools is appropriate. A formal written performance evaluation is to be conducted at the end of an employee's introductory period by the employee's direct supervisor. Employees who satisfactorily complete the introductory period will be classified as a regular full-time or part-time employee based upon their work schedule.

**TEMPORARY** employees are those who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the workforce, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of limited time duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary employees retain the status unless and until notified of a change. While temporary employees receive all legally mandated benefits (such as Worker's Compensation insurance and Medical insurance), they are ineligible for paid vacation and New Frontiers Public Schools' other benefit programs.

## **Performance Evaluations**

Supervisors and employees will discuss job performance and goals on an on-going basis. An annual performance evaluation is to be conducted to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals. The Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS) and Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS) are the approved TEA tools that will be used to evaluate teachers and principals. If an employee is found to be "Not Demonstrated/Needs Improvement" a growth plan will be developed in collaboration with the employee and school principal or designee. The plan will contain:

- area(s) where improvement is needed
- specific goals and objectives to be met
- specific activities or procedures to be used to meet goals/ objectives
- and the timeframe for achieving the desired results

If the plan objectives are not realized within the specified timeframe, performance could then be further evaluated through the Corrective Action Process in Section 3.

New Frontiers Public Schools awards merit-based adjustments in an effort to recognize superior employee performance. The decision to award such an adjustment is dependent upon numerous factors, including the information documented by this formal performance evaluation process and the School's financial standing.

Performance evaluations will be considered when assignments are determined for the following School year. The immediate supervisor will ensure and be held accountable for the correct and

consistent use of observation data collected throughout the school year to use in conjunction with the end of the school year summative evaluation.

### **Compensation Policy**

It is New Frontiers Public Schools' policy to competitively compensate employees for the work they perform. Periodic wage and benefit surveys for comparable positions are conducted within surrounding school districts. The results of these surveys are compared with New Frontiers Public Schools wage and benefits programs, and consideration is given to differences in job duties and school financial standing to determine when changes are appropriate.

Exempt employees are compensated on a daily rate of pay multiplied by the number of days indicated on the Employee Change Form.

Non-Exempt employees are compensated on an hourly rate multiplied by the number of hours expected to work multiplied by the days indicated on the Employee Change Form.

Exempt 10-month employee exceptions: Employees will be compensated a flat rate of \$80 a day for any staff development and/or additional days required of them by Administration outside of their school year (187 days).

A record of "Time and Effort/Timesheet" must be submitted and approved by the HR department and Principal

### **Employee's Duties and Responsibilities**

As an employee of New Frontiers Public Schools, it is agreed that your responsibilities include academic duties that may be assigned from time to time, as well as the specific requirement to attend and participate in departmental, divisional and other faculty meetings. Additionally, your responsibilities may include mentoring, coaching, and/or other extra-curricular duties as specified by school administrators. As an employee, you may be assigned professional duties that may include, but are not limited to, supervisory duties for study hall, detention, Saturday School, Camps, lunchroom, playground, or other assignments as may be designated by school administrators. All extra duty will be documented by clocking in and out with your timecard. Data will be collected with payroll and processed accordingly.

Employees are expected to be available on a full-time basis to meet responsibilities at New Frontiers Public Schools. All faculty members are expected to be available at a minimum for assigned school duties at 7:15 AM each school day and remain available until 4:15 PM. (Work hours may vary by department.) Conference periods are provided so that teachers may perform work directly related to their assigned instructional duties.

Conference periods are considered part of the instructional day and as such leaving the campus during their conference period is not permitted unless the Teacher has obtained permission in advance from the Principal.

### **Stipends**

For certain duties and responsibilities outside of an employee's normal duties, the school may provide a stipend. The school principal is responsible for recommending such stipends within the annual operating budget to the CEO. Approved stipends will be documented via the Notice of Supplemental Duty Assignment form and the Personnel Action Form completed by Human Resources.

## **Pay Periods**

New Frontiers Public Schools operates on a semi-monthly pay cycle. A schedule of pay periods and pay dates are distributed to all employees each year.

If a regularly scheduled payday falls during an employee's vacation, the employee's paycheck will be mailed to them. If a regularly scheduled payday falls during a weekend, payroll will be distributed on the Friday before. If a regular payday falls during a holiday or school closure, checks will be mailed. Earnings Statements will be mailed if requested, otherwise they will be available upon return to school. Employees must be sure that the Human Resources Department has the most current address information.

New Frontiers Public Schools offers employees convenient direct deposit as a preferred method of payment. This system offers the option of having employee's paycheck deposited to a maximum of three separate accounts, such as savings, checking, etc.

Employees are encouraged to sign up for direct deposit. (The School is not responsible for any fees charged to an employee for payroll errors resulting from miscommunication of address or direct deposit changes.) Direct deposit is not available for final checks upon termination of employment. Final checks will be mailed.

## **Administrative Pay Corrections**

New Frontiers Public Schools takes reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday. In the event there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of the Finance Department – Payroll so corrections can be made.

## **Paycheck Errors**

- **Underpayments:** In the event of an error resulting in an underpayment to an employee, the employee will be properly compensated on or before the next scheduled pay date.
- **Overpayments and deduction adjustments of \$50 or less:** If an employee has been overpaid an adjustment will be made on the next scheduled pay date. The Finance Department – Payroll will notify the employee before the adjustment is made.
- **Overpayments and deduction adjustments greater than \$50:** New Frontiers Public Schools may collect overpayments up to one (1) year from the date the employee is notified of the overpayment.

## **Pay Deductions and Set-offs**

Federal and State laws mandate that the School make deductions from every employee's paycheck for certain items such as Federal income taxes and Medicare. No deductions, other than those required by law or assigned by court order, will be made from the employee's paycheck without written authorization. Participation in School medical/ dental and 457 investment plans implies employee authorization of related payroll deductions.

Pay set-offs are pay deductions taken by the School usually to help pay off a debt or obligation to New Frontiers Public Schools or others. Questions concerning why deductions were made from an employee's paycheck or how they were calculated should be directed to the Finance Department – Payroll.

## **Timekeeping**

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every employee. Federal and State laws require that New Frontiers Public Schools keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. All employees are required to use the Virtual Timeclock to record their hours worked. Non-Exempt employees are not allowed to clock in sooner than 4 minutes before/after their scheduled shift and clock out no later than 4 minutes before/after the scheduled shift. Non-Exempt employees are required to clock in/out for lunch breaks in addition to the beginning and end of the day.

Employees are not allowed to clock another employee in or out. Clocking in/out for another employee will result in immediate corrective action that may include termination of employment.

### **UNREPORTED HOURS**

The FLSA does not permit an employer to benefit from the work of an employee without compensating them for such work. Therefore, all hours worked must be reported using the Virtual Time Clock ProClient. Any time spent working while not clocked in (a.k.a. “working off the clock”) is strictly prohibited. Employees are required to clock in before performing any work and are not permitted to clock out until all work has stopped. Employees that underreport or fail to report hours worked are subject to corrective action up to and including termination.

Examples of “working off the clock” may include:

- **Forgetting to clock in or out**
- Voluntarily continuing to work at the end of regular working hours
- Taking work home to complete on the weekend or in the evening
- Checking/Reading/Reviewing work-related emails or listening to work-related voicemail messages while away from the office or workplace
- Answering phones, emails, or attending to customers while clocked out for a lunch break

Once an employee has clocked in, he/she is responsible for starting work. When a shift has been completed, it is the employee’s responsibility to clock out including before extra-curricular activities start. Employees conducting personal business or simply not working while clocked in may be considered “riding the clock” and could be subject to corrective action up to and including termination.

The supervisor will review the timesheets and then initial the time record before submitting it for payroll processing. In addition, if corrections or modifications are made to the time record, both the employee and the supervisor must verify the accuracy of the changes. Employees that consistently have missed punches or tardiness are subject to corrective action and noted in the employee’s evaluation.

Employees who violate the Employee Time Clock Policy will be subject to disciplinary actions.

- 1st offense will result in a verbal warning.
- 2nd offense will result in a written warning or termination.

Any instance of falsifying time records will result in immediate termination. District Office is responsible for accurately reporting and maintaining documented time reports.

**Overtime**

Overtime hours are not budgeted and is not allowed unless approved and signed prior to processing payroll. Supervisors must sign off on timesheets with an explanation included about the overtime. Submit timeclock report to Payroll for processing in accordance with Federal and State wage and hour regulations. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time off on sick leave, vacation leave, or any leave of absence will not be considered hours worked for purposes of performing overtime calculations. Non-exempt employees will be paid time one and one-half for all hours physically worked in excess of forty (40) hours in any one work week.

Failure to work scheduled overtime may result in disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

## Section 3: Your Responsibilities

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

Arriving or leaving work on time, every day is crucial to the efficient performance of employee duties. To succeed as a team, employees must all be able to depend upon their fellow employees to be present for work as scheduled.

All Campus employees are required to clock in/out daily using the Virtual TimeClock when they arrive at school and when they leave for the day. The virtual time clock is located on the desktop of every classroom computer including the front office. If an employee leaves campus for any reason, they must clock out when they depart and clock in when they return. Failure to adhere to this requirement may lead to disciplinary action.

The District realizes that sometimes circumstances do arise which make being absent or late for work unavoidable. These circumstances must be kept to a minimum. Teachers must leave three days of work available for substitutes. Poor attendance and excessive tardiness is defined as at least three (3) times in ninety (90) days without approved written absence/tardiness excuse from your supervisor. Should this happen, employees may receive disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Any employee absent without notification for one or more consecutive days is considered to have abandoned their job and will be subject to immediate discharge.

### **Personal Appearance**

Dress, grooming and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the professional image New Frontiers Public Schools presents to its students, parents, clients, and visitors.

During the workday, employees are expected to present a clean and neat appearance and to dress in business casual attire. **I.D. Badge is part of your NFPS uniform and must be worn every day.** For additional guidance, please confer with your immediate supervisor. Employees who arrive to work inappropriately dressed will be sent home and directed to return to work in acceptable attire. Under such circumstances, employees will not be compensated for the time away from work. Fridays are designated as spirit days; all employees may dress less formally as long as appropriate business standards are followed.

Examples of business attire consists of dress slacks and shirts, skirts, suits or dresses. Men must wear ties on special occasions when asked. Dresses and skirts should not be shorter than one (1) inch above the knee. Dress jeans, athletic shoes and spirit/college T-shirts may be worn on casual Friday. Jeans worn to work should fit appropriately, not be torn or overly faded, and not show signs of excessive wear. Shoulder straps for women should be at least two (2) inches in width.

<p><b><u>Inappropriate Clothing/Shoes:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Torn, ripped, ragged, jeggings, treggings, leggings, and strapless attire is not acceptable.</li> <li>• Tank tops or spaghetti strap tops</li> <li>• Tight fitting or revealing clothing.</li> <li>• No cleavage showing – neckline appropriate</li> <li>• Flip flops and slippers are not acceptable</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Jewelry, Hair, Tattoos</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Appropriate:</u> Ear Piercings, natural colors for hair, hair must be neat and clean.</li> <li>• <u>Inappropriate:</u> ear gauges, ear cuffs, and tongue, nose, lip, eyebrow, and unnatural hair color. Prohibited tattoos on neck, head, face, shoulders and forearms. Existing ones must be covered not to be visible.</li> </ul>
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<p>footwear during in session school days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men should not wear sandals to work.</li> <li>• Women may not wear open-toed sandals without a back strap.</li> <li>• Undergarments may not be visible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All male employees shall be required to be clean-shaven at all times, with the exception of a well-trimmed mustache or beard.</li> </ul>
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Casual attire is acceptable during field trips and Professional Development days when the students are not in session. The school Nurse shall remain in scrubs all year long with the exception of Fridays and Professional Development. Contact your supervisor or human resources if you have any questions.

## **Fundraising Activities**

### **Single-Day Fundraising**

In an effort to comply with federal laws governing fundraising in 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations such as New Frontiers all fundraising activity must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer prior to scheduling. Each campus is allowed only two (2) single-day campus-wide fundraisers annually per school based sponsored committee. Each committee may designate the funds to their desired school purpose. Each committee is responsible for their own bookkeeping to maintain accurate balances of their fundraising balances

All fundraising activities must be submitted to the Principal for review and tentative scheduling.

### **Multiday Fundraising**

Each grade level, and groups such as the National Junior Honor Society and Student Council, may raise funds throughout the school year to pay for costs of field trips, incentives, awards, etc.

All fundraising activities must be coordinated and approved by the Principal before implementation. Check requests and Purchase Request's (see below) from the Fundraiser Account must be approved by the principal in advance. The principal will initial on the "Supervisor Approval" line of the Requisition Form. All funds raised through such activities must be turned in to the school office within three (3) business days of the conclusion of the fundraising activity. Each grade level and groups are responsible for their own bookkeeping to maintain accurate balances for their fundraising balances.

### **Field Trips**

All field trip request forms must be filled out prior to submitting to your Principals at least **THREE** weeks in advance of a field trip. Failure to complete and submit three weeks in advance of the field trip, will result in non-approval. This will allow for ample time to coordinate with the cafeteria staff, transportation department, finance department, and personnel needs.

## **Training and Staff Development**

All requests for training must be approved in advance by supervisor (principal for staff). Training may be selected for employees if it is determined that the training will be beneficial in the performance of their jobs. Employees may also bring training requests to the attention of their immediate supervisor for consideration. Employees will provide a Workshop/Training Request form with supporting documentation to supervisor/ principal.

## **Reimbursements**

Employees may on occasion purchase items for the benefit of the school or a specific school activity. Employees may be reimbursed for these out of pocket purchases with supervisory approval obtained prior to the purchase. Approval is obtained through the Requisition Form. If a purchase is approved an employee may submit a Requisition Form to be reimbursed. Check requests submitted without documentation of prior supervisory approval will not be reimbursed. The same policy applies with regard to adequate supporting documentation and copies to be submitted. Any items purchased for the benefit of the school must be bought separately from personal items. If a receipt provided contains personal items, the reimbursement will not be processed.

## **Use of Equipment**

When using school property and equipment, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines.

Supervisors or appropriate department personnel should be notified if any equipment, machines, or tools appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Use of Phone and Mail Systems**

Personal use of telephones for outgoing calls, including local calls, should be kept to a minimum. Employees will be required to reimburse the district for any charges resulting from the personal use of the telephone. Phones are available for personal outgoing calls during breaks and meal periods.

The mail system is reserved for business purposes only. The use of New Frontiers Public Schools paid postage for personal correspondence is not permitted. Employees should refrain from sending or receiving personal mail at the workplace.

To ensure effective telephone communications, employees should speak courteously and professionally.

## **Employee Cell Phones**

Cell phones provided to employees for work-related use remain the property of the District. Authorization to purchase and operate a School cell phone is to be granted solely with the permission of the Chief Executive Officer and is subject to ongoing review. To be eligible for a school cell phone each employee must complete a Cellular Telephone Agreement with the district. Employees will be required to reimburse the district for any charges resulting from usage outlined in the agreement.

If an employee loses a school-issued cell phone, the employee is responsible for the cost of replacing the phone. Employees will have the cost deducted from his/ her payroll check or pay by personal check to the District Office.

Those employees who are offered a company cell phone have the option of using their personal cell phone for business. Once the IT department is aware of the employees' preference, employees will be awarded a stipend determined by the Finance department for the fiscal year for the use of their personal cell phone.

## **Computer and E-Mail Usage**

As part of New Frontiers Public Schools' commitment to the utilization of new technologies, employees may have access to school computers, technology, electronic mail, telecommunications systems and the Internet.

In order to ensure compliance with copyright law, and to protect New Frontiers Public Schools' computer system against computer viruses, security breaches (such as unauthorized intrusions by computer hackers) and other unauthorized use, all employees must read, acknowledge, and sign *New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System and Internet Policy* as part of their new hire agreement.

Employees should notify the Principal or any member of administration upon learning of violations of this policy. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Workplace Monitoring**

Workplace monitoring may be conducted by New Frontiers Public Schools to ensure quality work environment, employee safety and security.

Computers furnished to employees are the property of New Frontiers Public Schools. As such, computer usage and files may be monitored or accessed.

The School may conduct video surveillance of non-private workplace areas. Video monitoring may be used to identify safety concerns, maintain quality control, detect theft and misconduct, and discourage or prevent acts of harassment and workplace violence.

Employees can request access to information gathered through workplace monitoring that may impact employment decisions. Access will be granted unless there is a legitimate business reason to protect the confidentiality or an ongoing investigation.

Because New Frontiers Public Schools is sensitive to the legitimate privacy rights of employees, every effort will be made to guarantee that workplace monitoring is done ethically and respectfully.

## **Smoking**

In keeping with New Frontiers Public Schools' intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking is prohibited throughout the workplace. Smoking breaks must be taken outside of the workplace in designated areas. This policy applies equally to all employees, contracted service providers and visitors.

## **Environmental Awareness**

New Frontiers Public Schools encourages reducing and, when possible, eliminating the use of disposable products. Source reduction decreases the consumption of valuable resources through such workplace practices as:

Network with E-mail  
Two-sided photocopying  
Routing slips for reports  
cover sheets  
packaging material

Posting memos for all employees  
Computerized business forms  
Turning off lights when not in use  
Eliminating fax  
Reusing paper clips, folders, and binders  
Reusing  
Communication through computer  
Minimum packaging

## **Emergency Closing**

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, power failures, or earthquakes, can disrupt School operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of a work facility.

When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, the time off from scheduled work will be paid. In the event a facility is required to be closed for a period that exceeds one day, the administration will determine compensation. Employees in essential operations may be asked to work on a day when operations are officially closed.

## **Business Travel Guidelines**

It is the policy of New Frontiers Public Schools to pay for reasonable employee expenses incurred while on official business for the School. For travel where air, hotel or rental car accommodations are requested employees must complete the Expense Report that will be forwarded to their Supervisor for review. Employees must provide contact information for hotels where they will be staying. The Employee will make airline reservations at the best price possible. The Employee will secure hotel accommodations at the State and/or Federal allowable rate. Approval for these expenses is at the discretion of the Supervisor and budget review. The Expense Report must be turned into the Finance department within five business days before the trip and must include documentation (mapquest mileage, hotel, etc.) with approved signatures. Expense Reports are not accepted without the requirements stated above.

### **Air Travel**

- Air travel requires approval from the Finance Department. Every attempt should be made to make travel arrangements at least seven (7) days in advance to take advantage of reduced airfares.
- Reservations should be made with the most cost-effective airline without regard to “sky miles” incentives or memberships the employee may have.
- The employee will make air travel arrangements based on the information on an approved Expense Report

### **Hotel Expenses**

- Employees should visit <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287> for guidance on allowable rates for hotel accommodations. Upon an unforeseeable circumstance, an employee may exceed the rate up to 50%, with supervisor approval. Employees will be responsible for any amount exceeding the 50% threshold. New Frontiers Public Schools reserves the right to deduct the overage from their paycheck
- New Frontiers Public Schools may have discounted relationships or State rates available with key hotels
- Movies, laundry, dry cleaning, personal items and bar charges are the responsibility of the employee and are not subject to reimbursement
- If the employee has an “AAA” card and presents it at the time of registering at the hotel, the room rate may be discounted, but the rate must be lower than the State rate

The employee will arrange hotel reservations based on the information on an approved Expense Report

## **Meals and Auto Miles**

Employees will be reimbursed for the actual cost of meals for each day they are on travel status on school-related business/training. The maximum amount paid for meals will be based on U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) domestic maximum per diem rates. If the travel destination is not listed, the maximum amount allowed is the standard rate on the current per diem rates. If no overnight travel, then the meal per diem rate is \$36.00

In order to be reimbursed for the actual cost of meals, employees must provide receipts attached to a completed Expense Report within one (1) business day when they return from travel status. Travel expenses apply only to travel outside of Bexar County for a minimum of six (6) hours per day. Employees will be advanced personal auto miles at the current established rate on the Texas Travel rate per mile for mileage to and from their travel destination.

Employees are asked to submit an Expense report, approved by their supervisor five (5) business days before their travel departure date in order to process checks. MapQuest directions or another similar tool must be attached to the Expense Report to document mileage paid.

Use the GSA website, <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287> if traveling outside of Texas to determine meals advance based on the travel destination. Employees that travel outside the state must attach the information from the GSA website as documentation for their meals advance. Upon returning from travel receipts for meals will be required. If an employee returns from travel status early they will be responsible for reimbursing the school for any excess amount advanced for meals/hotel.

## **Visitors in The Workplace**

To provide for the safety and security of students, employees and the facilities at New Frontiers Public Schools, only authorized visitors are allowed in the workplace. Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards, protects students and faculty, guards against theft, ensures the security of equipment, protects confidential information, safeguards employee welfare, and avoids potential distractions and disturbances.

Upon entering a New Frontiers Public Schools facility, all visitors should report to the front office desk where they will be issued a visitor's pass upon presenting a valid form of identification. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors.

If an unauthorized individual is observed on New Frontiers Public Schools' premises, employees should immediately notify the Principal and direct the individual to the reception desk located in the main office.

## **Safety**

New Frontiers Public Schools provides information to employees about workplace safety and health issues through regular internal communication channels such as supervisor-employee meetings, bulletin board postings, memos, or other written communications.

Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and to exercise caution in all work activities. Employees must immediately report any unsafe conditions to the appropriate supervisor. Employees who violate safety standards, cause hazardous or dangerous situations, fail to report or, where appropriate, remedy such situations, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

In the case of accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, the injured employee must proceed to the School Nurse and have the injury assessed. The employee will complete an Incident Report form provided by the Nurse. The Nurse will forward the report to the principal and the Human Resources department. Such reports are necessary to comply with laws and initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures if warranted. If an employee requires immediate medical attention, they will be referred to an approved medical facility.

### **Security - Access to Campuses**

During the school year employees may access the campus only during instructional hours unless the principal or principal's designee is present. Employees must request access to the campus during non-instructional hours. If access is granted employees must obtain prior approval from the Principal. A log will be available in the front office for employees to document the day, date, time and purpose of the visit. This will be done prior to access. During summer break all employees must turn in all their keys. Access to the campus during summer break is limited to hours of operation.

### **Employee Standards of Conduct**

All employees are expected to:

- Meet established expectations of job performance
- Comply with attendance policies;
- Be responsible for the performance of job duties
- Be efficient
- Respect the personal and property rights of all individuals one comes in contact with during the course of New Frontiers Public Schools business
- Maintain a courteous and professional demeanor Be Public Servants which means employees must follow the code of ethics and the standard practices of Texas Educators as outlined below:

#### **Statement of Purpose**

The Texas Educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom, the Texas Educator, in maintaining the dignity of the Profession freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty. The Texas Educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas Educator, in accepting a position of Public Trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas Educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.

#### **Enforceable Standards**

##### **Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performances.**

- Standard 1.1. The educator shall not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district or educational institution.
- Standard 1.2. The educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

- Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.
- Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
- Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.
- Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records, or director coerce others to do so
- Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other applicable state and federal laws.
- Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

### **Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues**

- Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.
- Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.
- Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, or family status.
- Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.
- Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC under this chapter.

### **Ethical Conduct toward Students**

- Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
- Standard 3.2. The educator shall not knowingly treat a student in a manner that adversely affects the student's learning, physical health, mental health, or safety.
- Standard 3.3. The educator shall not deliberately or knowingly misrepresent facts regarding a student.
- Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, national origin, religion, or family status.
- Standard 3.5. The educator shall not engage in physical mistreatment of a student.

- Standard 3.6. The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student.
- Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or knowingly allow any student to consume alcohol or illegal/ unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

In addition, New Frontiers Public Schools considers the following as grounds for disciplinary actions that include termination:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Falsification of timekeeping records
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles/ equipment
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or customer-owned property
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
- Engaging in misconduct that disrupts the cooperative, harmonious teamwork environment the organization strives to promote.
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice
- Unauthorized absence from work station during the workday
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential information
- Violation of personnel policies
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct; Willfully fail to perform assigned tasks

Employment with New Frontiers Public Schools is at the mutual consent of the District and the employee, and either party may terminate that relationship at any time, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice.

## **Bullying**

All employees are required to report student complaints of bullying to the Principal or other appropriate administrator. Bullying means a single significant act or a pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property, (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student, (3) materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school, or (4) infringes on the rights of the victim at school. The definition of

bullying includes “cyberbullying.” Cyberbullying means bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

Employees who observe students engaged in bullying, or who suspect that a student has engaged in or is the victim of bullying, must report the fact or suspicion to the Principal or other appropriate administrator. The Principal, or other appropriate administrator, shall conduct an investigation into the allegations.

The Principal, or the Principal’s designee, may make a report to the local police department (or if the school is not in a municipality to the county sheriff), if after an investigation is completed, the Principal has reasonable grounds to believe that a student engaged in conduct that constitutes the offense of Assault, as defined in Section 22.01 of the Texas Penal Code, or Harassment, as defined in Section 42.07 of the Texas Penal Code.

### **Corrective Action Process**

Most employees will enjoy the benefits that come from good job performance and will only occasionally need to resolve minor job-related problems through a constructive discussion with their Supervisor. However, there may be occasions when a performance related issue has not been corrected after discussions with a Supervisor, and it becomes necessary to use a system of progressive discipline to attempt a change in behavior.

The Corrective Action process may include the following, although based on the severity of the offense immediate termination is possible:

- Verbal Warning/ reprimand via a Memorandum of Understanding
- Written Notice via Employee Corrective Action Notice to file
- Termination

The employee will be asked to review and sign each written notice. By signing, the employee does not imply that he/ she agrees with the disciplinary action, only that he/ she is aware of it. Written notices will be placed in the employee’s personnel file. No record of any written notice will be placed in an employee’s personnel file without employee’s knowledge of the written notice and the fact that the written notice has been filed.

## **Personnel Files**

The employee personnel file is a record of employment with the School and it is important that it be kept up to date. Promptly notify the HR department, via appropriate HR forms of any changes in the following:

Name	Address
Telephone number	Emergency contact information
Children's names	Number of dependents
Beneficiary	Educational credentials
Changes in family status	

Personnel files are the property of New Frontiers Public Schools District, and access to the information they contain is restricted. Employees who wish to review their own file should contact the Human Resources Department. Employees may review their own personnel files, with reasonable advance notice, in the presence of HR personnel and/or appointee. If the employee requires a copy of their personnel file the request must be submitted in writing and allow District office 72 hours advance notice to process the request.

## **Voluntary Termination**

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment with the District. The District prefers two weeks' written notice from all employees.

All insurance benefits will be canceled on the last day of the month of termination. In an exit interview with Human Resources the appropriate paperwork and a detailed explanation of the cancellation of benefits will be provided.

An employee will be considered as having voluntarily terminated his/her employment under the following conditions:

- Working for pay while on a medical or personal leave of absence.
- Failure to report to work after the expiration of an approved leave of absence.
- Failure to report to work three times without notifying their supervisor.

## **Employment Termination**

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- **RESIGNATION:** voluntary employment termination initiated by an employee
- **DISCHARGE:** involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization
- **LAYOFF:** involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization for non-disciplinary reasons
- **REDUCTION IN FORCE:** involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization as a result of position elimination
- **RETIREMENT:** voluntary employment termination initiated by the employee meeting age, length of service, and any other criteria for retirement from the organization

The School will generally schedule exit interviews at the time of employment termination. The exit interview will afford an opportunity to discuss such issues as employee benefits, conversion privileges, and repayment of outstanding debts to New Frontiers Public Schools or return of School-owned property. Suggestions, complaints, and questions can also be voiced.

Since employment with New Frontiers Public Schools is based on mutual consent, both the employee and the School have the right to terminate employment at will, with or without cause, at any time. Employees will receive their final pay in accordance with applicable State law.

Employee benefits will be affected by employment termination in the following manner:

- All vested benefits that are due and payable at termination will be paid
- Some benefits may be continued at the employee's expense if the employee submits payment
- The employee will be notified in writing of the benefits that may be continued and of the terms, conditions, and limitations of such continuance

### **Return of Property**

Employees are responsible for all property, materials, or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. Employees must return all District property immediately upon request or upon termination of employment.

Where permitted by applicable laws New Frontiers Public Schools District may withhold from the employee's check or final paycheck the cost of any items that are not returned when required. New Frontiers Public Schools District may also take all actions deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

### **Security Inspections**

New Frontiers Public Schools District strives to maintain a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives, or other improper materials. As such, the District prohibits the possession, transfer, sale, or use of such materials on its premises.

New Frontiers Public Schools District requires the cooperation of all employees in administering security inspections.

- Desks and other storage devices are provided for the convenience and use of employees but remains the sole property of the District. These desks and storage devices are subject to search at any time
- Accordingly, any agent or representative of New Frontiers Public Schools District can inspect them, as well as any articles found within them, at any time, either with or without prior notice

To facilitate enforcement of this policy, New Frontiers Public Schools District or its representative may inspect persons entering and/or leaving the premises and any packages or other belongings

### **Solicitation**

In an effort to assure a productive and harmonious work environment, employees of New Frontiers Public Schools District may not solicit or distribute literature in the workplace at any time for any purpose.

Examples of prohibited forms of solicitation include the collection of money, goods or gifts for:

- Community groups
- Religious groups
- Political groups
- Charitable groups

- The sale of goods, services, or subscriptions outside the scope of official organization business (i.e., AVON, Mary Kay, etc.)
- The circulation of petitions
- The distribution of literature not approved by the employer
- The solicitation of memberships, fees, or dues

In addition, the posting of written solicitations on school bulletin boards is restricted. Bulletin boards display important information and employees should consult them frequently for:

- Employee announcements
- Job openings
- Payday notice
- State disability insurance/ unemployment insurance information
- Workers' compensation insurance information
- Organizational announcements
- If employees have a message of interest to the workplace, they may submit it to their supervisor or principal for approval.

## Section 4: Your Benefits

### **Medical Insurance**

All eligible employees may participate in the New Frontiers Public Schools District group medical plan.

The Group plan provides a comprehensive medical insurance program for employees and their eligible dependents covering doctor visits, lab work, hospitalization, surgical and major medical expenses. This plan protects employees from the high costs associated with catastrophic illness.

Employees are able to participate in the plan on the first of the month following their initial employment date as a regular thirty (30) hours a week, full time employee. New Frontiers Public Schools District contributes a generous portion of the cost of the employee's insurance. Dependent insurance is available at an additional cost.

An employee may enroll in the medical plan when they are first eligible (as stated above) or they may enroll during "open enrollment" which occurs on an annual basis during the insurance open enrollment period. In some instances, i.e. if a spouse loses medical coverage, the employee may be able to enroll in the New Frontiers Public Schools District plan at a time other than "open enrollment." To qualify under these conditions, enrollment must be requested within thirty (30) days of the event, in writing, to the Human Resources Department.

For further information, consult the employee insurance booklets and/or contact the Human Resource Department.

### **Basic Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance**

New Frontiers Public Schools District pays the entire cost for life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance coverage for its eligible employees. Life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance benefit is equal to \$50,000 and is payable to the employee's beneficiary. Beneficiaries may be changed at the employee's request.

Federal law requires that life insurance benefits exceeding \$50,000 be reported as taxable income to the employee.

### **Worker's Compensation Insurance**

New Frontiers Public Schools District provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical or hospital treatment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, workers' compensation insurance provides benefits after a short waiting period or, if the employee is hospitalized, immediately.

Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses should inform their supervisor immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible.

Neither the District nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by New Frontiers Public Schools.

## **Vacation Benefits**

Employees are eligible for vacation based on the guidelines listed below.

- Vacation benefits ARE NOT available to Full-time 10-month employees
- Vacation for Full-time 12-month employees is calculated from Sept 1 through Aug 31 of each school year (the benefit period)
- Introductory employees must successfully complete ninety (90) actual days worked, not including holidays prior to using vacation benefits
- Beginning with the first day of the benefit period, vacation is given according to the following schedule:
  - 0 to 4 years of employment - 10 days per year
  - 5 to 9 years of employment - 15 days per year
  - 10 or more years of employment - 20 days per year
- Paid vacation time can be used in minimum increments of four hours. Employees should request approval at least four (2) weeks in advance from the supervisor by submitting an Absentee Report Form. Requests are approved based on a number of factors, including educational and business needs and staffing requirements. Failure to submit appropriate and timely paperwork may result in non-approval of vacation time and/or compensation.
- Vacation pay will not be calculated and disbursed without an accurate, complete and authorized Absentee Report Form submitted to the Finance Dept. – Payroll.
- Vacation time off is paid at the employee's usual rate of pay (daily rate) at the time of vacation. It does not include overtime or any special forms of compensation such as incentives.
- Vacation time must be used in the benefit period in which it is awarded. Any unused vacation time is forfeited.
- Unused vacation time will be paid out for resignations/terminations after November of the benefit period.

## **Holidays**

New Frontiers Public Schools District observes the following holidays:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Good Friday – Friday before Easter
- Holy Monday – Monday after Easter
- Battle of Flowers
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

Additionally, during the following weeks, New Frontiers Public Schools District will be closed for school break:

- The week of Thanksgiving
- The last week of December (Winter Break)
- The first week of January (Winter Break)
- The week of Spring Break (usually March)

*Employees must work the last scheduled day immediately preceding and the first scheduled day immediately following the holiday and or school break, unless the employee's supervisor has approved vacation or personal time off in advance.*

### **Sick/ Personal Paid Days**

New Frontiers Public Schools provides Sick/Personal paid days off to eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to personal and immediate family illnesses/ injuries or to attend to unplanned personal business.

	<b>School</b>
<b>Benefit Period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September 1 to August 31 of each academic school year</li> </ul>
<b>Eligibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10-month full-time employees are entitled to six (6) sick/ personal days per benefit year – <b>not eligible within the introductory period</b></li> <li>• Non-exempt employees are entitled to 6 sick/personal days which are automatically converted into 48 hours.</li> <li>• 12 month full-time employees are entitled to six (6) sick/ personal days per benefit year – <b>not eligible within the introductory period.</b></li> <li>• <b>Sick/ Personal days are not vacation days</b></li> </ul>

<b>Requirements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit “Absentee Report Form” to your campus Principal for approval</li> <li>• Must submit an approved “Absentee Report Form” to the Accounting Department – Payroll</li> <li>• Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury must notify their supervisor <b>1.5 hours before</b> the scheduled start of their workday. Upon return to work, employees are responsible for submitting an absentee form immediately at the start of the work day.</li> <li>• Sick/ personal days may not be taken just prior to or following a school holiday, on state assessment days or during the first or last two weeks of school. An unapproved absence will result in corrective action.</li> <li>• Sick/ personal days may be taken in increments of four (4) hours</li> <li>• Unused sick/ personal days are forfeited at the end of the benefit period or upon termination/resignation. Unused sick/personal days will not be paid out.</li> </ul>
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Any sick/ personal days that are taken beyond what is entitled to, pay above and beyond that entitled will be deducted from employee’s next payroll check.

If an employee is absent for three (3) or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, a physician's statement must be provided verifying the disability and its beginning and expected ending dates. Such verification may be requested for other sick leave absences as well and may be required as a condition to receiving sick leave benefits.

Before returning to work from a sick leave of ten (10) work days or more, an employee must provide a physician's verification that he or she may safely return to work.

**Perfect Attendance Incentive:**

Full-time Teachers/IA’s will be awarded for perfect attendance if they are present from August – December (school days) in the amount of \$500.00 payable in January.

Full-time Teachers/IA’s will be awarded for perfect attendance if they are present from January – June (school days) in the amount of \$500.00 payable in June.

## Section 5: Supplemental Benefits

### **457 Retirement Plan**

A 457 retirement savings plan is available to qualified regular full-time employees. Eligible employees may participate in the plan on the first of the month after completing 30 days of service as a regular full-time employee.

The plan is a voluntary savings plan that can provide great financial security during your retirement years.

- The plan program allows employees to set aside pretax money through payroll deductions to grow tax-free until retirement. By sheltering these contributions from current income taxes, it allows you to grow a nest egg for the future under very favorable conditions
- Although primarily a retirement plan, this plan also has some provisions which allow you to meet certain near-term financial goals, such as buying a home or investing in your own education
- It can provide a buffer for certain life crises, such as non-reimbursable medical expenses or threatened foreclosure on your home
- There is also a tax-free beneficiary provision to the 457 program which can have significant benefits for your loved ones
- Employees may contribute from 1% to 15% of their salary on a pretax basis into this retirement program up to the maximum allowed by law. Changes to the percentage of savings may be made on a monthly basis
- The employee is always 100% vested in their own contributions
- A variety of investment options are available to employees
- Funds can be rolled over from an existing qualified 457 plan from a previous employer
- There is no waiting period for rollovers
- Additional information is available through the Human Resources Department

### **Short-Term Disability**

Employer paid core benefit with voluntary employee buy up option which pays for covered loss of earnings from a qualified disability for a short-term basis (up to 11 weeks) with a 14-day waiting period.

### **Long-Term Disability**

In order to protect employees and their families from loss of income due to a major illness or injury, a long-term disability plan (also known as a salary continuation plan) is available from an independent insurance company. Employees may purchase long-term disability coverage at the employee's expense subject to the requirements of the independent insurance company.

This plan will provide a basic income at a fixed percentage of salary for illnesses or injuries that require an employee to be absent for more than three (3) months.

This benefit would continue for as long as the employee is disabled, and is offset by Social

Security payments if the employee becomes permanently disabled.

### **Dental Insurance Plans**

New Frontiers Public Schools pays 100% of the Employee Only - Low Dental Plan. If employees upgrade to the High Dental Plan or add their spouse and dependents, NFPS contributes the same dollar amount to the cost of the employee's dental insurance. All eligible employees and their dependents may participate in the group dental plan on the 1st of the month following their initial employment date, during open enrollment or if they experience a life-changing event.

If employee experience a life-changing event, the employee has thirty (30) days to elect the insurance by submitting the form to the Human Resources Department. Examples of a life changing events are divorce, loss of other insurance or addition to the family.

Eligible employees are employees who work at least 18.75 hours per week. See benefits brochure for additional information.

### **Vision Plan**

A vision care plan is available to employees who work at least 18.75 hours per week. The program offers a number of in-network practitioners who agree to fixed co-pays for office visits and provides discounts on prescriptions and frames. See benefits brochure for more detailed information or contact the Human Resources Department for further information.

### **Section 125 Plan**

New Frontiers Public Schools District participates in a Section 125 plan which allows the employee to have premiums for the selected benefits deducted from their paycheck on a pretax basis. This represents an advantage to the employee by reducing their taxable wages.

The Section 125 Plan also stipulates that the employee can increase or decrease coverage on open enrollment periods. However, the employee cannot withdraw from a program at other times except under a few very limited circumstances.

### **Long Term Care**

This insurance benefit is available on a group basis for both employees and their parents. This integrated coverage provides the insured parties with qualified home care services over a specified period of time. The member selects the time period and benefit amounts.

### **Benefits Continuation (COBRA)**

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under the District's health plan when a "qualifying event" would normally result in the loss of eligibility.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage at New Frontiers Public Schools District group rates plus an administration fee. The District's COBRA Administrator provides each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted

under COBRA when the employee becomes ineligible for coverage under New Frontiers Public Schools' District health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee's rights and obligations.

## Section 6: Types of Duties and Leaves

### **Jury Duty**

New Frontiers Public Schools District encourages employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when summoned. Employees in an eligible classification may request up to a maximum of ten (10) days per year in addition to any other paid leave.

- Jury duty pay will be calculated on the employee's base pay rate times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on the day of the absence.
- Only regular, full-time employees qualify for paid jury duty leave.
- If employees are required to serve jury duty beyond the period of paid jury duty leave, they may use any available paid time off (for example, vacation benefits) or may request an unpaid jury duty leave of absence.
- Employees must show the jury duty summons to their supervisor immediately when it is received so that arrangements may be made to accommodate their absence. Of course, employees are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.
- Either the District or the employee may request an excuse from jury duty if, in New Frontiers Public Schools' judgment, the employee's absence would create serious operational difficulties.
- The District will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full term of the jury duty absence.

### **Witness Duty**

New Frontiers Public Schools District supports employees who must appear in court for witness duty when subpoenaed to do so.

- If employees have been subpoenaed or otherwise requested to testify as witnesses by New Frontiers Public Schools District, they will receive paid time off for the entire period of witness duty.
- Employees will be granted a maximum of three (3) days of paid time off to appear in court as a witness if subpoenaed by a party other than New Frontiers Public Schools District. Employees will be paid at their base rate and are free to use any remaining paid leave benefits (such as vacation leave) to receive compensation for any period of witness duty absence that would otherwise be unpaid.
- The subpoena should be shown to the employee's supervisor immediately after it is received so that operating requirements can be adjusted, where necessary, to accommodate the employee's absence. The employee is expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

## **Assault Leave**

Assault leave provides extended job income and benefits protection to an employee who is injured as a result of a physical assault suffered during the performance of his or her job. An injury is treated as an assault if the person causing the injury could be prosecuted for assault or could not be prosecuted only because that person's age or mental capacity renders the person non-responsible for purposes of criminal liability.

An employee who is physically assaulted at work may take all the leave time medically necessary (up to two years) to recover from the physical injuries he or she sustained. At the request of an employee, the district will immediately assign the employee to assault leave. Days of leave granted under the assault leave provision will not be deducted from accrued personal leave and must be coordinated with workers' compensation benefits. Upon investigation the district may change the assault leave status and charge leave used against the employee's accrued paid leave. The employee's pay will be deducted if accrued paid leave is not available.

## **Bereavement Leave**

Employees who need to take time off due to the death of an immediate family member should notify their supervisor immediately.

Up to three (3) days of paid bereavement leave will be provided to regular, full-time employees:

- Bereavement pay is calculated based on the base pay rate at the time of absence.
- Bereavement leave will be granted unless there are unusual business needs or staffing requirements. Employees may, with their supervisors' approval, use any available paid leave for additional time off as necessary.

New Frontiers Public Schools District defines "immediate family" as the employee's spouse, partner, parent, child, stepchild, sibling, mother/ father-in-law, brother/ sister-in-law, daughter/ son-in-law, grandparents or grandchildren.

## **Family and Medical Leaves**

New Frontiers Public Schools District will follow all State and Federal laws pertaining to family and medical leaves.

- New Frontiers Public Schools District provides family and medical leaves of absence without pay to eligible employees who wish to take time off from work duties to fulfill family obligations relating directly to childbirth, adoption, or placement of a foster child or to care for a child, foster child, spouse or parent with a serious health condition or when the employee is unable to work due to a serious health condition.

- A serious health condition means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility; or continuing treatment by a health care provider.
- Regular full-time employees who have at least 12 months of service with New Frontiers Public Schools District and have worked at least 1,250 hours over the prior 12 months are eligible to request family leave as described in this policy.
- Eligible employees should make requests for family and medical leaves to the Human Resources Department at least 30 days in advance of foreseeable events and as soon as possible for unforeseeable events. Employees requesting family and medical leaves related to the serious health condition of a child, spouse, or parent may be required to submit a health care provider's statement verifying the need for a family and medical leave to provide care, its beginning and ending dates, and the estimated time required in the leaves.
- Eligible employees may request up to a maximum of 12 weeks of family and medical leave within any 12-month period. A combination of family and medical leave may not exceed this maximum limit. Employees may choose to use any accrued paid time before taking unpaid family leave. Married couples may be restricted to a combined total of 12 weeks leave within any 12-month period for childbirth, adoption, or placement of a foster child or to care for a parent with a serious health condition. Leaves for birth and care or placement for adoption or foster care must conclude within 12 months of the birth or placement. Employees may take a family and medical leave intermittently (taking leave in blocks of time or reducing their normal or daily work schedule) whenever medically necessary to care for a seriously ill family member or because the employee is seriously ill and unable to work.
- Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans, health insurance benefits will be provided by New Frontiers Public Schools District for the full period of the family and medical leave whenever such insurance was provided before the leave was taken and on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Arrangements will be made for employees taking unpaid leave to pay their contribution of health insurance premiums while on leave. Employees may choose to have the premiums deducted from their pay upon their return to work. Selecting this option means that premiums will accumulate and deductions will be more than normal until premiums are current.
- Benefit accruals, such as vacation, sick/personal leave, and holiday benefits will be suspended during the unpaid leave and will resume upon return to active employment.
- An employee on family leave is requested to provide Human Resources with at least two weeks advance notice of the date the employee intends to return to work. When family leave ends, the employee will be reinstated to the same position, if it is available, or to an equivalent position for which the employee is qualified.

If an employee fails to report to work promptly at the end of the approved leave period, New Frontiers Public Schools District will assume that the employee has resigned.

## **Personal Leave**

New Frontiers Public Schools District *may* provide an extended leave of absence *without pay* to eligible employees who wish to take time off from work duties to fulfill personal obligations.

- Regular full-time employees who have completed 1 year of employment are eligible to request a non-paid leave of absence.
- As soon as an employee becomes aware of the need for a personal leave of absence, they should request leave from their supervisor. Upon supervisory approval, leave forms are to be forwarded to Human Resources by the employee.
- Personal leave may be granted for a period of up to 12 weeks every 12 months. With supervisory approval, an employee may take any available sick or vacation time as part of the approved leave.
- Requests for personal leave will be evaluated based on a number of factors, including anticipated workload requirements and staffing considerations during the proposed period of absence.
- Health insurance benefits will be provided by the District for the full period of the personal leave whenever such insurance was provided before the leave was taken; however, arrangements will be made for employees electing to continue their benefits during the unpaid leave to pay the District's full health insurance premiums while on leave.
- Benefit such as vacation, sick leave, or holiday benefits, will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon return to active employment.
- When a personal leave ends, every reasonable effort will be made to return the employee to the same position, if it is available, or to a similar available position for which the employee is qualified. However, New Frontiers Public Schools District cannot guarantee reinstatement in all cases.

If an employee fails to report to work promptly at the expiration of the approved leave period, the District will assume the employee has resigned.

## **Military Leave**

A military leave of absence will be granted to employees, except those occupying temporary positions, to attend scheduled drills or training or if called to active duty with the U.S. armed services.

- Employees will receive partial pay for two-week training assignments and shorter absences. Upon presentation of satisfactory military pay verification data, employees will be paid the difference between their normal base compensation and the pay (excluding expense pay) received while on military duty. The portion of any military leaves of absence in excess of 2 weeks will be unpaid. Employees may use any available paid time off for the absence.

- Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans, health insurance benefits will be provided by the District for the full period of the personal leave whenever such insurance was provided before the leave was taken and on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Arrangements will be made for employees taking unpaid leave to pay their share of health insurance premiums while on leave.
- Benefits such as vacation, sick and holiday benefits will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon the employee's return to active employment.
- Employees on two-week active duty training assignments or inactive duty training drills are required to return to work for the first regularly scheduled shift after the end of training, allowing reasonable travel time. Employees on longer military leave must apply for reinstatement in accordance with all applicable State and Federal laws.
- Every reasonable effort will be made to return eligible employees to their previous position or a comparable one. They will be treated as though they were continuously employed for purposes of determining benefits based on length of service, such as the rate of vacation accrual and job seniority rights.

### **Excessive Leave/ Prorated Salary Schedule**

Leave in excess of time earned or available will be docked at the employee's daily rate of pay. In some instances, the Human Resource Department or the employee may determine that a prorated salary schedule may be necessary.

An employee who commences employment after the first scheduled workday will only be paid the daily rate of pay offered for the number of days remaining in the school year.

## Section 7: Updates

### **New Updates**

We strive to make additions and improvements when necessary for our employees. From time to time, the District may update the handbook in the middle of the school year. When the employee handbook is updated a copy of the update(s) will be emailed to all employees. Those who don't have a NFPS email will receive the update(s) from their supervisor. The updated employee handbook will also be placed online for employees to access.

Employee feedback is always appreciated – through the Human Resources mailbox available at the school front office or through participation in the employee surveys.

## **New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System and Internet Policy**

As part of New Frontiers Public Schools' commitment to the utilization of new technologies, employee's may have access to New Frontiers Public Schools' computer, technology, electronic mail, and telecommunications systems (collectively, "New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System") and the Internet. In order to ensure compliance with copyright law, and to protect New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System against computer viruses, security breaches (such as unauthorized intrusions by computer hackers) and other unauthorized use, the following Computer System and Internet Policy is effective immediately:

1. New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System, including, but not limited to, it's electronic mail system (the "E-Mail System"), is the property of New Frontiers Public School.
2. Employees may have access to the Internet through New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System. Employees may access and use the Internet and New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System (including, but not limited to the E-Mail System) only for educational purposes in the furtherance of official New Frontiers Public Schools business, except for occasional personal use after hours in compliance with New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System and Internet Policy.
3. Each personal electronic mail message transmitted by an employee over the E-Mail System shall clearly reflect the fact that it contains only the employee's own personal views and not the views of New Frontiers Public Schools. Use of "Auto Signature's", corporate, school, and/or similar employment affiliation in the signature section of email which is personal in nature is prohibited.
4. Employees may have access to the Internet through New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System. Subject to any exceptions specifically provided herein, use of the New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System and access to the Internet through New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System shall be for official use only. Employees are authorized to utilize their email account to send and receive email not related to official New Frontiers Public Schools business.
5. Use of the New Frontiers Public Schools' E-Mail system to send attached, or otherwise included files which exceed 1 Mb (1,000,000 bytes) in size individually or aggregate to a distribution list, group or of New Frontiers Public Schools' employees or any others within the New Frontiers Public Schools' network totaling more than five (5) recipients is prohibited if the item(s) being sent is unsolicited or non-official in nature. Repeated emails with similar content and similar attachments to groups less than five (5) shall not defeat the provisions of this section.
6. No employee shall disseminate, register, subscribe or otherwise provide any third party the email addresses of any internal distribution list, routing group or similar electronic means of distribution within New Frontiers Public Schools. This provision includes but is not limited to: Commercial business Newsgroups, List-Serves, websites, and "chainmail" organizations.

7. When using New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System, New Frontiers Public Schools employees should, at all times, refrain from any action that would harm New Frontiers Public Schools' reputation or expose New Frontiers Public Schools to liability. Employees shall not use New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System (including, but not limited to, any Internet access and/or the E-Mail System) for business or personal purposes to: (i) commit any illegal or wrongful act (including, but not limited to, any racial or sexual harassment or discrimination) or to annoy, harass, intimidate, or violate the rights of others, (ii) browse or access any Internet site containing adult (sexual) or other objectionable content, (iii) store, access, create, transmit, or receive any communication (such as E-Mail Messages), material or information containing any sexual, slanderous, defamatory, derogatory, obscene, offensive, racist, discriminatory, harassing, fraudulent, or otherwise inappropriate content, (iv) engage in gambling (casino or sports), or (v) degrade the performance of New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System, such as by receiving or transmitting chain mail.
8. No electronic mail messages, information, or communications transmitted, stored, received, or otherwise passing through over New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System (collectively, "E-Mail Messages"), nor any employee's use of New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System (including, but not limited to, its Internet activities, such as the web sites accessed by such employee) are considered private, except where such privacy may benefit New Frontiers Public Schools. No employee shall expect that any of its E-Mail Messages shall remain private, nor shall any employee have any expectation of privacy whatsoever in its use of New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System, including, but not limited to, with respect to any of its Internet activities or any E-Mail System.
9. New Frontiers Public Schools and its authorized representatives may, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice to such employee, access, read, inspect, monitor, and disclose to third parties such as employee's E-Mail Messages and such employee's use of New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System, including, but not limited to, such employee's Internet activities and the web sites accessed by such employee.
10. No employee shall disclose or forward any New Frontiers Public Schools E-Mail message to any third party unless such E-Mail Message expressly provides that it is for public distribution, nor shall any employee provide any third party with access to New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System without New Frontiers Public Schools' prior written approval.
11. Information and E-Mail Messages transmitted over the Internet may be intercepted and/or monitored by third parties; the privacy and confidentiality of such transmissions is not guaranteed. Consequently, employees will not send any sensitive, privileged, confidential, or proprietary information or materials (including, but not limited to, any New Frontiers Public Schools trade secrets) over the Internet or the Electronic Mail System. Employees shall not place or store any New Frontiers Public Schools materials (including, but not limited to, any software, memoranda, or internal correspondence) on any portion of New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System that is accessible over the Internet or that is otherwise available to third parties.
12. The introduction of viruses and/or malicious tampering with New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System is expressly prohibited.
13. No file, document, software, or other material may be installed on, introduced to, or

accessed or used by New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System until it has been scanned for viruses in accordance with New Frontiers Public Schools' then-prevailing procedures. This includes, for example, all files which are (i) downloaded from the Internet, (ii) attached to third party E-Mail Messages, and/or (iii) brought by any employee from home.

14. NO SOFTWARE may be installed on any New Frontiers Public Schools computer without first providing the following to New Frontiers Public Schools Information Technology Department
  - A photocopy of valid Software License
  - A specific identification of computer terminal on which it will be installed
  - The duration the software will remain on the computer system.
  - No downloading applications or music for students.
15. Unless particular purpose is not reasonably ascertainable, no justification for use shall be required. This restriction applies to New Frontiers Public Schools computers and/or similar equipment to include any laptop or other mobile device or New Frontiers Public Schools equipment provided for employee use at home or other non-corporate location.
16. Copyright law prohibits the unauthorized copying, installation, modification, and dissemination of certain software, articles, text, illustrations, photographs, pictures, and other materials authorized by third parties, regardless of whether same are in hard-copy or electronic form. Employees should assume that copyright protection extends to all software, articles, text, illustrations, pictures, photographs, and other materials created by third parties, including, but not limited to, those that are: (i) download from the Internet, or (ii) purchased by employees for personal use on a retail basis. A copyright violation may occur even if the copyrighted software or other material has been paid for in full by the employee and/or has been copied and used solely for non-profit, educational purposes.
17. Severe penalties may be imposed for copyright violations, such as the unauthorized copying, installation, modification, and/or distribution of personal software or Internet materials on or over New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System. Moreover, under certain circumstances, New Frontiers Public Schools may be legally responsible for copyright infringements committed by its employees using New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System. New Frontiers Public Schools reserves the right to hold employees accountable for their use of New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System.
18. It is New Frontiers Public Schools' policy to abide by all copyright laws and all software license agreements to which it is a party. Violations of copyright law or software license agreements whether intentional or intentional or inadvertent, committed by employees using or otherwise involving New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System (including, but not limited to, any Internet access or E-Mail System) are absolutely prohibited and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Therefore, employees may not, for example, download, install, copy, transfer, transmit, or disseminate any copyrighted software (or other materials) on, from, though, over, or using New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System (such as over the Internet or via electronic mail) without first obtaining any necessary authorization from the copyright owner. Employees will not copy, install, or transfer any New Frontiers Public Schools software from or between computers in New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System or to employee's personal computer.
19. In addition to copyright law, software license agreements may prohibit employees from

installing and/or using their personal software on New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System. Any installation and/or use of personal software on New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System in violation of copyright law, any applicable software license agreement, and/or any other third party rights or legal requirements is strictly prohibited.

20. Employees should not assume that any information obtained from the Internet or E-Mail is true or accurate until it is verified by a reliable, independent source.
21. Alternate Internet Service Provider connections to New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System firewall or other appropriate security devices specified by New Frontiers Public Schools are prohibited. Connections to New Frontiers Public Schools resources available via the worldwide web through an Internet browser are excluded from this provision.
22. Employees may encrypt their E-Mail Messages and files only with software pre-approved by New Frontiers Public Schools. Each employee will, on New Frontiers Public Schools' request, immediately provide New Frontiers Public Schools with a copy of any key, password or similar access method necessary to access encrypted E-Mail Messages or files.
23. Employees will not attempt to avoid or defeat any Internet firewalls or other security measures which may be implemented by New Frontiers Public Schools now or in the future to protect New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System. Each employee will comply with all existing and future New Frontiers Public Schools security procedures, including, but not limited to, those procedures governing the use and confidentiality of any user passwords. All Employees are restricted and prohibited from accessing data, email, Network accounts not assigned to them, unless such information is public in nature or specifically authorized to do so.
24. New Frontiers Public Schools' policy is to delete and purge all E-Mail Messages from New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System every nine (9) months as a matter of routine, except for those E-Mail Messages relating to imminent or active investigations or litigation, which will be preserved.
25. New Frontiers Public Schools reserves the right to modify New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System and Internet Policy at any time in its absolute discretion.

## **New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System and Internet Policy**

By signing below, and as consideration for my continued employment by New Frontiers Public Schools, I confirm that I have received and read a complete copy of New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System and Internet Policy located in the employee handbook, and that I accept, consent to, and agree to comply with all of the terms and conditions of such policy as set forth above and with any future modifications to such policy that may be made by New Frontiers Public Schools and communicated to me in writing. I understand that any violation of New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System and Internet Policy by me may result in disciplinary action being taken against me, including, but not limited to, termination of my employment with New Frontiers Public Schools, which shall constitute a "termination for cause" for all purposes.

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Employee Name

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Employee Signature

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Date

**\*\*\*\*Sign and return this page to the Human Resources Department. \*\*\*\***

Portions of New Frontiers Public Schools' Computer System and Internet Policy are published by the SPA Anti-Division of the Software and Information Industry.

## Employee Handbook Acknowledgement

The employee handbook describes important information about New Frontiers Public Schools District. I understand that I should consult with my Supervisor regarding any questions concerning policies in the handbook. My Supervisor may direct me to the Human Resources office for further guidance if needed.

I have entered into my employment relationship with New Frontiers Public Schools District voluntarily and acknowledge there is no specified length of employment. Accordingly, either I or the District can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time so long as there is no violation of applicable Federal or State laws.

Since the information, policies, and benefits described here are subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur, except to the District's policy of employment-at-will. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies. Only the Board of Trustees has the ability to adopt any revisions to set policies.

I have been informed of the material contained in the Employee Handbook and understand it is my responsibility to comply with the policies contained herein and any revisions that may follow.

I have been informed how to print out a copy of the handbook via the NFPS website. It is my responsibility to print out a copy for my records.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I have received the handbook and understand it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained herein and any revisions that may follow.

Employee Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Shuttle Bus Policy for Drivers

### Basic Driving Rules

- All shuttle buses will travel **5 MPH** below the posted speed limit in residential areas.
- All school zones are to be strictly observed.
- Speed limit on all School District properties, unless otherwise posted, is 10 MPH.
- The minimum speed limit on the expressway is 45 MPH; 60 MPH is the maximum speed limit.
  - In many instances, a shuttle bus is a slower moving vehicle and should be driven accordingly. It is illegal to willfully drive a vehicle so slowly as to obstruct or impede the normal, reasonable and safe movement of traffic.
- DO NOT make “U-turns” with a shuttle bus. This includes while driving on multilane divided roadways. If this creates special routing problems, solicit management approval.
- Do not drive side-by-side with another school or shuttle bus. Shuttle buses should be generally driven in the far right-hand lane.
- Shuttle bus horn should be used only for emergency purposes.
- Always maintain at least a four (4) car-length following distance.
- Communication with base & drivers – If there is a problem or emergency while on route, a cell phone may be used by the driver (after safely securing the bus). Any other use of cell phones is strictly prohibited. Drivers are strictly prohibited from using earphones while on route, including i-watches, Bluetooth or any other hands-free devices.
- Parking or stopping a bus behind vehicles, in loading zones, or on streets:
  - When pulling into a school loading zone and other buses are unloading, do not pull too close to the back of the vehicle in front of you. Leave room for the emergency door of the bus in front of you to open.

Students must present their Frank L. Madla Early College High School student ID and Shuttle Pass before entering and utilizing the district shuttle service. This must be presented every day for pickup and drop off. Replacements can be purchased in the high school campus office for \$5.00 each.

Each Shuttle Pass has the letter “A” or “B” on it. The letter on the pass is the shuttle vehicle the student boards. The safety of our students is of the utmost importance. Immediately report any behavioral issues to the front office.

### Bus Route Schedules

If a school has been dismissed when you arrive, the waiting time should be minimal. The students will quickly learn that they must go to the shuttle loading area immediately following dismissal. Upon dismissal do not wait any longer than is expected because the students will keep you waiting for an extended period of time. Do not make multiple stops to pick up or discharge students in designated loading zones. Do not pick up or discharge students outside the loading zones.

Shuttle busses should leave at approved scheduled/designated times. NEVER run your route ahead of schedule. Drivers will have the map of route and times of student pick-ups and drop-offs. Pick-up times and drop-off times should be maintained to keep on schedule.

If for any reason you should get behind schedule on the route or on a field trip, DO NOT

speed up and try to make up time. A driver may tend to be careless, take more chances, and concentrate less on driving thereby increasing the possibility of being involved in an accident. Notify the office, if possible, and proceed on your scheduled trip at a normal rate of speed. School Principals must be contacted immediately, if the route or field trip runs more than 15 minutes late.

### **Shuttle Drop-Off & Pick-up**

Drivers must not unload students at any place other than the authorized and designated drop-off or pick-up locations, including drop-off and pick-up locations for school Field Trips. Do not make unauthorized stops (convenience stores, restaurants, etc.) at any time, or make special deals/arrangements with student/parents.

### **Deviation from Route**

It is imperative that there be no deviation from established routes unless an emergency occurs. Always contact Director of Operations, Principals or Maintenance Supervisor to deviate from your route. Consistently deviating from route may result in appropriate disciplinary action. (See Shuttle Route Map for trip details.)

### **Shuttle Bus Maintenance Guidelines**

Decorative or non-essential items (i.e., decorations, stickers, flyers) are not permitted to be posted on or in the shuttle bus. No stickers are to be placed on the windows or on any part of the inside or outside of the shuttle bus. The shuttle bus is NOT to be altered in any manner by anyone other than Maintenance staff. Shuttle bus should be maintained in a manner that meets safety and regulatory standards.

### **Vehicle Maintenance Report**

If the shuttle bus should require maintenance or repairs, the shuttle bus driver should complete a Vehicle Maintenance Request form. In order to ensure that shuttle buses are in good working condition or to perform maintenance service at any given time, a Vehicle Maintenance Request must be submitted in a timely manner to ensure proper maintenance of the shuttle bus.

### **Dress/Uniforms**

Shuttle bus drivers shall maintain a clean and neat appearance at all times in accordance with the New Frontiers Public Schools (NFPS) Employee Handbook. NFPS logoed shirts are provided to bus drivers to wear while on duty as part of their uniform.

All employees shall be properly dressed for duty at all times while on district property.

### **Field Trip Assignments**

Drivers will alternate field trip assignments by utilizing a sign-up log. Drivers will sign up for trips by checking a box to accept or decline a field trip assignment along with printing their name and signing to confirm their choice to accept or decline the assignment. This process will eliminate confusion and errors by the staff member assigning field trips.

### **Athletic Trips**

Athletic events are not supported by New Frontiers Public Schools. Shuttle transportation is not provided. Parents are responsible for getting the students to the event site.

### **Food & Drink on Shuttle Bus**

Food and drinks are permitted on the shuttle bus, including during school field trips, if doing so does not create an unmanageable situation for drivers.

## New Frontiers Public Schools' Shuttle Bus Policy

By signing below, and as consideration for my continued employment by New Frontiers Public Schools, I confirm that I have received and read a complete copy of New Frontiers Public Schools' Shuttle Bus Policy for Drivers located in the employee handbook, and that I accept, consent to, and agree to comply with all of the terms and conditions of such policy as set forth above and with any future modifications to such policy that may be made by New Frontiers Public Schools and communicated to me in writing. I understand that any violation of New Frontiers Public Schools' Shuttle Bus Policy by me may result in disciplinary action being taken against me, including, but not limited to, termination of my employment with New Frontiers Public Schools, which shall constitute a "termination for cause" for all purposes.

Employee Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

**\*\*\*\*Sign and return this page to the Human Resources Department. \*\*\*\***