

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

PA Distance Learning Charter School

2024-2025

Welcome to the Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School ("PDLCS" or the "School") Family. We are very excited that you have agreed to join our family of dedicated professionals. We are committed to our Mission Statement:

Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School's mission is to empower students to own their learning, grow, achieve, and succeed through the use of evidence-based, inclusive, and culturally responsive practices as we build positive relationships in our online environment with all students, families, and communities.

This Employee Handbook (Handbook) will provide information regarding the School's employment policies and the benefit plans available to you. In the Handbook, you will find details regarding information such as Enrollment Eligibility, Medical Insurance, Dental Insurance, Vision Insurance, Life Insurance, Retirement Program, Supplemental Life Insurance, Short-term and Long-term Disability and Tuition Reimbursement, as well as other information related to your employment. The School retains the ability to add to, amend, alter, or eliminate the employee's benefit programs described herein, including eligibility, co-pays, deductibles or coverage.

Please take time to review the policies contained in this handbook. If you have any questions regarding the information contained in this Handbook, please see a School Administrator.

THIS DOCUMENT IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT TO BE CONSTRUED AS AN EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT OR CONTRACT. PDLCS RETAINS THE RIGHT TO AMEND OR CHANGE POLICIES CONTAINED HEREIN AT ANY TIME WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

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EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all people, Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School (PDLCS or the School) bases its employment decisions on lawful factors, such as each person's performance and qualifications. PDLCS does not discriminate against applicants or employees with respect to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, familial status, genetic information, sexual identity, pregnancy, military or veteran status, ancestry, or any other characteristic protected by law. This prohibition may include harassment based on any protected class or classes, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local laws. Harassment may include verbal or physical conduct which has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile work environment. This policy applies to all employees, including managers, supervisors, co-workers and non-employees such as customers, clients, business partners and consultants.

Direct any questions about discrimination at work, or information about possible violations of this policy to School Administrators. There will be no consequences for asking questions or making any good faith complaints as retaliation is prohibited. Any employee found to be illegally discriminating or retaliating against any individuals will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

ACCOMMODATIONS

To comply with applicable laws ensuring equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with disabilities, the Employer will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or an employee unless undue hardship or a direct threat of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or other that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation would result.

Any applicant or employee who requires an accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of the job they hold or desire should contact the human resources coordinator and request such an accommodation. If the requested accommodation is reasonable and will not impose an undue hardship or a direct threat of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation, the Employer will make the accommodation in accordance with applicable law.

The Employer may propose an alternative to the requested accommodation or substitute one reasonable accommodation for another. The Employer retains the

ultimate discretion to choose between reasonable accommodations. Employees are expected to cooperate fully with the accommodation process.

In addition, the School will make reasonable accommodations for pregnant employees or those with pregnancy-related disabilities as required by law, so long as the accommodation does not present an undue hardship.

The School will make reasonable accommodations to an employee's or applicant's religious beliefs or practices as required by law, so long as the accommodation does not present an undue hardship.

NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

Working at PDLCS is voluntary and employment is "at will." "At will" means that employees are free to resign at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. Likewise, "at will" means that PDLCS may terminate employment at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. The "at-will" nature of an employee's employment cannot be altered or modified by a School Administrator or other PDLCS representative; rather, when PDLCS seeks to alter "at-will" employment, it does so through a written agreement specifically guaranteeing employment consistent with terms approved in writing by the Chief Executive Officer or authorized designee.

The policies in this Handbook are not intended to create a contract. The policies should not be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind or a contract of employment between PDLCS and any employee. The provisions in the Handbook have been developed at the discretion of School Administration and may be amended or cancelled at any time, at the sole discretion of PDLCS.

These provisions replace all other existing handbooks and may not be changed or added to without the express written approval of the Chief Executive Officer of PDLCS and its Board of Trustees.

CLEARANCES/CERTIFICATIONS

All PDLCS employees are required to have all clearances required by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania including Act 34, Act 151, Act 168, and FBI Fingerprint.

Every employee is required to obtain a Child Abuse History Clearance and Criminal Background Check as stipulated under PA Act 151, PA Act 34, Act 168 and FBI fingerprint verification. These documents must be kept on file in the employee's personnel file and must be kept current. No employee will be permitted to work

without these clearances. Employees are responsible for providing the HR Coordinator with updated clearances every five (5) years. Employees should maintain originals of these clearances as copies will not be distributed after initial dissemination.

Every employee is responsible for advising the School of any changes to the employee's ability to maintain a required clearance and/or certification.

Acceptable Use of Electronic Information Resources

The Employer's Technology & Internet Acceptable Usage Policy governs employees' use of Employer-owned resources such as internet, intranet, e-mail, software, social media, computers, phones or other devices, voicemail, printers and electronic equipment. A copy of the [Technology & Internet Acceptable Usage Policy](#) is attached at Appendix B.

EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

PDLCS relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as other data represented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in PDLCS's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

All individuals employed at PDLCS are also expected to comply with the employment eligibility verification requirements of the U.S. Department of Justice. All workers must produce the appropriate identification documents and complete a Form I-9 at the time of hire.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

It is the policy of the School to have written job descriptions for each position within the School. The job description includes the essential functions of the job, other job-related duties, problem solving/analysis requirements, education level, experience, and other skills and abilities.

PDLCS reserves the right to assign employees their work hours, job duties, including temporary relief or emergency work, and to assign employees to other work situations or positions.

Employees must perform their work assignments according to the standards established.

Should the need arise to create a new position or modify an existing position, a job analysis will be conducted, followed by a newly created or modified job description describing the new position. This will be completed prior to any posting or advertising for the newly created or modified position.

EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEES

Evaluation is a continuing process in which the administrative, professional and support employees and the respective supervisors cooperatively identify strengths and weaknesses in an individual's job performance. Employee evaluations shall be used to assess and improve performance, encourage professional growth, promote positive behavior, and facilitate attainment of School goals and objectives.

Employees who receive an overall performance rating of "needs improvement" or "failing" may be required to participate in a Performance Improvement Plan. The School in its sole discretion may also place an employee on a Performance Improvement Plan if the School has concerns regarding employee performance during the evaluation period.

ETHICS AND CONDUCT POLICY

Employees of PD LCS are expected to be ethical in their conduct. Employee conduct impacts the School's reputation and success. PD LCS requires employees to obey and comply with all laws and regulations and practice the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity. Ethics in the educational work space is addressed in the [Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct](#) and the [Professional Educator Discipline Act](#) administered by the Professional Standards and Practices Commission.

The following are some examples of the kind of conduct that would warrant discipline, up to and including termination:

- Insubordination – refusal to comply with instructions of a supervisor;
- Falsifying an application for employment, time sheets or other work records;
- Malicious damage to School property;
- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property;
- Use of obscene, abusive or threatening language;
- Unsatisfactory performance;
- Unsafe acts;
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness;
- Fighting;

- Refusal to work overtime when required; and
- Violation of any policy set forth in this Employee Handbook.

NO DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

Federal and state law prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, familial status, genetic information, sexual identity, pregnancy, military or veteran status, ancestry, or any other characteristic protected by law. Unlawful discrimination on the job, including harassment, is prohibited by PDLCS. For purposes of this policy, "harassment" can include, but is not limited to:

- derogatory remarks, epithets, offensive jokes, or the display or circulation of offensive printed or visual matter;
- offensive physical contact, impeding or blocking movement, and gestures or any physical interference with normal work or movement; and/or
- Visual forms, such as derogatory posters, letters, poems, graffiti, cartoons, or drawings.

Harassment also can include unwelcome and unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment;
- submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used or is threatened to be used, as the basis for employment decisions affecting such an individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with any individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

The prohibition against discrimination and harassment is applicable to all employees of PDLCS, which includes all staff members, teachers, administrators, managers and officers.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*, protects students and employees from discrimination based on sex in educational programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title IX states that:

No person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic, extracurricular, research, occupational training, or other education program

or activity operated by a recipient, which receives Federal financial assistance.

Refer to the PA Distance Learning Charter School Board of Trustees Title IX policy, for more information and guidance. This policy covers student on student as well as employee on student sexual harassment.

Federal and state law also prohibits retaliation based on an employee's protected activity, including making complaints about unlawful harassment or participating in an investigation into allegations of prohibited harassment. PDLCS also prohibits such unlawful retaliation against its employees. No employee will be retaliated against for good faith reporting of any suspected policy violation.

Reporting Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation

The School encourages every employee who believes they have been subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to report it to the School to allow School Administration the opportunity to investigate the situation and take appropriate action. It takes the complete cooperation of the entire staff for PDLCS to enforce this Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy. Any employee who is determined to have violated this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

If an employee feels that they have been disrespected, discriminated against or harassed in any way, it is generally best to tell the person exhibiting such behavior that you find the behavior offensive, that such behavior is against PDLCS's policy, and that the employee wants them to immediately stop. However, if the employee is uncomfortable taking this action, if the conduct does not stop after the employee has warned the offending person, or if an employee has observed discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the employee, may report it to their department supervisor. If the employee is unable or does not wish to report the matter to the department supervisor for any reason, they may report it to the Chief Executive Officer or other School Administrator. The report will be kept confidential to the extent practicable and as necessary to complete the investigation. The Complainant should submit the report in written form to the Principal, Chief Executive Officer or other School Administrator. The Complainant will generally be asked to acknowledge the accuracy of the facts or to correct the statement to accurately describe the complaint. The steps to be taken during the investigation cannot be fixed in advance but will vary depending on the nature of the allegations.

In addition to, or instead of, reporting suspected violations to the School, employees may report possible violations of law or regulation to any government agency or entity or make other disclosures that are protected under the whistleblower provisions of federal, state, or local law or regulation. Solely in connection with such reporting, an employee may disclose Confidential Information (as defined below), in confidence, to a government official or to an attorney to address possible violations of law; however, any disclosure of Confidential Information must be in good faith and effectuated in a manner that prevents the dissemination of Confidential Information beyond those persons necessary to make the report or filing, such as filing the Confidential Information under seal and otherwise preventing it from being publicly disclosed.

Resolution of Complaints

The results of the investigation will be discussed with the complaining employee. If it is determined that there has been discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the Chief Executive Officer, Principal or other School Administrator will discuss the procedure for resolving the complaint with the employee.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND WORK RULES

School Administration expects employees to follow certain work rules and behave in ways that protect the interests and safety of all employees and PDLCS.

While it is impossible to list every action that is unacceptable conduct, the following lists some examples. Employees who break work rules such as these may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. This list is not exhaustive; it is only meant to be a guide:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property;
- Falsification of timekeeping records or other forms of time theft including punching in prior to arriving to work;
- Punching in/out for another employee;
- Not punching in/out when required;
- Habitual tardiness;
- Not following documented Human Resources Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs);
- Significant usage of personal technology during working hours;
- 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 or equipment;

- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace;
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or customer-owned property;
- Insubordination;
- Violation of safety or health rules;
- Smoking on school property or property being used for school purposes;
- Smokeless tobacco products, such as chewing tobacco, vaping products, or e-cigarettes on school property or property being used for school purposes;
- Sexual or other unlawful harassment or unwelcome/unprofessional or inappropriate gestures or contact;
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace;
- Unauthorized absence from work station during the workday;
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other employer-owned equipment;
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information as defined below;
- Violation of personnel policies; or
- Unsatisfactory performance.

When a staff member's actions or inaction is in conflict with the expectations of the school, a documented discussion, improvement plan or termination may occur. The School may discipline or terminate an employee based upon the seriousness of the behavior. Please refer to *[PDLCS' Progressive Disciplinary Action Plan Steps Procedure](#)* for further guidance and information.

NON-DISCLOSURE/CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

It is very important to the School that employees protect confidential school-related information. Any product designed and created for PDLCS by an employee remains the sole property of PDLCS and may only be used elsewhere with appropriate citation or origin. Confidential information includes the School's non-public business information that provides the School with a competitive advantage or constitutes personal information under data security laws or the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") which include but are not limited to the following specific examples:

- Computer Processes;
- Computer Programs and Codes;
- Legal Information, such as attorney-client privilege discussion;
- New Materials Research;
- Pending Projects and Proposals;

- Research and Development Strategies;
- Scientific Data;
- Social Security Numbers;
- Student Information and education records;
- Technology Data;
- Internal communications and correspondence; or
- Standard Operating Procedures.

An employee improperly using or disclosing confidential school information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and legal action. This provision applies even if disclosure or use of the confidential information does not benefit the employee in any manner.

Under limited circumstances and consistent with applicable law, employees may disclose Confidential Information, including trade secrets, only when reporting possible violations of law or regulation, or making other disclosures protected under the whistleblower provisions of federal, state, or local law or regulation. For more information, see the Whistleblower Policy (provided below) or the federal Defend Trade Secrets Act, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1833.

OPEN COMMUNICATIONS/COMPLAINT POLICY

General Overview

PDLCS is committed to providing an outstanding educational value to Pennsylvania students. As part of this commitment, the School has developed this *Open Communications/Complaint Policy* to manage and resolve complaints and to document situations providing input for possible school improvement.

PDLCS also believes in, supports and fosters open communication with its employees. Employees are encouraged to bring issues of concern or suggestions to the attention of their supervisor or any School Administrator on a regular basis. We believe that through this open dialogue, problems can be resolved at an early stage before they become an obstacle to an effective business environment. By working together directly, we can achieve a productive, positive environment that benefits everyone.

To the extent that an employee desires to utilize the formal complaint process, the employee should indicate their desire so the issue is documented in accordance with the process identified below. By communicating it as an Official Complaint, it prevents ambiguity as to the employee's view of the seriousness of the issue being reported.

Complaint System

The School shall develop and maintain a complaint system, such as a database for data management, to meet the requirements of the policy. It is the responsibility of School Administration to maintain this policy and the associated systems.

Complaint – Definitions

A Complaint is a comment from a student, parent, teacher, administrator, or supplier that suggests a need for improvement by PDLCS with regard to a specific situation, circumstance or policy. An Originator is the issuer of the notice of complaint.

The School encourages comments and suggestions and takes negative complaints very seriously; however, the School does not encourage excessive use of complaints to push an individual agenda or for any other reason than bringing issues to light that can help to improve the School.

A complaint can be filed as an Official Complaint; this means the Originator requests a formal review and response. Official Complaints will generally be given priority and addressed on an accelerated basis to the extent possible. For example, communications about the need for improvement or issues with any of the following will generally be treated as "Official Complaints":

- Theft;
- Improper deductions from employee wages or payment of employees;
- Financial reporting which is fraudulent, intentionally misleading or negligent in any manner;
- Improper or undocumented financial transactions;
- Forgery or alteration of documents;
- Unauthorized alteration or manipulation of computer files;
- Improper destruction of records;
- Improper punching in/out, and/or time theft;
- Improper access or use of confidential information;
- Authorizing or receiving compensation for goods not received or services not performed;
- Violations of the Board's Conflict-of-Interest Policy;
- Any other improper occurrence regarding cash, financial procedures, or reporting;
- Any abuse of or discrimination against a school employee, client, vendor, or person connected with the School;
- Any violation of the School's Employee Conduct and Work Rules; or

- Any crime, including those defined by the Pennsylvania Drug Device and Cosmetic Act and/or the Pennsylvania Crime Code, or federal criminal statute.

Complaint Recording & Documentation – Confidentiality

All Complaints must be recorded in the School's complaint system by a designated member of the School Administration (Complaint Administrator), including parameters such as nature of the Complaint, Originator, date filed, status, and employee appointed to investigate/resolve the Complaint. One or more employees will be designated as responsible for maintaining the data in the system.

Access to this system will be on a need-to-know basis as determined by School Administration. Once filed, a School Administrator will be named as the Complaint Manager, who will be responsible for further investigation and resolution of the Complaint. The Complaint will continue to be listed as "active" in the complaint system until satisfactorily resolved, as determined by School Administration, at which time the Complaint will be classified as "closed."

School Administration will use their best judgment to determine how best to report the Complaint to the Originator and others affected by the Complaint, subject to the Originator's rights to naming a Complaint as an Official Complaint. It is expected that in certain cases, the recording of the Complaint will be sent to the Originator and any others involved even if it is not an Official Complaint, to ensure accurate recording, with the Originator then being obligated to offer remarks to correct the filed Complaint. Any parties named in the Complaint will also be obligated to respond to the complaint file, in care of the Complaint Manager.

The Complaint Originator and any parties named in the Complaint shall have the right at any time to request the current status of an Official Complaint, and the Complaint Administrator will then be obligated to respond in writing, in a timely fashion.

Complaint Confidentiality

The Complaint Manager and Complaint Administrator are obligated to keep the details of the Complaint confidential to the extent practicable to review and investigate the Complaint, and to identify information to those affected or named in the Complaint, generally in connection with the investigation and resolution.

Complaint Review and Resolution

The Complaint Manager will use their best efforts, in a professional and unemotional manner, to investigate the situation of the Complaint and to resolve any related issues. Once so resolved, the details of the resolution act will be recorded in the Complaint System, and written conclusion will be sent to the Originator and any involved named parties.

Complaint Appeal

The Complaint Originator or any named involved party has the right to appeal the resolution of the Complaint Manager, in which case the Complaint Manager must name an Alternate Complaint Manager to review the case and confirm or revise the previous resolution. The Alternate Complaint Administrator should, unless prevented due to circumstance, be a supervisor of the Complaint Administrator. However, the School Administrator has the right to define a Complaint or an appeal as frivolous, and thus immediately close the Complaint.

Any Complaints relating to ethics or the proper action of the School Administrator should be discussed with the School's Board of Trustees President.

Review and Reporting

Complaint file status and resolution are to be reported to the Board of Trustees at regular intervals, with information reported to include data such as number of active complaints, number of complaints received in the period, number of complaints resolved in the period, number of latent complaints, and specific information of any particular complaints that the Complaint Administrator feels should be reviewed at the Board level, keeping in mind that such specifics may not be appropriate for a public meeting such as a Board meeting and that it may be more appropriate for Board review under an Executive Session.

MANDATED CHILD REPORTING

Additionally, if any employee believes or suspects there to be an issue concerning the health, safety or welfare of a student in accordance with 23 Pa. Code § 6311, Subchapter B Provisions and Responsibilities for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse, the employee must immediately report the concern to Child Line 800-932-0313. Only after the employee makes the report to Child Line may the employee report an Official Complaint to an Administrator.

All employees of PDLCS must complete *PDLCS' Mandated Reporter Training* every five years. If a new employee has not completed the training within the past 5 years, employee will be required to take the training as part of on-boarding.

WHISTLEBLOWER ENCOURAGEMENT AND PROTECTION

PDLCS is committed to facilitating open and honest communications relevant to its governance, finances and compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Employees and representatives must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling responsibilities. Employees who, in good faith, report to School Administration, report to an appropriate enforcement authority, or who cooperate in an investigation of suspected waste or wrongdoing shall not be subject to retaliation, discrimination or other adverse employment consequences.

The *Pennsylvania Whistleblower Law*, 43 P.S. §1421 et seq., provides protection for employees against being discharged or discriminated against by reason of the employee filing good faith reports with an employer of suspected waste or wrongdoing or cooperating in the investigation of such reports.

Definitions include:

Good faith report: A report of conduct defined as wrongdoing or waste which is made without malice or consideration of personal benefit and which the person making the report has reasonable cause to believe is true.

Waste: Conduct or omissions which result in substantial abuse, misuse, destruction or loss of funds or resources belonging to or derived from Commonwealth or political subdivision sources.

Whistleblower: A person who witnesses or has evidence of wrongdoing or waste while employed and who makes a good faith report of the wrongdoing or waste, verbally or in writing, to School Administration, to an agent of the School, or to an appropriate authority.

Wrongdoing: A violation which is not of a merely technical or minimal nature of a federal or state statute or regulation, or a political subdivision ordinance or regulation, or of a code of ethics designed to protect the interest of the public or the School.

Protection of Employees: No employee may be discharged, threatened or otherwise discriminated or retaliated against regarding the employee's compensation, terms, conditions, location or privileges of employment because the employee: 1) makes a

good faith report or 2) participates in an investigation, hearing or inquiry held by an appropriate authority or in a court action.

Reporting Procedure: Employees must follow the Complaint procedures in reporting a concern about wasteful, illegal or dishonest activities, which are violations of federal, state or local laws, billing for services not performed or goods not delivered, and other fraudulent activity.

Employees must exercise sound judgment to avoid baseless allegations. An employee who intentionally files a false report of wrongdoing will be subject to further disciplinary action including, but not limited to, discharge from employment.

Anyone reporting a concern must act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates an improper accounting or auditing practice, or a violation of Board policies. The act of making allegations that prove to be unsubstantiated, and that prove to have been made maliciously, recklessly, or with knowledge that the allegations are false, will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense and may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Such conduct may also give rise to other actions, including civil lawsuits.

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating, posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal web site, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with PDLCS. Failure to adhere to this Policy on Social Media may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The School has established these guidelines to define the permissible uses of social media by employees, guidelines for such uses, and consequences for failure to follow these guidelines. This Policy applies to all forms of social media and to all information communicated or posted through official, professional, or personal channels. This Policy applies to all personnel employed by the School, including School Administrators and employees, all temporary employees, and anyone else under the direction and control of the School.

Social Media Definitions:

- *Official Channels* – School-branded social media channels whose primary purpose is to participate in online conversations on behalf of the School

while advancing School goals. Examples include School-branded Facebook and Instagram pages that are owned and operated by the School.

- *Professional Channels* – Non-School-branded social medial channels used by School employees and personnel to engage as members of their professional communities. Content is conveyed as the employee's own thoughts and opinions, and not as the School's official views. Examples include individual employees' LinkedIn accounts, industry-focused blogs that may be of interest to other professionals, and comments posted under online news articles.
- *Personal Channels* – Social medial channels owned and used by School employees and personnel for non-business and non-professional reasons. Examples include a personal Facebook page, a personal blog, a non-business, personal Twitter account, Instagram, Vine, YouTube channel, Tik Tok, etc.

General Guidelines:

Use of the School's technology systems, as defined herein, for social media purposes must comply with the School's Technology and Internet Acceptable Usage Policy. The School reserves the right to monitor and examine (without notice) any component (including computer servers) of the School's technology systems, and any information and data contained therein.

The School's Confidentiality, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Anti-Harassment policies apply to all social media posts, whether for School or personal purposes.

This Policy does not prohibit employees from discussing the terms and conditions of their employment with those who have a legitimate interest.

Official Use Guidelines:

When publishing content on official School channels, employees must comply with the following:

- The School's Confidentiality policy which applies to all social media posts, whether for School or personal purposes. Employees may only post accurate, official and public School information.
- Employees may not post any information which is untrue, unethical, illegal or prohibited by School policies.
- All internal policies established by the School.

- When discussing School-related matters, including services, vendors, business partners or personnel, or marketing, the employee must clearly identify him/herself by his/her real name, reveal the employee's connection with the School and ensure there is a way for readers to contact the employee. When posting on official channels, employees cannot be anonymous or hide their connection with the School.
- Employees may never comment on behalf of the School on strategic issues or in a crisis situation without manager approval.
- Employees may not post obscenities, slurs or personal attacks that can damage the reputation of the School, students, parents or guardians, employees, or applicants.
- Employees may not respond to social media (or other) posts disparaging the School students, parents or guardians, vendors, business partners or personnel. The employee should alert a School Administrator to these posts to allow the School to coordinate any response.

Personal Use Guidelines:

When publishing content as an individual on professional or personal channels, without express School Administrator approval, an employee may not:

- Refer to or identify any School employees, students, parents or guardians, vendors, or business partners.
- Use School logos, trademarks, service marks, uniforms, products, etc., without the express written consent of the School, or to suggest that what the employee is displaying is an official statement on behalf of the School,
- Identify him/herself as affiliated with the School, without including a disclaimer that his/her views do not represent those of the School. Employees must make it explicitly clear that their views do not represent those of the School. Employees must use the following disclaimer when discussing job-related matters, "The opinions expressed on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of PDLCS."
- Disclose trademarked, copyrighted, trade secret, propriety, or other confidential business information of this nature of the School or its students, parents or guardians, vendors, business partners or personnel.

Violations of these Guidelines:

The School may monitor content out on the internet. Employees may be required to remove social media content posted in violation this Policy.

If an employee discovers a violation of this Policy by someone else, the employee should contact a School Administrator immediately to allow the School to take corrective action if necessary.

For More Information:

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact the School Administrators.

BENEFITS OVERVIEW

Employee Insurance Premiums

The School takes pride in offering employees' access to medical, dental, vision, disability and life insurance that includes superior benefits at the lowest reasonable cost to employees. Periodically, the School will review employee needs, as well as costs to the School, when evaluating policy, premiums and quality for the benefits program. In the present economy, the long-term health and wellness of the School must be considered along with the health and wellness of the employees as School Administration seeks the best possible balance for all concerned. Quality programs will continue to be offered within that balance.

The Human Resources Coordinator will direct employees to the appropriate benefits resource for a detailed explanation of premiums and benefits.

Insurance Enrollment Eligibility

Employees working in full-time positions are eligible to participate in the School's insurance programs. Part-time employees who work at least 30 hours per week are eligible for insurance programs. Contracted service providers are not eligible. Eligible employees are required to elect or waive insurance coverage within the first thirty (30) days of employment. Elected benefits are effective on the 1st day of the month following date of employment. Employees who waived health insurance in their first thirty (30) days of employment may enroll in the medical, dental and/or vision plans during Open Enrollment or under the Qualifying Event rule.

Open Enrollment

Open enrollment is offered during the month of December with an effective date of January 1st the following calendar year for those employees who waived insurance coverage during the first thirty (30) days of employment and employees who wish to make changes to their current coverage. Outside of the Open Enrollment period, changes to enrollment can only be made due to a qualifying event.

Qualifying Events – Medical, Dental and Vision

Loss of Other Coverage is defined as: The Eligible person and/or Dependent had existing health coverage under another plan at the time they had an opportunity to enroll during the Initial Enrollment Period or Open Enrollment Period. Coverage under the prior plan ended because of any of the following: loss of eligibility (including, without limitation, legal separation, divorce or death); the employer stopped paying the contributions; and/or, in the case of COBRA continuation, the coverage ended.

Employees and/or family members that lose prior insurance coverage and wish to enroll in the benefit plan must apply for coverage within thirty (30) days of losing coverage by completing the enrollment form and by providing a Certificate of Prior Coverage to the School. The prior insurance company will provide this certificate to the employee.

Marriage, Birth or Adoption of Child: Enrolled employees who wish to enroll a new spouse or newborn or adopted child must apply for coverage within thirty (30) days of the qualifying event. The employee must complete an enrollment form and provide proof of the event, i.e., marriage certificate or birth certificate of newborn to the School.

To Search for Providers, visit the following websites:

- Insurance Broker: Benefits Management Corporation Client Service Center – www.bmcbenefitservices.com
- Medical and Vision – UPMC www.upmchealthplan.com
- Dental – MetLife www.metlife.com

Basic Life

The School provides \$25,000 Basic Term Life coverage for full-time employees. Basic Term Life coverage includes Accidental Death and Dismemberment coverage equal to one times the employee's life benefits.

VOLUNTARY BENEFITS

Supplemental Life Insurance

A voluntary Supplemental Life Insurance is offered through MetLife. Eligible employees can choose to purchase supplemental life insurance on themselves and their dependents. Employees pay 100% of the premiums and the premiums will be deducted from the employee's semi-monthly payroll check. Employees may choose to keep the supplemental plan after their employment at the School is terminated. MetLife offers a

portability feature that allows an insured person to continue their low-cost group term protection. In addition, there is a conversion feature that allows employees to convert coverage to a permanent plan after termination. Supplemental life insurance is also available for spouses and children. Please refer to [PDLCS Guide to Benefits](#).

Short- and Long-Term Disability Insurance

Employees may also elect short and/or long-term disability insurance. Employees pay 100% of the premiums and the premiums will be deducted from the employee's semi-monthly payroll check. The maximum benefit amount is 60% of gross weekly earnings or \$1,100, whichever is less (rounded down to the next \$50 increment). Short-term disability insurance will provide benefits on the 8th day following an injury or illness that prevents the employee from working up to 13 weeks. Long term coverage provides the employee with 60% of monthly earnings up to \$3,000 per month after a 90-day elimination period. Specific details can be found in the [PDLCS Guide to Benefits](#).

Late Enrollee Application – Short/Long Term Disability and Supplemental Life

If an employee waived coverage during the first thirty (30) days, they may still apply for Long/Short-Term Disability and Supplemental Life Insurance Plans during subsequent enrollments subject to the terms of the plan. Specific details can be found in the [PDLCS Guide to Benefits](#).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/EDUCATIONAL REIMBURSEMENT

Please refer to [PDLCS Reimbursement for Professional Development/Tuition/Additional Certifications Procedure](#) for additional information regarding the Educational Reimbursement Program. The Reimbursement Program is offered to all eligible employees working towards Certification Compliance, Re-Certification, or a School approved graduate degree program by earning college credit hours subject to the following conditions:

1. Eligible Employees are all regular full-time employees who have completed a minimum of three (3) months with the School and who are not currently subject to a professional improvement plan. All Reimbursement Requests must be pre-approved by Chief Executive Officer prior to registering for a course(s).
2. Eligible courses/programs include those taken for certification, re-certification, certification compliance or graduate degree that will either offer growth in an area related to their current position or might lead to promotional opportunities within the School. Eligible courses/programs

must be offered by an accredited institution recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. School administration retains the right/discretion to determine what qualifies as an eligible course.

3. Requests for additional certifications must be based on the requirements of the School, not on the wishes of the staff member.
4. If an employee loses eligibility (termination of employment, withdrawal from course(s), disciplinary action) before the course is completed, no reimbursement will be available.
5. The amount of reimbursement may be subject to deductions mandated by law.
6. Employees receiving reimbursement must work for one (1) academic school year post tuition reimbursement or refund PDLCS the amount paid.

Please refer to PDLCS Reimbursement for Professional Development/Tuition/Additional Certifications Procedure for further guidelines and conditions.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

PDLCS provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program to all employees in accordance with Pennsylvania law. This program is provided at no cost to employees.

The workers' compensation insurance program covers injuries or illnesses that might happen during the course of employment requiring medical, surgical, or hospital treatment. Subject to legal requirements, workers' compensation insurance begins after a short waiting period, or if an employee is hospitalized, the benefits begin immediately.

It is very important that the employee immediately report any work-related injury or illness, (within one hour) to School Administration regardless of how minor it might seem at the time. Prompt reporting helps to make sure employees qualify for appropriate coverage as quickly as possible. It also enables School Administration to investigate the matter promptly.

Workers' compensation covers only work-related injuries and illnesses. Except as may be required by law, neither PDLCS nor its insurance carrier will pay workers' compensation benefits for injuries that might happen if an employee voluntarily participates in an off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity that PDLCS may sponsor, or any other injury that is not work related.

BENEFITS CONTINUATION (COBRA)

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives workers and their families who lose their health benefits the right to choose to continue group health benefits provided by their group health plan for limited periods of time under certain circumstances such as voluntary or involuntary job loss, reduction in the hours worked, transition between jobs, death, divorce, and other life events. Qualified individuals may be required to pay the entire premium for coverage up to 102 percent of the cost to the plan.

COBRA generally requires that group health plans sponsored by employers with twenty (20) or more employees in the prior year offer employees and their families the opportunity for a temporary extension of health coverage (called continuation coverage) in certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise end.

COBRA outlines how employees and family members may elect continuation coverage. PDLCS is required to provide COBRA notice, upon termination, to an employee. Direct any questions regarding COBRA to the school's Insurance Broker.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS & COMPENSATION

Employment Status

REGULAR FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES – A regular full-time employee normally works 37.5-40 or more hours per work week.

PART-TIME EMPLOYEES – A part-time employee normally works between 24-32 hours per work week.

Your employment status may affect your eligibility for benefits.

Exempt and Nonexempt Classifications

The School classifies its employees as follows:

EXEMPT EMPLOYEES – Exempt employees are not required to be paid overtime under applicable federal or state wage and hour laws.

NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES – Non-exempt employees are paid overtime under applicable wage and hour laws. Overtime pay will be paid at a rate of one and one-half the employee's regular hourly rate for each hour of overtime worked.

Overtime

Overtime compensation is paid to all non-exempt employees in accordance with applicable federal and state wage and hour laws. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Time away from work for paid time off and any other leave of absence are not considered hours worked for purposes of overtime calculations. Non-exempt employees are required to obtain permission from their supervisors prior to working overtime. Failure to obtain permission as required prior to working overtime will result in discipline, up to and including termination. Non-exempt employees should refer to the applicable Standard Operating Procedures for specific guidelines.

Work Week

The work week is defined as the seven-day period beginning each Sunday at 12:00 a.m. and ending at 11:59 p.m. the following Saturday.

Time Reporting

Accurately recording total hours worked is the responsibility of every employee. Regulations require the Employer to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits.

Employees must use the time clock or online portal to record time worked. All employees must punch "in" upon beginning work and punch "out" immediately upon leaving duty. In addition, ANY employee who leaves the school premises during normal working hours must punch in/out. Time records must reflect all regular and overtime hours worked, any absences, late arrivals, and early departures. Non-exempt employees are prohibited from performing any "off-the-clock" work. "Off-the-clock" work means any work performed but not reported.

Employees must punch their own time, and it is a violation of School policy for any employee or manager to instruct another employee to incorrectly or falsely report hours. Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record is prohibited. If an individual (1) instructs an employee to incorrectly or falsely under-report or over-report hours worked; or (2) alters another employee's time records to inaccurately or falsely report that employee's hours worked, the employee should report the details of the request immediately to an Administrator. It is the employee's responsibility to certify the accuracy of all time reported. Additionally, habitual tardiness is not acceptable. If corrections or modifications to the employee's time record are needed, the employee must contact the Human Resources Coordinator and make the necessary changes to ensure an accurate report.

Employees who fail to report or inaccurately report hours worked will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Payroll Deductions

Various payroll deductions are made to comply with federal and state laws or the convenience of the employee, including, but not limited to the following:

- Payroll Taxes;
- Benefit Plan Contributions;
- Garnishments – including child support or other court ordered waged deductions – statutory; and
- Other agreed-upon and legally permissible deductions.

Garnishments are court orders requiring an employer to withhold specified amounts from an employee's wages for payment of a debt owed by the employee to a third party. State law requires the School to honor garnishments of employee wages (including child support) as a court or other legal judgment may instruct.

Payroll Review

Employees are advised to review their paychecks for accuracy. The School makes every effort to ensure employees are paid correctly. In the event that there is an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of the HR Coordinator so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible.

Paydays

Payday is on the 15th and 30th or last working day of each month. If the payday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, payday is the Friday before. There are two (2) payroll due dates each month.

Personal Data Changes

Employees must inform the School of any changes to personal information. Personal information includes: name, mailing address, telephone number, marital status, dependents' information, emergency contact, highest degree of education obtained, and certifications acquired. These changes can be made online in the Employee Self Service section of the ISolved system. Personal data changes should be reported in a timely manner.

Retirement

Notification of impending retirement should be provided to the school at a minimum of ninety (90) days in advance unless retirement is due to the onset of an illness.

Annual Holidays

PDLCS recognizes the following holidays and creates an annual school calendar accordingly. It is up to School Administration to designate school holidays for either time off, or for in-service training.

Currently, PDLCS observes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Presidents Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Paid Time Off for Employees

Full-time employees should refer to their individual contracts regarding available paid time off. PDLCS does provide prorated paid time off for part-time employees.

Scheduling Paid Time Off

PDLCS staff members work a 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM schedule with a thirty (30) minute paid lunch. When a staff member is unable to fulfill responsibilities as scheduled, they may request time off. Travel for school business purposes is an expectation of all school staff and outlined in the Business Travel section of this handbook and may take place outside of the normal school day.

Paid time off (PTO) may be taken in increments of one hour. All requests for time off must be submitted via the ISolved system and preapproved at least three (3) days in

advance. No leave will be preapproved during professional development days or during the Testing window without the approval of the Chief Compliance Officer.

Employees with emergency requests for personal time unable to be preapproved three (3) days in advance must call the HR Coordinator to request the time off and discuss its purpose and also notify their department supervisor. Leave requests that may occur during the school day that have not been prescheduled, should be called in to the HR Coordinator and the department supervisor.

If three (3) or more consecutive personal days are taken and were not prescheduled due to illness, the employee must provide a doctor's excuse to return to work.

Many employees are provided time off during the month of July and are not required to work during this time. Based upon work responsibilities and requirements of the School, it may be necessary for some employees and/or administrators to have modified PTO schedules. Employees should refer to their individual contracts for specifics related to PTO. For all employees, unused PTO may not be rolled over to the following year.

PDLCS must maintain adequate staffing at all times. Therefore, employees are to refer to time off parameters in their individual contracts. Only the Chief Compliance Officer can preapprove leave during Professional Development Days or during the standardized testing windows.

Leave without Pay (LWOP)

PDLCS provides leave without pay in conjunction family and medical leave (FMLA). In addition, the School can provide LWOP when the staff member does not qualify for FMLA.

The School will also provide unpaid leave in accordance with other applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to accommodations that may be required under the ADA.

Leave without pay will not be granted for instances where a staff member has used all available leave, does not qualify for FMLA or for non-medical events. If the staff member goes into a negative leave balance, the individual is in violation of his/her contract and could be subject to immediate termination.

The School may grant temporary medical leave without pay due to the birth of a child to birth mothers who do not yet qualify for FMLA due to number of hours worked or length of service. Staff members who have been employed and working for eight months at the time of birth, may receive an additional three weeks of unpaid leave in

addition to the convalescence period determined by the medical provider (typically based on the mode of delivery). For length of service under eight months, the School will provide leave without pay for the convalescence period only.

The School may grant temporary medical leave without pay for other medical events provided that medical documentation received from the provider outlines the length of leave requested.

Employees beginning temporary medical leave between July and December may hold back up to ten paid time off days and are required to exhaust all other accrued paid time prior to taking temporary medical leave without pay.

Employees beginning FMLA leave between January and June may hold back up to five paid time off days and are required to exhaust all other accrued paid time prior to taking temporary medical leave without pay.

During leave without pay, employees are entitled to continued group health plan (currently, medical, dental and vision) coverage under the same conditions as if they had continued to work, unless the Employer notifies employees of other arrangements. The employee is responsible for payment of all supplemental policies elected which currently consists of short-term disability insurance, long-term disability insurance and supplemental life insurance policies. The employer will deduct the cost of the supplemental premiums upon the employee's return to active work. If the staff member does not return to active work, the employee will be required to reimburse the Employer for the cost of any supplemental premiums the Employer paid for in order to maintain coverage during the leave without pay period.

Family and Medical Leaves of Absence

The Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") provides eligible employees the opportunity to take unpaid, job-protected leave for certain specified reasons. The School complies with the FMLA and provides FMLA to eligible employees in accordance with its [FMLA policy](#) which is attached at Appendix A.

If an employee is no longer qualified to perform the essential functions of the job duty with or without a reasonable accommodation, the employee may be terminated consistent with applicable law.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE POLICY

Notification of Leave

The employee must notify School Administration of the need to take bereavement leave.

Upon return, documentation must be provided to the HR Coordinator. When granted bereavement leave, it is **mandatory** to attend the funeral of the relative for whom such leave was requested. School Administration reserves the right to request the name and relationship, the name of the funeral home that handled the arrangements, as well as the obituary to confirm the funeral date.

Paid bereavement leave days do not count toward an employee's paid time off. Employees may elect to use paid time off days in conjunction with the allotted number of funeral leave days.

Immediate Family Member

Up to five (5) days of paid bereavement leave will be provided to all full-time employees at the time of death of an employee's immediate family member which includes: the employee's spouse, child(ren), step-children, siblings, domestic partner, grandchild, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, parent, step-parent, or custodial relative acting in the role of a parent or caregiver for the employee during their life.

Non-Immediate Family Member

One (1) day of paid bereavement leave will be provided to all full-time employees at the time of death of a non-immediate family member which includes: grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, or the non-immediate family member of the employee's spouse/domestic partner.

JURY DUTY

The School encourages employees to fulfill civic responsibilities by serving on a jury if summoned. Employees may request up to one (1) week paid leave for jury duty. Thereafter, an employee may request unpaid jury duty leave for the absence. An employee may elect to use any earned personal or vacation time available.

Paid Absence

Upon receiving a jury duty summons, show it to HR Coordinator as soon as possible. This will help PDLCS plan for possible absence from work. Time off taken for jury duty is treated as a paid absence for up to five (5) days during any one year. Employees are paid for the time they are absent for jury duty, less the amount they receive for performing jury duty service. Before performing any work while on jury duty leave, the employee must first seek approval from a School Administrator.

Advance Notice

Employees must give advance notice of the need for time off for jury duty. A copy of the summons should accompany the request.

Return to Work

If the employee is dismissed from jury duty before the end of the workday, they must immediately call their direct supervisor or the HR Coordinator for instructions on whether to return to work for the rest of the workday.

Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of the applicable plans, PDLCS will continue to provide all benefits for the full period of unpaid jury duty leave.

MILITARY LEAVE

Employees who wish to serve or are serving in the military and take leave in conjunction with military service should contact the Human Resources Coordinator for information about their rights before and after such leave. You are entitled to reinstatement upon completion of military service, provided you return or apply for reinstatement within the time allowed by law.

ORGANIZATION AND OFFICE POLICY

Attendance and Punctuality

Unplanned absences can disrupt work, inconvenience other employees, and affect productivity. Poor attendance or excessive lateness may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, and opportunities for advancement.

Employees are expected to report for work as scheduled. The normal work schedule for employees is eight (8) hours a day, five (5) days per week. Employees work from 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM. A paid thirty (30) minute duty-free lunch is built into each workday.

schedule. Any requested deviations from the work schedule must be approved by School Administration. Staffing needs and operational demands are determined solely at the discretion of administration.

All employees are required to travel for the administration of standardized testing and family outreach events. Travel often involves overnight stays for which the employee is reimbursed expenses as outlined in *PDLCS's Business Travel and Reimbursement Procedure*.

Remote Work

A hybrid work schedule is contingent upon approval by the Board of Trustees and is voted upon annually. It is subject to change by Board approval. Staff members are assigned a set schedule of three in-office workdays and two remote days; however, any staff member is approved to work in the office five days a week without Supervisor approval.

The ability to work from home is also contingent upon the staff member's ability to complete essential functions. In the event that a staff member who is working from home, cannot complete all essential functions from the remote location, the staff member must notify the HR Coordinator and report to the office to complete the workday or take PTO. In addition, if Administration has a concern about a staff member's ability to work from home, Administration may require the staff member to work onsite.

Administration may also require staff members to work onsite on specific professional development days with no adjustment to the individual staff member's weekly schedule.

Should a staff member need to change a regular in-office day, this request must be communicated with the staff member's Supervisor and will be replaced with another in-office day within one business week. The Supervisor will notify the HR Coordinator.

Dress Code

PDLCS provides a casual yet professional work environment for its staff members. Even though the dress code is casual, it is important to project a professional image to our students, families,

visitors and coworkers. All staff members are expected to dress in a manner consistent with good hygiene, safety and good taste.

When working in the office, staff members are expected to dress in smart casual attire unless the day's tasks require otherwise. Everyone is expected to be well-groomed and wear clean clothing, free of holes, tears or other signs of wear. Footwear must be appropriate attire for the school environment. Hooded PDLCS sweatshirts may be worn on Fridays. An example of smart casual attire would be a pair of slacks or a nice pair of jeans with a button up shirt or blouse.

In addition, if blankets are used due to office temperatures, these may be worn from the waist down while seated. Staff members should not be fully covered in a blanket while in the office or while walking around the office.

When working outside of the office, staff members are expected to dress in business casual attire and are encouraged to wear a PDLCS school shirt. Jeans should not be worn for business trips with the exception of field trips or marketing events that may be outside.

When working from home and when on camera for meetings or classes, staff members are expected to dress in a manner consistent with working in the office. In addition, workspaces, particularly those that may be visible on camera, should be maintained in a professional manner.

Fraud

Like all organizations, PDLCS is faced with risks from wrongdoing, misconduct, dishonesty, and fraud. As with all business exposures, School Administration must be prepared to manage these risks and their potential impact in a professional manner. The impact of misconduct and dishonesty may include:

1. actual financial loss incurred;
2. damage to the reputation of PDLCS and its employees;
3. negative publicity;
4. the cost of investigation;
5. loss of employees;
6. loss of customers;
7. damaged relationships with PDLCS students, parents, and suppliers;
8. litigation; and
9. damaged employee morale

The School's goal is to establish and maintain a business environment of fairness, ethics, and honesty for its employees, students, parents, guests, suppliers, and anyone else

with whom there is a relationship. To maintain such an environment requires the active continual assistance of employees and managers.

PDLCS is committed to the deterrence, detection and correction of misconduct and dishonesty. The discovery, reporting and documentation of such acts provide a sound foundation for the protection of innocent parties, the disciplinary action against offenders up to and including termination where appropriate, the referral to law enforcement agencies when warranted by the facts, and the recovery of assets.

Personal Property

PDLCS is not responsible for personal property that is lost, damaged or stolen. Be aware that employees are solely responsible for any personal property that is brought into the workplace.

No item may be brought onto the premises or worksite that is sexually suggestive, offensive, or demeaning to specific individuals or groups. Firearms or other weapons are strictly prohibited. All personal property brought onto the premises may be inspected for purposes of enforcing the School's policies and to protect against theft.

Small appliances (*e.g.*, space heaters, small refrigerators and microwaves) are not permitted.

Telephones and Voicemail

Use of PDLCS telephones for personal calls is discouraged. All calls may be monitored or recorded. There should be no expectation of privacy when using School telephones. The School's telephones and voice-messaging systems should be used only in relation to an employee's job duties or for school business purposes.

Telephone communications are an important reflection of the School's image to our families and the community. Always use proper telephone etiquette. The following are some examples of good telephone etiquette: use an approved greeting, speak courteously and professionally, repeat information back to the caller, and only hang up after the caller hangs up.

Voicemail messages recorded on PDLCS equipment are the property of the School. As a result, employees have no expectation of privacy in any voicemail messages left on the PDLCS voice-messaging system and should act and treat the system accordingly. Voicemail messages can be disclosed, monitored, copied, retrieved or reviewed by PDLCS at any time, with or without permission, prior to or otherwise, of the employee.

Respectful use of **personal cell phones** for talking and texting is important to daily workspace. These guidelines are to be followed:

- Do not bring personal cell phones to School meetings (with the exception of the Safe2Say Something team members)
- If taking a call, be considerate of others who may be working.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Animals in the Workplace

Service animals are the only animals permitted in the workplace. No other exceptions may be made in order to provide a safe, clean working environment.

Please refer any questions concerning this policy to School Administration.

Emergency Office Closings

Emergencies such as severe weather, fires or power failures can disrupt the School's operations. There is a notification process in place to notify employees in the event of an emergency. Staff members may be expected to work from home during such events and should have the necessary arrangements in place. If the staff member is unable to adequately perform job responsibilities, paid time off may be requested.

First Aid

Call 911 for any life-threatening emergency. During a 911 call, follow the instructions of the dispatcher to safely assist in the situation until qualified help arrives. For minor injuries, report the incident to School Administration.

Contact School Administration, immediately, to report any incident that occurs on school property. Employees must report all work-related injuries, regardless of severity, to School Administration. Work-related injuries will be handled in accordance with Workers' Compensation laws. Refer to the section on Workers' Compensation Insurance for more information.

Safety

The Board of Trustees of the PDLCS recognizes the importance of a safe school environment relative to the educational process. Possession of weapons in the school setting is a threat to the safety of students and staff and is prohibited by law.

Weapon: The term shall include but is not limited to any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, martial arts device, firearm, air rifle, pistol, slingshot device, explosive device, replica of a weapon, and/or any other tool or instrument capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

Furthermore, the term "weapon" is defined and prohibited in accordance with applicable law.

Smoking/Drug/Alcohol Use

Smoking: It is against Pennsylvania law to smoke on any school property. This law applies equally to all employees, vendors, and visitors. School policy concerning smoking, smokeless, e-cigarettes, vaping products and/or chewing tobacco use states that such use must occur fifty (50) or more feet from any building owned, leased or being used for school purposes, such as testing, graduation, and family community activities.

Drug and Alcohol Use: PDLCS is a smoke-free and drug-free workplace.

PDLCS explicitly prohibits the following to the extent allowable under applicable law:

1. The use, possession, solicitation for, or sale of narcotics or other illegal drugs, alcohol, or prescription medication either without a prescription or not taken in accordance with the prescription ("Prohibited Substances") on PDLCS or school event premises or while performing an assignment.
2. Being impaired or under the influence of Prohibited Substances during working hours or at school sponsored events, if such impairment or influence adversely affects the employee's work performance, the safety of the employee or of others, or puts PDLCS's reputation at risk.
3. Possession, use, solicitation for, or sale of Prohibited Substances away from the School or school event premises, if such activity or involvement adversely affects the employee's work performance, the safety of the employee or of others, or puts PDLCS's reputation at risk.

Violation of any of the above requirements will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment. School Administration may also require the employee to participate in a substance abuse rehabilitation or treatment program. Failure to comply could lead to other legal consequences.

If an employee is tested for drugs or alcohol outside of the employment context and the results indicate a violation of this policy, the employee may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In such a case, the

employee will have the opportunity to explain the circumstances prior to any final employment action becoming effective. Per Act 24, if a staff member is arrested, the arrest must be reported to School Administration within 72 hours of arrest.

This policy, however, does not prevent employees from taking drugs in accordance with their prescription, and to the extent such prescription medication interferes with an employee's performance of their job duties, the employee must notify the Principal or other School Administrator.

PDLCS reserves the right if there is reasonable suspicion of drug/alcohol use in the workplace to require medical testing.

Questions regarding this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use at work can be directed to School Administration without fear of reprisal.

Workplace Monitoring

PDLCS may conduct workplace monitoring to help ensure quality control, employee safety, security, and customer satisfaction.

All computer equipment, services, or technology furnished for carrying out employment responsibilities are property of PDLCS. School Administration reserves the right to monitor computer activities and data that are stored in school computer systems. School Administration also reserves the right to find and read any data written, sent, or received via a school computer and systems, and such monitoring should be expected. Please do not use PDLCS's equipment for transferring or storing information that you would like kept private.

BUSINESS TRAVEL

Travel Statement of Purpose

PDLCS seeks to simplify the travel process by providing guidelines to follow in order to protect the interests of both the employee and the School. The following information serves to clarify the means by which travel should be arranged and parameters that employees must adhere to. It is School policy to reimburse employees for ordinary, necessary and reasonable travel expenses when directly connected with or pertaining to the transaction of school business. All travel must be done in accordance with these guidelines to qualify for reimbursement. Employees are asked to exercise prudent business judgment regarding expenses covered by these guidelines. When submitting expense report reimbursement claims, employees are expected to neither gain nor lose financially with regard to the below identified reimbursable expenses.

Responsibilities and Enforcement

The School realizes business travel can, at times, be costly. With this understanding, an organized and clear process for submitting expenses is crucial to ensure all expenses are reimbursed in a timely manner. For detailed instructions on the reimbursement process, refer to *PDLCS's Business Travel and Reimbursement Procedure*. School employees who incur travel and entertainment expenses are required to comply with these guidelines. Employees submitting expenses that are not in compliance with the guidelines risk a delayed, partial or forfeited reimbursement.

Cases of significant abuse will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action up to and including employee termination.

Employees must submit a *Pre-Travel Authorization Form* at least two weeks prior to travel to their direct supervisor for approval. All travel, which may require school reimbursement, must be approved by the CEO prior to booking a trip.

The School Administrator is responsible for assuring that all policies detailed herein have been adhered to prior to approving employee expense reports. Any deviations must be explained on the employee's expense report with the approval of the reviewer. The School Administrator is responsible for ensuring that any expenses reimbursed or paid for by the School are in compliance with these guidelines. Reimbursements for expenses that are not in compliance with the guidelines require the written approval of a School Administrator.

RESIGNATION

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment with PDLCS. PDLCS requests at least two weeks written resignation notice from all employees.

If the staff member has provided notice of terminating employment, leave requests should not be submitted during the notice period and School Administration reserves the right to disapprove any requests.

Prior to an employee's departure, an exit interview will be scheduled to discuss the reasons for resignation and the effect of the resignation on the employee's benefits.

If an employee does not provide advance notice as requested, the employee may be considered ineligible for rehire.

JOB ABANDONMENT

Any employee who is habitually absent from work or who is absent for at least three (3) consecutive scheduled workdays, without approval or without notice to School Administration, shall be deemed to have abandoned employment and will be automatically terminated.

In addition, employees who resign without providing a two-week notice are considered to have abandoned their jobs and are not eligible for rehire consideration.

RETURN OF PROPERTY

PDLCS may loan property, materials or written information to fulfill employee responsibilities. Employees are responsible for protecting and controlling said property.

Employees must return loaned property promptly when asked for the purpose of inventory or termination of employment.

If the property is not returned, or if property is lost or damaged at any point during your employment, PDLCS may also take legal action to recover property.

APPENDIX A
Family and Medical Leave Policy

Employees may be entitled to a leave of absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). This policy provides employees information concerning FMLA entitlements and obligations employees may have during such leaves. The FMLA is a federal law which can be accessed at www.dol.gov/whd/fmla and is outlined in the U.S. Department of Labor Notice of Employee Rights and Responsibilities, attached hereto. The terms and provisions outlined in this policy shall be construed in accordance with the FMLA and applicable regulations.

To request FMLA leave or to ask a question regarding FMLA eligibility, employees should contact the Human Resources Coordinator.

1. Eligibility

FMLA leave is available to "eligible employees." To be an "eligible employee," an employee must: (1) have been employed by the Employer for at least 12 months (which need not be consecutive); (2) have been employed by the Employer for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave; and (3) be employed at a worksite where 50 or more employees are located within 75 miles of the worksite.

2. Entitlements

The FMLA provides eligible employees with a right to leave, health insurance benefits and, with some limited exceptions, job restoration. The FMLA also entitles employees to certain written notices concerning their potential eligibility for and designation of FMLA leave.

3. Basic FMLA Leave Entitlement

The FMLA provides eligible employees up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave for certain family and medical reasons during a 12-month period. The 12-month period is determined based on a rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses his/her FMLA leave. Leave maybe taken for any single, or for a combination, of the following reasons:

To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care (this leave must be taken within 12-months of the child's birth/placement);

To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent who has a serious health condition;

For the employee's own serious health condition (including any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or childbirth) that makes the employee unable to perform one or more of the essential functions of the employee's job;

For purposes of Qualified Exigency Leave (described below); and/or For purposes of Military Caregiver Leave (described below).

If both married parents are employed by the Employer, they are together entitled to a total of 12 weeks of leave (rather than 12 weeks for each employee) for the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care.

The terms "serious health condition" and "son" and "daughter" are defined by the FMLA and applicable regulations.

Qualified Exigency Leave Entitlement

When an employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin (as those terms are defined by law) of a member of the United States Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves, such employee will qualify for "qualified exigency leave" if the covered service member is on active duty, has been called to active duty, or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty. For the purposes of this provision, "active duty" means deployment to a foreign country.

The categories of qualifying exigencies for which leave may be taken are:

- Short-notice deployment;
- Military events and related activities;
- Childcare and school activities;
- To care for the parent of a covered service member who is incapable of self-care;
- Counseling;
- Rest and recuperation with a covered service member who is on temporary, short-term leave during a period of active duty (up to 15 days);
- Post-deployment activities (within 90 days following active duty);
- Additional activities as agreed upon by the Employer.

Military Caregiver Leave Entitlement

Military Caregiver Leave will be granted for up to twenty six (26) weeks to eligible employees who are the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin (as those terms are defined by law) of a covered service member with a serious injury or illness during a 12-month period to care for the covered service member.

For the purposes of this provision, a covered service member is defined as a member of the United States Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves, or any individual who was honorably discharged from the United States Armed Forces, National Guard or Reserves at any time during the five (5) years immediately preceding the beginning of the requested FMLA leave period, who has a serious injury or illness incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

For purposes of this provision, the 12-month period of Military Caregiver Leave eligibility is calculated on a fixed basis, by looking forward from the date of the FMLA leave request.

"Serious injury or illness" is defined by the FMLA and applicable regulations.

Intermittent Leave and Reduced Leave Schedules

FMLA leave usually will be taken for a period of consecutive days, weeks or months. However, employees also are entitled to take FMLA leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary due to a serious health condition of the employee or covered family member or the serious injury or illness of a covered service member. For instructional employees, please refer to the section "Special School Rules – Intermittent Leave."

No Work While on Leave

Staff members are not expected or required to work while on FMLA leave. Staff members on FMLA leave should provide a personal email account address to the Human Resources Coordinator for communication purposes only. Gmail account passwords will be changed and emails forward to the staff member's supervisor for the duration of leave.

In addition, the taking of another job while on family/medical leave or any other authorized leave of absence is grounds for immediate termination, to the extent permitted by law.

Communication While on Leave

During FMLA leave, the employee's primary point of School contact is the Human Resources Coordinator. Information related to FMLA should not be discussed with other staff members.

Protection of Group Health Insurance Benefits

During FMLA leave, eligible employees are entitled to receive group health plan coverage on the same terms and conditions as if they had continued to work.

Restoration of Employment and Benefits

At the end of FMLA leave, subject to some exceptions including situations where job restoration of "key employees" will cause the Employer substantial and grievous economic injury, employees generally have a right to return to the same or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment. The Employer will notify employees if they qualify as "key employees," if it intends to deny reinstatement, and of their rights in such instances. Use of FMLA leave will not result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an eligible employee's FMLA leave.

FMLA Special School Rules

The FMLA's Special School Rules apply only to instructional employees whose principal function is to teach students in a class, small group, or individual setting. At PA Distance Learning Charter School this includes all personnel who have a defined summer break (i.e., the month of July off).

Leave Near the End of the Term

The Special School Rules apply to instructional employees requesting leave near the end of an academic term. If a teacher begins FMLA leave more than five weeks before the end of a term, the school may require the teacher to remain on leave until the end of the term if their leave is expected to last at least three weeks and the employee would otherwise return to work during the last three weeks of the term. If the teacher begins FMLA leave during the last five weeks of a term, the school may require them to remain on leave until the end of the term if the leave is expected to last more than two weeks and the employee would otherwise return to work during the last two weeks of the term. If the teacher begins FMLA leave during the last three weeks of the term, the school may require them to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave is expected to last more than five working days.

When an instructional employee is required to remain on leave until the end of an academic term, the Special School Rules require that the school only designate as FMLA leave the period of time during which the instructional employee is actually unable to work, not the period of time after which they were able to return to work but were asked by the school to remain on leave. In this case, the initial period of leave is required by the instructional employee and therefore should be counted against FMLA entitlements, but the additional leave is required by the school and therefore should not be counted against the teacher.

Leave During Summer Break or School Closure

If an employee's FMLA leave begins before the summer break and continues into the next school year, the period during the summer vacation when the employee would not have been required to report for duty is not counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. When FMLA leave continues beyond the end of the school year, the school will continue to provide the employee with any benefits over the summer break that the instructional employee would normally receive if the employee had been working at the end of the school year and was not on leave.

If the instructional employee has signed a contract for the upcoming school year, regular salary payments, less any payments for short term disability insurance payments, will continue through the summer break.

In cases where the school is closed for one or more full weeks (Sunday – Saturday), the leave taken by any eligible employee who is not required to work during break would not count towards the employee's FMLA entitlement. The employee would be entitled to full salary for that week, less any short-term disability insurance payments.

FMLA Special School Rules - Intermittent Leave

Instructional employees taking intermittent leave post significant issues for the school. For instructional employees taking longer leaves of absence under the FMLA, the school is able to secure a single, long-term substitute who can continue to follow a class's lesson plans during the original teacher's absence. For instructional staff taking intermittent leave; however, the school potentially would have to secure multiple short-term substitutes to cover a teacher's frequent absences, which causes significant disruption to the class's lesson plans and curriculum. To address this potential disruption, the Special School Rules impose certain limits on teaching staff taking intermittent leave. If an instructional employee needs intermittent leave and the employee would be on leave for more than 20 percent of the total number of working days over the leave period, the school may require the employee to take a certain period

of consecutive leave not to exceed the duration of the employee's planned medical treatment, or transfer the employee temporarily to an available alternative position for which he or she is qualified, which has equivalent pay and benefits and which would better accommodate recurring periods of leave than the instructional employee's regular position.

Notice of Eligibility for, and Designation of, FMLA Leave

Employees requesting FMLA leave are entitled to receive written notice from the Employer telling them whether they are eligible for FMLA leave and, if not eligible, the reasons why they are not eligible. When eligible for FMLA leave, employees are entitled to receive written notice of: (1) their rights and responsibilities in connection with such leave; (2) the Employer's designation of leave as FMLA-qualifying or non-qualifying, and if not FMLA-qualifying, the reasons why; and (3) the amount of leave, if known, that will be counted against the employee's leave entitlement.

The Employer may retroactively designate leave as FMLA leave with appropriate written notice to employees provided the Employer's failure to designate leave as FMLA-qualifying at an earlier date did not cause harm or injury to the employee. In all cases where leaves qualify for FMLA protection, the Employer and employee can mutually agree that leave be retroactively designated as FMLA leave.

Employee Obligations

1. Provide Notice of the Need for Leave

Employees who take FMLA leave must timely notify the Employer of their need for FMLA leave. The following describes the content and timing of such employee notices.

Content of Employee Notice

To trigger FMLA leave protections, employees must inform the Human Resources Coordinator of the need for FMLA-qualifying leave and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave, if known. Employees may do this by either requesting FMLA leave specifically, or explaining the reasons for leave so as to allow the Employer to determine that the leave is FMLA-qualifying.

Calling in "sick," without providing the reasons for the needed leave, will not be considered sufficient notice for FMLA leave under this policy. Employees must respond to the Employer's questions to determine if absences are potentially FMLA-qualifying.

If employees fail to explain the reasons for FMLA leave, the leave may be denied. When employees seek leave due to FMLA-qualifying reasons for which the Employer has previously provided FMLA-protected leave, they must specifically reference the qualifying reason for the leave or the need for FMLA leave.

Timing of Employee Notice

Employees must provide 30 days' advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days' notice is not possible, or the approximate timing of the need for leave is not foreseeable, employees must provide the Employer notice of the need for leave as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Employees who fail to give 30 days' notice for foreseeable leave without a reasonable excuse for the delay, or otherwise fail to satisfy FMLA notice obligations, may have FMLA leave delayed or denied.

Cooperate in the Scheduling of Planned Medical Treatment (Including Accepting Transfers to Alternative Positions) and Intermittent Leave or Reduced Leave Schedules

When planning medical treatment, employees must consult with the Employer and make a reasonable effort to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the Employer's operations, subject to the approval of an employee's health care provider. Employees must consult with the Employer prior to the scheduling of treatment to work out a treatment schedule that best suits the needs of both the Employer and the employees, subject to the approval of an employee's health care provider. If employees providing notice of the need to take FMLA leave on an intermittent basis for planned medical treatment neglect to fulfill this obligation, the Employer may require employees to attempt to make such arrangements, subject to the approval of the employee's health care provider.

When employees take intermittent or reduced work schedule leave for foreseeable planned medical treatment for the employee or a family member, including during a period of recovery from a serious health condition or to care for a covered service member, the Employer may temporarily transfer employees, during the period that the intermittent or reduced leave schedules are required, to alternative positions with equivalent pay and benefits for which the employees are qualified and which better accommodate recurring periods of leave.

When employees seek intermittent leave or a reduced leave schedule for reasons unrelated to the planning of medical treatment, upon request, employees must advise the Employer of the reason why such leave is medically necessary. In such instances,

the Employer and employee shall attempt to work out a leave schedule that meets the employee's needs without unduly disrupting the Employer's operations, subject to the approval of the employee's health care provider.

Submit Medical Certifications Supporting Need for FMLA Leave (Unrelated to Requests for Military Family Leave)

Depending on the nature of FMLA leave sought, employees may be required to submit medical certifications supporting their need for FMLA-qualifying leave. As described below, there generally are three types of FMLA medical certifications: an initial certification, a recertification and a return to work/fitness for duty certification.

It is the employee's responsibility to provide the Employer with timely, complete and sufficient medical certifications. Whenever the Employer requests employees to provide FMLA medical certifications, employees must provide the requested certifications within 15 calendar days after the Employer's request, unless it is not practicable to do so despite an employee's diligent, good faith efforts. The Employer shall inform employees if submitted medical certifications are incomplete or insufficient and provide employees at least seven calendar days to cure deficiencies. The Employer will delay FMLA leave to employees who fail to timely cure deficiencies or otherwise fail to timely submit requested medical certifications.

With the employee's permission, the Employer (through individuals other than an employee's direct supervisor) may contact the employee's health care provider to authenticate or clarify completed and sufficient medical certifications. If employees choose not to provide the Employer with authorization allowing it to clarify or authenticate certifications with health care providers, the Employer may delay FMLA leave if certifications are unclear.

Whenever the Employer deems it appropriate to do so, it may waive its right to receive timely, complete and/or sufficient FMLA medical certifications.

Initial Medical Certifications

Employees requesting leave because of their own, or a covered relation's, serious health condition, or to care for a covered service member, must supply medical certification supporting the need for such leave from their health care provider or, if applicable, the health care provider of their covered family or service member. If employees provide at least 30 days' notice of medical leave, they should submit the medical certification before leave begins. A new initial medical certification will be required on an annual basis for serious medical conditions lasting beyond a single leave year.

If the Employer has reason to doubt initial medical certifications for an employee taking Basic FMLA Leave, it may require employees to obtain a second opinion at the Employer's expense. If the opinions of the initial and second health care providers differ, the Employer may, at its expense, require employees to obtain a third, final and binding certification from a health care provider designated or approved jointly by the Employer and the employee.

Medical Recertifications

If an employee's medical certification states that the employee's FMLA leave period will last less than six (6) months, then the employee will be required to submit a new medical certification at the end of the initial leave period. If an employee's medical certification states that the employee's FMLA leave period will last six (6) months or more, then the employee will be required to submit a new medical certification every six (6) months. The Employer will notify employees if recertification is required and will give employees at least 15 calendar days to provide medical recertification.

Return to Work/Fitness for Duty Medical Certifications

Unless notified that providing such certifications is not necessary, employees returning to work from FMLA leaves that were taken because of their own serious health conditions that made them unable to perform their jobs must provide the Employer medical certification confirming they are able to return to work and the employees' ability to perform the essential functions of the employees' position, with or without reasonable accommodation. The Employer may delay and/or deny job restoration until employees provide return to work/fitness for duty certifications.

2. Submit Certifications Supporting Need for Qualified Exigency and Military Caregiver Leave

Confirming documentation, including but not limited to the applicable Military orders of the covered service member, may be required to support an employee's request for Qualified Exigency Leave.

In addition to medical certifications, confirming documentation, including but not limited to proof of the covered service member's honorable discharge, may be required to support an employee's request for Military Caregiver Leave.

Substitute Paid Leave for Unpaid FMLA Leave

Employees beginning FMLA leave between July and December may hold back up to ten paid time off days and are required to exhaust all other accrued paid time prior to taking unpaid FMLA leave.

Employees beginning FMLA leave between January and June may hold back up to five paid time off days and are required to exhaust all other accrued paid time prior to taking unpaid FMLA leave.

The use of paid time does not extend the length of FMLA leave and the paid time will run concurrently with an employee's FMLA entitlement.

Employees with short term disability insurance may opt to exercise this benefit (if it applies) prior to taking paid and/or unpaid leave. Leaves of absence taken in connection with a disability leave plan or workers' compensation injury/illness shall run concurrently with any FMLA leave entitlement.

Health Insurance Premiums

During FMLA leave, employees are entitled to continued group health plan (currently, medical, dental and vision) coverage under the same conditions as if they had continued to work, unless the Employer notifies employees of other arrangements. During any paid portion of FMLA leave, the Employer will deduct supplemental plan premiums from the employee's paycheck in the same manner as if the employee was actively working. During any unpaid portion of FMLA leave, the employee is responsible for payment of all supplemental policies elected which currently consists of short-term disability insurance, long term disability insurance and supplemental life insurance policies. During any period that FMLA is unpaid, the employer will deduct the cost of the supplemental premiums upon the employee's return to active work. If the staff member does not return to active work, the employee will be required to reimburse the Employer for the cost of any supplemental premiums the Employer paid for in order to maintain coverage during the unpaid portion of FMLA leave.

Coordination of FMLA Leave with Other Leave Policies

The FMLA does not affect any federal, state or local law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any state or local law, which provides greater family or medical leave rights. For additional information concerning leave entitlements and obligations that might arise when FMLA leave is either not available or exhausted, please consult the Employer's other leave policies in this Employee Handbook or contact a Human Resources Coordinator.

Questions and/or Complaints about FMLA Leave

If you have questions regarding this FMLA policy, please contact the Human Resources Coordinator. The Employer is committed to complying with the FMLA and shall interpret and apply this policy in a manner consistent with the FMLA and all applicable regulations.

The FMLA makes it unlawful for employers to: 1) interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA; or 2) discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA. If employees believe their FMLA rights have been violated, they should contact the Human Resources Coordinator immediately. The Employer will investigate any FMLA complaints and take prompt and appropriate remedial action to address and/or remedy any FMLA violation. Employees also may file FMLA complaints with the United States Department of Labor or may bring private lawsuits alleging FMLA violations.

Exemption for Highly Compensated Employees

The Employer may choose not to return highly compensated employees (highest paid 10% of employees at a worksite or within 75 miles of that worksite) to their former or equivalent positions following a leave if restoration of employment will cause substantial economic injury to the Employer. (This fact-specific determination will be made by the Employer on a case-by-case basis.) The Employer will notify you if you qualify as a "highly compensated" employee, if the Employer intends to deny reinstatement, and of your rights in such instances.

APPENDIX B
Technology and Internet Acceptable Usage Policy

PURPOSE: Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School (PDLCS) is dedicated to providing services and educational programs using current technology necessary for providing a safe and orderly environment and protecting the health, safety, and welfare of all students.

The Internet as used by students and staff of PDLCS will be solely a tool to facilitate educational programs and research. No other use of the Internet will be endorsed or allowed by PDLCS. Specifically, through the use of computers, students and staff will be able to access educational research materials stored on other computers at other facilities located throughout the world. They will also be able to collaborate with other students and peers with Internet access globally.

Although this represents a significant opportunity, there are important responsibilities that must be shared among students, parents and staff. The purpose of this policy is to detail these responsibilities in a manner understandable to all parties involved.

DETAILED POLICY STATEMENT:

COMPUTER NETWORK: PDLCS computer network includes all local area networking and wide area networking within the school community as well as all online and direct-wired networking such as Internet to which the PDLCS network may be linked.

ACCEPTABLE USE: All persons (students and staff) using PDLCS's computer network must conduct themselves in a responsible, ethical and polite manner. Students and staff of PDLCS shall practice responsible computing. Responsible computing encompasses the ethical use of computers and mobile devices as tools. Users of PDLCS's IT resources must adhere to the following principles:

- 1. Legal and Ethical Use:** Users shall use IT resources in a manner consistent with all applicable laws, regulations, and ethical standards. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from engaging in any unlawful or fraudulent activities.

- 2. Network Security:** Users shall not attempt to compromise the security of IT resources, including unauthorized access, hacking, or distribution of malicious software. Users are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of their passwords and access credentials.

3. Data Privacy: Users shall respect the privacy of others' data and information. Unauthorized access, sharing, or disclosure of sensitive data is strictly prohibited.

4. Copyright and Intellectual Property: Users must respect copyright and intellectual property rights when using IT resources. Unauthorized distribution, reproduction, or sharing of copyrighted materials is prohibited.

5. Responsible Content: Users shall not create, access, download, or distribute offensive, obscene, or inappropriate content through IT resources. This includes, but is not limited to, hate speech, harassment, and material that may be considered discriminatory or defamatory.

UNACCEPTABLE USES: PDLCS's Network is to be used for legitimate academic and employment related purposes only. The following types of access are considered to be inappropriate uses. This list is by no means exclusive and PDLCS reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine whether a particular use is considered inappropriate or unacceptable.

1. Accessing profane or obscene material, material suggesting illegal acts and material advocating violence or discrimination.
2. Using the access for illegal acts.
3. Attempts to access any resources that are restricted, confidential or privileged.
4. Posting chain letters.
5. Internet Relay Chat, news groups, or mailing list participation unless directed and supervised by a staff member for a classroom assignment.
6. Unauthorized Access: Attempting to gain unauthorized access to systems, data, or accounts, or attempting to impersonate another user.
7. Granting Internet or Network access to unauthorized persons intentionally or unintentionally, or failing to notify a teacher or administrator if you suspect someone of using your password.
8. Posting personal contact information.
9. Agreeing to meet someone met online without parental approval and under the supervision of a teacher or authorized adult.
10. Attempts to disrupt access.
11. Causing damage to or changing function, operation or design of technology.
12. Using obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening language.

13. Harassing another person.
14. Posting false or defamatory information.
15. Plagiarizing information found on the Internet.
16. Disregarding the rights of copyright owners on the Internet.
17. Posting web pages without the consent of a teacher or authorized adult.
18. Conducting business unrelated to PDLCS.
19. Buying or selling any products or services.
20. Engaging in acts of bullying, harassment, intimidation, and/or threatening conduct including, but not limited to such conduct committed or furthered by means of an electronic act.
21. Using school provided devices to send, receive, or in any way access sexually explicit pictures and messages.
22. Gambling
23. Cybersecurity Threats: Engaging in any activity that may compromise the security and availability of IT resources, including but not limited to hacking, virus distribution, and phishing.
24. Network Abuse: Excessive use of network resources, including bandwidth, which may degrade network performance for others.
25. Using Artificial Intelligence in an unauthorized or unethical manner. This includes but is not limited to acts of academic dishonesty, and the creation of deep fake or shallow fake images or videos.

Students or staff who engage in such activities, or any others deemed inappropriate by PDLCS, shall be subject to disciplinary measures, as deemed appropriate by PDLCS administration, its Board of Trustees and PDLCS policy.

As stated above, use of the PDLCS computer network is to be limited to legitimate academic purposes. This means using the network in such a manner as to have a direct or indirect impact on the student's educational program at PDLCS. The use of computer network for sending frivolous electronic mail (e-mail), chatting, reading, and sending jokes, researching non-academic related sources such as MTV, sports sites, social networking sites such as Facebook, and playing computer games will not be supported or allowed to occur at PDLCS. The use of the system for defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, offensive, and illegal material or other prohibited activities shall not be permitted, and PDLCS will use any and all efforts, within the confines of the law, to prevent such material from entering the school's network. Individuals are encouraged to

report such activity to the school administration. PDLCS also requires adherence to certain rules for use of its hardware:

1. Learn how to use the hardware properly.
2. Do not adjust, connect, or disconnect components without supervision unless you understand what you are doing and are authorized by PDLCS personnel to do so.
3. Do not connect your personal hardware to PDLCS's hardware.
4. No food or drink within 10' of computer stations.

PRIVACY: For the protection of our students, all users are advised and should be reinforced by parents/guardians to NEVER disclose personal information over the network or Internet, including but not limited to, home address, physical description, age, route to and from a location, or any other personal information that could threaten the safety, identity, and security of our students.

Electronic information and communication sent to, received by, or accessed on PDLCS-owned property, networks, and/or hardware, remain the property of PDLCS. PDLCS reserves the right to monitor electronic activities and communications.

COLLECTION, USE AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION: PDLCS employs the Google Apps suite of products for student use. These applications are powered by Google but administered by PDLCS. Google Apps integrates with the school's standard web single sign-on system using the SAML2.- standard. These single sign-on systems are owned by PDLCS and housed in a secure datacenter within the school. Such systems permit students to access Google Apps only after their school-assigned credentials are authenticated by the systems.

PDLCS student email is provided as part of Google Apps. PDLCS utilizes a set of security tools that allow the school to restrict electronic communications to within the PDLCS domain or school-affiliated domains. PDLCS provides Google Apps and student email accounts to students for educational purposes only. PDLCS is the sole owner of user data. The Google Apps Terms of Service assures PDLCS that the controls, processes and policies that protect user data in Google's system adhere to strict auditing standards; and that Google complies with applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to applicable privacy laws and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

GOOGLE G SUITE ACCOUNT USAGE: The Google G Suite for Education is utilized across all aspects of the school for educational purposes in grades K-12. This account will potentially provide the student's name to Google G Suite Applications and other

third party applications. Parents/Guardians consent to the creation of a Google G Suite account for all students of PDLCS to be utilized for school communication, lesson activity completion and as a means for logging into third part educational applications that utilize a Google account single sign on protocol.

GOOGLE APPS: Google Docs is a component of Google Apps. It is a collaborative tool that allows multiple users to collaborate on a single document in real time. PDLCS teachers or staff may assign students to use Google Docs to collaborate on assignments or projects. Students are to use this application for these purposes only. Using Google Docs for unauthorized communication with other students such as passing notes is unacceptable and will not be permitted.

WEBCAM: With technology advancing at such a rapid pace, it is important that we offer our students the tools needed to get the most out of their educational experience. With the growing use of video collaboration tools in schools, PDLCS may choose to offer webcams to some students. PDLCS webcams may be used for face-to-face video meetings between students and staff or parents and staff. They may also be used as educational tools as directed by School Administration. These webcams may be external USB devices that can be connected to student computers as needed or built into the school issued computer. It is the personal responsibility of each student and staff member to use webcams in an appropriate manner, in accordance with the acceptable usage outlines on Page 1 of this policy. PDLCS does not employ the use of webcams to help enforce any polices or asset tracking, nor does the school use webcams to remotely monitor end use activity.

TABLETS: PDLCS is committed to providing a learning environment that will enable students to succeed in a constantly evolving technological landscape. The School believes in the importance of providing students with the 21st century skills they need to become self-motivated learners. To accomplish this vision, PDLCS may choose to loan tablet devices to some students. The following guidelines must be adhered to:

1. Students are expected to use tablets appropriately for educational purposes.
2. Students should not attempt to change the configuration of the devices or removed installed profiles.
3. Chrome Web Store free apps may be installed; however, only those free apps with an app store age appropriate level may be installed.
4. PDLCS will not reimburse for any paid app.
5. PDLCS will not reimburse for mobile coverage.

Tablets will be pre-configured and enrolled on the PDLCS mobile device management server before being assigned to students. This enrollment allows for asset management, as well as remote updates of any PDLCS in-house apps that may be distributed to students. The server also alerts school administration when a tablet has had unauthorized changes made to any installed configuration such as removal of profiles or restrictions. Restrictions will be implemented on each tablet. CIPA-compliant Internet filtering will be installed similar to laptop filtering. This filter is a Web browser that replaces a tablet's default browser on PDLCS tablets. Devices like a tablet can be a valuable tool to encourage students to use technology to research, explore, and be creative. Such tools also support the mission of PDLCS.

NETWORK SECURITY: Using the guidelines of the U.S. Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000, PDLCS has implemented a technology protection measure (Internet site filtering software) to prevent all users of the network from accessing inappropriate Internet sites. Inappropriate Internet sites: include the following content: Anything that falls under at least one of the categories below shall be blocked/filtered. This list will be updated/modified as required.

NUDITY/PORNOGRAPHY:

1. Prevailing U.S. standards for nudity (e.g., genitalia, female breasts)
2. Provocative semi-nudity (i.e., lingerie models)
3. Sites which include pornography or links to pornographic sites
4. **Exceptions:** Classical nudity (e.g., Michelangelo), swimsuit models

SEXUALITY:

1. Sites which contain material of a mature level (elementary/middle school levels)
2. Images or descriptions of sexual aids
3. Descriptions of sexual acts or techniques
4. Sites which contain inappropriate personal ads

VIOLENCE:

1. Sites which promote violence
2. Images or a description of graphically violent acts (rape, dismemberment, torture, etc.)
3. Graphic autopsy or crime-scene images

CRIME:

1. Information on performing criminal acts (e.g. drug or bomb making, computer “hacking”)
2. Illegal file archives (e.g., software piracy)

DRUG USE:

1. Sites which promote the use of illegal drugs
2. Materials advocating the use of illegal drugs (e.g., marijuana, LSD) or abuse of any drug (e.g., drinking-game rules)
3. **Exception:** Material with valid-educational use (e.g., drug-use statistics)

Student Hardware: PDLCS Students will be issued the necessary computer and peripheral devices necessary to facilitate their learning upon enrollment. Students are required to use only school-owned and issued technology, including but not limited to Chromebooks, laptops, software, and other peripherals, to complete school activities.

In the event of any issues or malfunctions with the technology, Parents/Guardians or Students should first attempt to troubleshoot the problem using provided resources or contacting the IT department for remote assistance.

If the issues cannot be resolved remotely, IT will coordinate with the Materials Coordinator to ship a replacement device, along with provisions for the family to ship the broken device back to the school. PDLCS families should return the broken devices within 3 business days of receiving the return shipment labels. It is important to return broken devices promptly, as students that have multiple devices assigned to them may not be shipped additional replacement devices until previously assigned devices are returned to the school.

Employee Hardware: PDLCS employees will be issued the necessary computer and peripheral devices for the completion of their job duties. Employees are required to use only school-owned and issued technology, including but not limited to computers, laptops, mobile devices, software, and peripherals, to perform their job responsibilities.

Personal devices and software are prohibited for conducting school business, unless explicitly approved by a PDLCS Chief Officer.

In the event of any issues or malfunctions with the technology during remote work days, employees should first attempt to troubleshoot the problem using provided

resources or contacting the IT department for remote assistance. If the issue cannot be resolved remotely, employees are required to report to the office for further assistance.

Employees should promptly notify their supervisor if they encounter technology-related issues that prevent them from fulfilling their job duties effectively while working remotely.

Reporting Violations: Users are encouraged to report any suspected violations of this AUP to the Chief Operations Officer, or to Technical Support (888-997-3352 Option 2/support@padistance.org). Reports will be treated confidentially to the extent permitted by law.

Policy Review: PDLCS reserves the right to modify this Acceptable Use Policy at any time. Users are responsible for reviewing and understanding the most current version of this policy.

By using PDLCS's IT resources, users acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agreed to comply with this Acceptable Use Policy.

**Acknowledgment of Receipt
of Technology and Internet Usage Agreement**

This will acknowledge your receipt and understanding of the provisions contained in the 2024-25 Technology and Internet Usage Agreement.

I acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the Technology and Internet Usage Agreement. I further acknowledge that I am an "at will" employee and am aware of my reporting obligations under the School's policies. I acknowledge that I have no expectation of privacy with respect to any technology and internet usage that is owned by the School.

Employee Printed Name

Employee Signature

Date

Acknowledgment of Receipt of 2024-25 Employee Handbook

This will acknowledge your receipt and understanding of the provisions contained in this Employee Handbook. The information contained in this manual has been prepared to give employees a summary of many but not all policies. Although this Handbook reflects the current benefits and practices, it may be necessary to make changes from time to time to best serve the needs of the School, and the School reserves the right to change any policy at any time with or without specific written notice. The School seeks to follow all of the applicable laws, and these laws continuously change. The School's policies will only be enforced to the extent they are consistent with applicable law.

The policies and statements contained in this Handbook (and any future changes) are NOT to be considered as a contract of employment. Instead, this Handbook serves the purpose of a guideline to help improve mutual communication.

If you have any questions regarding any of the policies contained in this Handbook, please contact the designated School Administrator.

I acknowledge that I have received, read and understand the Employee Handbook. I further acknowledge that I am an "at will" employee and am aware of my reporting obligations under the School's policies.

Employee Printed Name

Employee Signature

This Employee Handbook replaces all previous versions.