



AFCS

2023 - 2024

**AMERICA'S FINEST CHARTER
SCHOOL**

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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WELCOME STATEMENT

Welcome to America's Finest Charter School! We offer this Employee Handbook to assist you in understanding our processes as a new employee or to those of you who have been with us for a while to refresh that understanding.

As an employee of America's Finest Charter School, the importance of your contribution cannot be overstated. Our goal is to provide the finest-quality education to our students. By satisfying our students' needs, they will continue to grow with us and attain the success they seek in life.

You are an important part of this process for your work directly influences America's Finest Charter School's success. Your service to our families and our students is commendable. We welcome you and look forward to serving alongside you.

Tim Bagby, Executive Director

Gary Rubin, Board President

A WORD ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This Employee Handbook contains information about the employment policies and practices of America's Finest Charter school. We expect each employee to read this Employee Handbook carefully, as it is a valuable reference for understanding your job and the school. The policies outlined in this Employee Handbook should be regarded as management guidelines only, which will require changes from time to time. The school retains the right to make decisions involving employment as needed in order to conduct its work in a manner that is beneficial to the employees and the school. This Employee Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all prior Employee Handbooks and inconsistent verbal or written policy statements. Except for the policy of at-will employment, which can only be changed by a resolution of the Board of Directors in writing, the school reserves the right to revise, delete and add to the provision of this Employee Handbook. All such revisions, deletions or additions must be in writing and must be signed by the Director of the School. No oral statements or representations can change the provisions of this Employee Handbook.

The provisions of this Employee Handbook are not intended to create contractual obligations with respect to any matters it covers. Nor is this Employee Handbook intended to create a contract guaranteeing that you will be employed for any specific time period.

America's Finest charter school is an at-will employer. This means that regardless of any provision in this employee handbook, either you or the school may terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice. Nothing in this employee handbook or in any document or statement, written or oral, shall limit the right to terminate employment-at-will. No officer, employee or representative of the school is authorized to enter into an agreement - expressed or implied - with any employee for employment other than at-will.

This Employee Handbook refers to current benefit plans maintained by the school. Refer to the actual plan documents and summary plan descriptions if you have specific questions regarding the benefit plans.

THE OBJECTIVES OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

Charter schools in California are meant to accomplish the following objectives:

- (a) Improve pupil learning.
- (b) Increase learning opportunities for all pupils, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for pupils who are identified as academically low achieving.
- (c) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- (d) Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.
- (e) Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public-school system.
- (f) Hold the schools established under this part accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide the schools with a method to change from rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.

- (g) Provide vigorous competition within the public-school system to stimulate continual improvements in all public schools. [§47601]

AMERICA’S FINEST CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

America’s Finest Charter School’s continuing mission is to help our students achieve their American Dream. Our Motto is: “Work Hard, Learn Everything You Can, Always Do Your Best, Help Others And Success Will Follow To Realize The American Dream.”

America’s Finest Charter Schools are located in San Diego, California and serve students in Transitional Kindergarten through twelfth grade.

CHARTER SCHOOL VISION

Seize the Dream!

Our vision is to accelerate students’ academic achievement and cultivate a sense of helping others by providing an education based on the best teaching and learning theories. We will provide every student with research-based teaching strategies to develop their academic potential.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

“Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky stressed that with a proper education, everyone’s needs will be met and everyone’s life will be fulfilled. His Learning Theories will be put into practical application by America’s Finest Charter School teachers with support from the Director, instructional aides, consultants, and collaborative peer-groups. This intensive endeavor will create a cutting-edge learning community where students will accelerate their learning by working in what Vygotsky coined as their ‘Zone of Proximal Development.’ This will be aided by the process of scaffolding. This process is particularly emphasized at AFCS due to its student population of a wide age range.” (from AFCS website)

America’s Finest Charter School envisions helping students through the use of:

LEARNER OUTCOMES

The following are the schoolwide learner outcomes for AFCS:

America’s Finest Charter School Graduate are:

Critical Thinkers who:

- Apply, analyze, and connect information learned across the curriculum, including language arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, and the arts
- Use the Inquiry Process to address a problem, hypothesize, analyze, and draw conclusions as they investigate an issue/problem.
- Understand how to solve real world problems through internalizing problem solving methods.

Effective Communicators who:

- Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills through the use of academic language at school, with peers, and in the community.
- Practice active listening skills, such as asking clarification questions, restating comments to confirm what was heard.
- Collaborate, produce, and manage interpersonal relationships within diverse groups and settings.

21st Century Scholars who:

- Use technology effectively to access, organize, research and present information.
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate technology as an effective tool in their daily lives.
- Have developed an academic plan with goals to guide them in their pursuit towards college degrees or career/trade choices.
- Have a clear understanding of the UC A-G Course Requirements and the pathway to meet college eligibility requirements.

Socially Responsible Global Citizens who:

- Embrace and respect cultural diversity through the understanding of our global society.
- Will contribute to the improvement of their school and local community by maximizing learning and creating future educational goals.
- Demonstrate knowledge of proper nutrition, exercise and physical health and its impact on daily life.

Among the other theories and practices AFCS also utilizes:

- Field Trips and Community Service Projects to provide authentic learning, a space to internalize external experiences, and to expose children to civic engagement.
- Backwards Planning to cluster standards in learning units for all core subjects and identify common learning targets and success criteria, along with unit assessments.
- Daily Lesson Plans to indicate standards taught, learning targets, success criteria and identify how individual student needs will be met.
- Classroom Walk-Throughs by principals and mentors with feedback.
- Whole-Group Reteaching of an area designated by the teachers as needing review along with decisions on which standards need to be retaught, when they will be taught, and how they will be assessed.
- Benchmark and formative Assessments for teachers to collaborate on student performance and to instigate new strategies to aid in student mastery:
 - Reflect on and assess their teaching
 - Explore and test new ideas, methods, and materials
 - Assess how effective the new approaches were
 - Share feedback with fellow team members
 - Make decisions about which new approaches to include in the team's curriculum, instruction, and assessment plans

Therefore, the AFCS mission is achieved through the following strategies:

LONGER SCHOOL DAY—ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

America's Finest Charter School will provide a safe haven for our students until 6pm where students can complete schoolwork in their class from 3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. and then attend an exciting class of dance, art, martial arts, chorus and/or instrumental music, skating etc.

SMALL SCHOOL COMMUNITY

America's Finest Charter School is an intentionally small school community. Limiting class size to 25 helps us maintain a small school environment.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT — SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

America's Finest Charter School creates a school culture that fosters an academic learning environment. In this culture students' thoughts and feelings are respected and students work collaboratively with classmates and other members of the community. America's Finest Charter School staff are trained in the principles of Social Emotional Learning.

COMMUNITY AS PARTNER

Vygotsky felt that schools are part of the larger social context from which they come from. AFCS will assimilate parents, local college students, graduates, artists, community members, and representatives of the students' culture into the school's social context and provide activities, to promote community involvement and learning development.

FAMILIES AS PARTNERS

America's Finest Charter School families are respected collaborators in the educational process. Staff listens carefully to parents and requires their active partnership in implementing an effective educational plan for their children. Parents are invited into the partnership through volunteer work, field experiences, and parent teacher conferences, attending school celebrations and District English Learner Advisory Committee and/or School Site Council meetings. The school has an open-door policy for the AFCS Board of Directors. **Staff members who have school aged children who are not enrolled at AFCS are encouraged not to bring them to school during school/work hours.**

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Our School is committed to equal employment opportunity. We will not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on any legally-recognized basis. You may discuss equal employment opportunity related questions with the Director or any other member of management.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Our School is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals

with disabilities. This may include providing reasonable accommodation where appropriate for an otherwise qualified individual to perform the essential functions of the job. It is your responsibility to notify the Director of the need for accommodation. Upon doing so, the Director may ask you for your input or the type of accommodation you believe may be necessary or the functional limitations caused by your disability. Also, when appropriate, we may need your permission to obtain additional information from your physician or other medical or rehabilitation professionals.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS PHILOSOPHY

We are committed to providing the best possible climate for maximum development and goal achievement for all employees. Our practice is to treat each employee as an individual. We seek to develop a spirit of teamwork; individuals working together to attain a common goal.

In order to maintain an atmosphere where these goals can be accomplished, we provide a comfortable and progressive workplace. Most importantly, we have a workplace where communication is open and problems can be discussed and resolved in a mutually respectful atmosphere. We consider individual circumstances and the individual employee.

We firmly believe that with direct communication, we can continue to resolve any difficulties that may arise and develop a mutually beneficial relationship.

TEACHER RIGHT TO KNOW ABOUT DANGEROUS STUDENTS

AFCS teachers will be notified when one of their students has engaged in, or reasonably suspected to have engaged in, for the previous three school years, any of the acts described as:

- Education Code 48900 physical fighting, destruction of property, stealing etc.
- Education Code 48900.2 sexual harassment
- Education Code 48900.3 hate violence
- Education Code 48900.4 harassment of school personnel or pupil; threats/intimidation
- Education Code 48900.7 terrorist threat

The teacher view of our Student Information System denotes students with suspension of this nature with the letters SSA (Student Safety Act). Teachers have up to date access to this each day in their attendance screen. The Executive Director, Principal, and teacher shall keep this information in confidence and must not further disseminate. Site administrators are obligated to tell staff about students considered dangerous or troublesome, but it is important that the students' rights be respected as well.

Teachers are also notified of suspensions as they occur during the school year via email and are advised about the confidential nature of the information.

HARASSMENT FREE WORKPLACE

We prohibit harassment of one employee by another employee, supervisor or third party for any reason including, but not limited to: veteran status, uniform service member status, race, color, religion, sexual orientation or national origin or any other protected class under federal, state or local law.

While it is not easy to define precisely what harassment is, it includes: slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments or visual depictions, unwelcome jokes and teasing.

Any employee who believes that s(he) has been harassed should report the situation immediately to Tim Bagby, Director at (619) 694-4809. If an employee makes a report to management and the director either does not respond or does not respond in a manner the employee deems satisfactory or consistent with this policy, the employee can report the situation to the AFCS Board of Directors.

The School will investigate all such reports as confidentially as possible. Adverse action will not be taken against an employee because he or she, in good faith, reports or participates in the investigation of a violation of this policy. Violations of this policy are not permitted and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Any type of sexual harassment is against school policy and may be unlawful. Every employee must complete a sexual harassment training on a yearly basis by September 15th, or within 30 days of being hired.

We firmly prohibit sexual harassment of any employee by another employee, supervisor or third party. Harassment of third parties by our employees is also prohibited. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate the morality of employees. It is to ensure that in the workplace, no employee is subject to sexual harassment. While it is not easy to define precisely what sexual harassment is, it may include: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including, but not limited to, sexually-related drawings, pictures, jokes, teasing, uninvited touching or other sexually-related comments. The conduct prohibited by this policy includes conduct in any form including but not limited to email, voice mail, chat rooms, Internet use or history, text messages, pictures, images, writings, words or gestures.

Sexual harassment of an employee will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. There will be no adverse action taken against employees who report violations of this policy in good faith or participate in the investigation of such violations.

Any employee who believes that (s)he is a victim of sexual harassment or has been retaliated against for complaining of sexual harassment, should report the situation immediately to Tim Bagby, Director at (619) 694-4809 or tbagby@americasfinestcharterschool.org. If the Director either does not respond or does not respond in a manner the employee deems satisfactory or consistent with this policy, the employee is required to report the situation to AFCS Board of Directors.

- The School will investigate every reported incident immediately. Any employee, supervisor or agent of the School who has been found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge.

- The School will conduct all investigations in a discreet manner. The School recognizes that every investigation requires a determination based on all the facts in the matter. We also recognize the serious impact a false accusation can have. We trust that all employees will continue to act responsibly.
- The reporting employee and any employee participating in any investigation under this policy have the School's assurance that no reprisal will be taken as a result of a sexual harassment complaint. It is our policy to encourage discussion of the matter, to help protect others from being subjected to similar inappropriate behavior.

DISCIPLINARY PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH STUDENTS

It is the policy of America's Finest Charter School that no teacher or other staff member will use corporal punishment against a student. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, tying, taping, or the use of any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior.

STAFF-STUDENT INTERACTIONS

While the use of appropriate touching is part of daily life and is important for student development, teachers and other staff members must ensure that they do not exceed appropriate behavior. If a child or other staff member specifically requests that he or she not be touched, then that request must be honored without question.

BOUNDARIES DEFINED

For the purposes of this policy, the term "boundaries" is defined as acceptable professional behavior by staff members while interacting with a student. Trespassing beyond the boundaries of a student-teacher relationship is deemed an abuse of power and a betrayal of public trust.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviors

Some activities may seem innocent from a staff member's point-of-view but could be perceived as flirtation or sexual insinuation from the perspective of students or parents. There is no single reasonable person standard. The purpose of the following lists of unacceptable and acceptable behaviors is not to restrain innocent, positive relationships between staff and students, but to prevent relationships that could lead to or may be perceived as inappropriate, or sexual misconduct, or "grooming." Grooming is defined as an act or series of acts by a sexual predator to gain physical and/or emotional control by gaining trust (of staff and/or family and a minor) and desensitizing the minor to various forms of touching and other intimate interaction.

Staff members must understand their own responsibilities for ensuring that they do not cross the boundaries as written in this policy. Violations could subject the teacher or staff member to discipline up to and including termination. Disagreeing with the wording or intent of these established boundaries will be considered irrelevant for any required disciplinary purposes. Thus, it is critical that all employees study this policy thoroughly

and apply its spirit and intent in their daily activities.

Unacceptable Behaviors

These lists are not meant to be all-inclusive, but rather, illustrative of the types of behavior intended to be addressed by this policy.

- Giving gifts of a personal and intimate nature (including photographs) to a student; or items such as money, food, outings, electronics, etc. without the written pre-approval of the Principal or School Leader. It is recommended that any such gifts be filtered through the Director along with the rationale therefore.
- Kissing of ANY kind
- Massage [Note: Prohibited in athletics unless provided by massage therapist or other certified professional in an open public location. Coaches may not perform massage or rub-down. Permitted in special education only as instructed under an IEP or 504 Plan.]
- Full frontal or rear hugs and lengthy embraces
- Sitting students on one's lap (grades 3 and above)
- Touching buttocks, thighs, chest, or genital area
- Wrestling with students or other staff member except in the context of a formal wrestling program
- Tickling or piggyback rides
- Any form of sexual contact
- Any type of unnecessary physical contact with a student in a private situation
- Intentionally being alone with a student away from school
- Furnishing alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs - or failing to report knowledge of such
- "Dating" or "going out with" a student
- Remarks about physical attributes or physiological development of anyone. This includes comments such as "Looking fine!" or "Check out that [body part]."
- Taking photographs or videos of students for personal use or posting online
- Either partially or fully undressing in front of a student or asking a student to undress with the intent to view/expose private body parts
- Leaving campus alone with a student for lunch
- Sharing a bed, mat, or sleeping bag with a student
- Making, or participating in, sexually inappropriate comments
- Sexual jokes, or jokes/comments with sexual overtones or double-entendres
- Seeking emotional involvement (which can include intimate attachment) with a student beyond the normative care and concern required of an educator.
- Listening to or telling stories that are sexually oriented
- Discussing your personal troubles or intimate issues with a student
- Becoming too involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior
- Giving students a ride to/from school or school activities without the express, advance written permission of the Director and the student's parent or legal guardian
- Being alone in a room with a student at school with the door closed and/or windows blocked from view
- Allowing students at your home and/or in rooms within your home without signed parental permission for a pre-planned and pre-communicated educational activity which must include another educator, parent, or designated school volunteer

- Sending emails, text messages, social media responses, making phone calls, or sending notes or letters to students if the content is not about school activities. **Communication via private social media accounts is not acceptable.**

Acceptable Behaviors

- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes
- “High-fives” and hand slapping
- Touching face to check temperature, wipe away a tear, remove hair from face, or other similar types of contact
- Placing TK through second grade students on one’s lap for purposes of comforting the child for a short duration only
- Holding hands while walking with small children or children with significant disabilities
- Assisting with toileting of small or disabled children in view of another staff member
- Touch required under an IEP or 504 Plan
- Reasonable restraint of a violent person to protect self, others, or property
- Obtaining formal written pre-approval from parents or guardians to take students off school property for activities such as field trips or competitions, including parent’s written permission and waiver form for any sponsored after-school activity whether on or off-campus
- Emails, text-messages, phone conversations, and other communications to and with students, if permitted, must be professional and pertain to school activities or classes (communication should be initiated via transparent [non-private] school-based technology and equipment)
- Keeping the door wide open when alone with a student
- Keeping reasonable and appropriate space between you and the student
- Stopping and correcting students if they cross your own personal boundaries, including touching legs, or buttocks, frontal hugs, kissing, or caressing
- Keeping parents informed when a significant issue develops about a student, such as a change in demeanor or uncharacteristic behavior
- Keeping after-class discussions with a student professional and brief
- Immediately asking for advice from senior staff or administration if you find yourself in a difficult situation related to boundaries
- Involving your direct supervisor in discussion about boundaries situations that have the potential to become more severe (including but not limited to: grooming or other red flag behaviors observed in colleagues, written material that is disturbing, or a student’s fixation on an adult)
- Making detailed notes about an incident that in your best judgment could evolve into a more serious situation later
- Recognizing the responsibility to stop “Unacceptable Behaviors” of students and/or co-workers
- Asking another staff member to be present, or within close supervisory distance, when you must be alone with a student after regular school hours
- Prioritizing professional behavior during all moments of student contact
- Asking yourself if any of your actions, which could be contrary to these provisions, are worth sacrificing your job and career.

- This policy does not prevent: 1) touching a student for the purpose of guiding them along a physical path; 2) helping them up after a fall; or 3) engaging in a rescue or the application of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) or other emergency first-aid. Nor does it prohibit the use of reasonable force and touching in self-defense or in the defense of another. Restraining a child who is trying to engage in violent or inappropriate behavior is also allowed. Only such force as necessary to defend one's self, another person, or the child or to protect property is legally permitted. Excessive force is prohibited.

BOUNDARIES REPORTING

When any staff member, parent, or student becomes aware of a staff member (or volunteer, guest, vendor) having crossed the boundaries specified in this policy, or has a strong suspicion of misconduct, he or she must report the suspicion to the Director promptly. Reasonable suspicion means something perceived in spite of inconclusive or slight evidence. It is based on facts that would lead a reasonable person to believe the conduct occurred. Prompt reporting of observations falling into the unacceptable range of adult behavior with students is essential to protect students, the staff member, any witnesses, and the school as a whole. Employees must also report to the administration any awareness of, or concern about, student behavior that crosses boundaries, or any situation in which a student appears to be at risk for sexual abuse.

MANDATED REPORTING: CHILD ABUSE/SEXUAL ABUSE REPORTING

If, within your professional capacity or within the scope of your employment, you observe or gain possession of knowledge that a child has been a victim of child abuse or sexual abuse, or you reasonably suspect it, California Penal Code Section 11166 requires **YOU** to immediately report this information or suspicion directly to a child protective agency or the police. The report shall be made by phone as soon as possible and a subsequent written report must be sent within 36 hours of your knowledge or suspicion of the abuse. Failure to meet these obligations can result in a monetary fine and/or jail.

All AFCS employees are considered mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect under the California Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, which is contained within the California Penal Code at sections 11164 - 11174.3, and can be accessed via the internet site titled California Law at: https://california.public.law/codes/ca_penal_code_section_11164

What is "Reasonable Suspicion"

"Reasonable Suspicion" occurs when "it is objectively reasonable for a person to entertain such a suspicion, when based upon the facts that could cause a reasonable person in a like position, drawing when appropriate on his or her training and experience, to suspect child abuse."
(California Penal Code 11166[a])

All employees must complete the California Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training annually (see page 32 for more information) .

The Director will promptly investigate and document the investigation of any allegation of sexual misconduct or inappropriate behavior, using such support staff or outside assistance, as

he or she deems necessary and appropriate under the circumstances. Throughout this fact-finding process, the investigating administrator, and all others privy to the investigation, shall protect the privacy interests of any affected student(s) and/or staff member(s) including any potential witnesses, as much as possible. The investigating administrator shall promptly notify the Governing Board in closed session of the existence and status of any investigations. Upon completion of any such investigations, the Director shall report to the Governing Board any conclusions reached. The investigating administrator shall consult with legal counsel, as appropriate, prior to, during, and after conducting any investigation.

Staff members who have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, and where appropriate, will be reported to authorities for potential legal action.

EMPLOYMENT:

EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP

The following general statement of policy applies to all employees of America's Finest Charter School. If any conflict should exist between the Employment Handbook and a written Employee Agreement between the Employer and Employee, the Employment Agreement shall prevail.

RESIGNATION

Should it become necessary for an employee to terminate his/her employment with America's Finest Charter School, America's Finest Charter School requests the courtesy of the employee's notice of the intent to terminate employment at least two weeks prior to termination whenever possible. Upon termination of employment, all school property must be returned to the Director including, but not limited to, computers, keys, gate security badge.

EXIT INTERVIEW

If an employee voluntarily leaves America's Finest Charter School, you may be asked to participate in an exit interview. During the exit interview, you can express yourself freely. We hope this will provide insight to both parties. All information will be kept confidential and will not affect any reference information we provide to another employer.

PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

Employee files and benefit records are considered confidential. Keeping your file up to date can be important to you with regard to pay, deductions, benefits and other matters.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

You are responsible for providing the following information required for your personnel file. You must promptly notify America's Finest Charter School of any changes:

- a. Full correct name, home address, telephone number, and social security number.

- b. Copies of all academic records, credentials, degrees.
- c. Annual forms and certifications as required.
- d. Applications for benefits with accurate information.
- e. Tuberculosis Tests. Employees must be tested every four years by having a skin test. If you qualify for the Tuberculosis Risk Assessment you may ask the office for the form and take it to your provider, have this form filled out and signed. A chest x-ray is also acceptable. Current TB test results must be on file in the office and updated every four years.
- f. Proof of U.S. citizenship. Federal regulations require that 1) before becoming employed, all applicants must complete and sign Federal Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification Form; and 2) all applicants who are hired need to present documents of identity and eligibility to work in the U.S.
- g. Other forms as necessary.

INSPECTION OF YOUR FILE AND/OR BENEFIT RECORDS

You may inspect your own personnel file by making an appointment with the Human Resources Director. Files will be inspected in the presence of one of the employees of the office. Benefit information, such as sick leave records, personal days used, or hours worked may also be reviewed. You may request and receive copies of all documents you have signed.

Benefits described in this manual apply only to full-time employees. All other policies apply to all employees.

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

Full-time employees are those scheduled for 40 hours per week or more during the school year.

PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

An employee who is scheduled to work less than a 40-hour week is considered a part-time employee.

CONSULTANTS

America's Finest Charter School may hire persons for completion of a specific project. These persons may be hired as consultants and the job assignment; work schedule and duration of the position will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

EXEMPT AND NONEXEMPT EMPLOYEES

At the time of hiring, all employees are classified as either "exempt" or "nonexempt". By law, employees in certain types of jobs are entitled to overtime pay for hours worked in excess of eight hours per day or forty hours per work week. These employees are referred to as "nonexempt" and therefore they should receive overtime pay. Overtime hours require supervisor approval prior to being worked.

Exempt employees are administrators, teachers, professional staff, technical staff and others whose duties and responsibilities allow them to be “exempt” from the laws governing overtime pay.

EMPLOYEE EVALUATION

Job description and specific criteria for each position should be clearly communicated to each employee. Performance feedback is an important part of each person’s growth. Feedback will be given on an ongoing basis. New employees and employees who have a change in responsibilities may be reviewed more often. Employees who believe they do not have clear job descriptions and specific position criteria must communicate this to AFCS well before scheduled evaluation.

WORK SCHEDULES

The normal workweek is a five-day period, Monday through Friday. America’s Finest Charter School’s regular hours of operation are from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. In general, employees are informed of their working hours/schedule at the inception of their employment relationship. Working hours and schedules vary depending upon the job classification and the school’s needs. In addition, America’s Finest Charter School reserves the right to alter schedules as it may require.

Teachers are required to work 187 days; 5 days are for teacher planning and staff development throughout the school year and 3 to 5 days are set aside as “The Compass” which will happen the week before school begins.

MEALS AND REST PERIODS

The School prioritizes compliance with California’s meal and rest period laws. All non-exempt (hourly) employees are required to abide by these requirements.

All non-exempt employees must take an uninterrupted meal period of at least 30 minutes for each work period in excess of 5 hours in accordance with this policy. Further, all non-exempt employees must take a second uninterrupted meal period of at least 30 minutes for each work period in excess of 10 hours in accordance with this policy.

Employees must begin their first meal period within five hours of starting work. For example, if the employee begins working at 7:00 a.m., then the employee must clock out to begin his or her meal period no later than 12:00 p.m. (noon). Further, employees must begin their second meal period (if applicable) within ten hours of starting work. For example, if the employee begins working at 7:00 a.m., then the employee must clock out to begin his or her second meal period no later than 5:00 p.m.

An employee whose work period is 5 to 6 hours may waive, in writing, his or her right to a first meal period. Further, an employee may waive his or her right to a second meal period for a work period as long as the employee does not work more than 12 hours and did not waive his or her first meal period for that work period. **The School offers written Meal Period Waiver Agreements that govern an employee’s entire employment, which are voluntary and may be revoked at any time, to document the employee’s waiver of first and second meal periods.**

During meal periods, employees are absolutely prohibited from performing work of any kind or any amount. Employees are excused from all duties and are free to leave the premises. Employees must record the exact start and stop times of each meal period through the School’s timekeeping system so that the School may monitor time records for compliance. Employees may not join together for required meal periods to take a longer break.

Daily Meal Period and Rest Period Reporting Any employee who misses a meal or rest period or who experiences a late, short, or interrupted meal period—for any reason—must immediately report this issue to his or her supervisor. The employee must provide a thorough explanation for the non-compliant meal or rest period. The employee must make this report to Human Resources on the same workday that he or she experienced the non-compliant meal or rest period. If an employee voluntarily chooses to miss a meal or rest period or take a late, short, or interrupted meal period (e.g., I chose to take my lunch later in the day or I chose to refuse an “authorized” meal period at the time provided by the School), the employee is not entitled to premium pay (one additional hour of pay). If an employee involuntarily experiences a missed meal or rest period or a late, short, or interrupted meal period (e.g., my supervisor asked me to handle a client call or meeting that caused me to miss or take a late meal period), the employee is entitled to premium pay.

Supervisors may not pressure or coerce employees to take late, short, or interrupted meal and rest periods or to skip their meal and rest periods. If you feel pressured or coerced, report it to Human Resources.

Employees are eligible for the following number of meal periods:

Work hours:	The number of Meal Periods:	Detailed Explanation:
0 to 5 hours	0	An employee whose work period is 5 hours or less is not entitled to a meal period.

5 to 10 hours	1	An employee whose work period is more than 5 hours up to and including 10 hours is eligible to take a 30-minute uninterrupted meal period unless the employee's work period is 6 or fewer hours and voluntarily waives his or her first meal period.
10 hours and above	2	An employee whose work period is more than 10 hours is eligible to take a second uninterrupted 30-minute meal period unless the employee's work period is 12 or fewer hours, did not waive his or her first meal period, and voluntarily waives his or her second meal period.

TIMEKEEPING

To ensure compliance with all applicable laws, non-exempt employees must accurately record all hours worked using the School's timekeeping system. This means they must clock in and out whenever they begin, cease, or resume working during the course of a workday. While you need not clock out and in during your rest periods, you must clock out and in during your meal periods. Under no circumstances may one employee clock in or out for another employee. Exempt employees may also be expected to record their total time worked and report absences from work due to personal needs or illness.

Employees are prohibited from doing the following:

- Recording hours worked inaccurately.
- Recording hours worked on behalf of another employee.
- Working "off the clock."
- Failing to record all hours worked.
- Falsification of any time record. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

PAY PRACTICES

Payroll dates and times are scheduled according to America's Finest Charter School policy. Employees get paid 2 times per month on the 10th and the 26th of each month unless these days fall on a weekend or a holiday. 10 month employees may opt into the Summer Holdback Program, allowing them to receive paychecks every pay period of the year (rather than just September-June). To opt into the summer holdback program, employees must complete the Summer Holdback Election Form and return it to Andrea Vasquez.

ANNIVERSARY DATE

The first day you report to work will be recorded in school records as your anniversary date. This date may be used to calculate many different school benefits. If you have any questions regarding your anniversary date, please see your supervisor.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

The California State Education Department requires background checks. The school recognizes the importance of maintaining a safe place for our students and Employees who are honest, trustworthy, qualified, reliable, and nonviolent, and do not present a risk of serious harm to their coworkers or others. Consistent with Education Department guidelines, prospective Employees are fingerprinted for a criminal background check and must be cleared by the California State Department of Justice before hire. For purposes of furthering these concerns and interests, the School reserves the right to investigate an individual's prior employment history, personal references, and educational background, as well as other relevant information that is reasonably available to the School.

CERTIFICATION, LICENSING AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

You will be informed by your supervisor if there are any licensing, certifications or testing requirements for your job. Failure to qualify or to maintain a certification or license may be sufficient cause for discharge.

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

Upon joining our school, you were given this copy of our Employee Handbook. After reading this Employee Handbook, please sign the receipt page and return it to Andrea Vasquez in Human Resources. You will be asked to complete personnel, payroll and benefit forms.

If you lose your Employee Handbook or if it becomes damaged in any way, please notify your supervisor as soon as possible to obtain a replacement copy.

Your supervisor is responsible for the operations of your department. S(he) is a good source of information about the School and your job.

IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT

In compliance with the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), as amended, and any state law requirements, if applicable, our School is committed to employing only individuals who are authorized to work in the United States.

Each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form 1-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility.

If an employee is authorized to work in this country for a limited time, the individual will be required to submit proof of renewed employment eligibility prior to expiration of that period to remain employed by the School.

OPEN COMMUNICATION

We encourage you to bring your questions, suggestions and complaints to our attention. We will carefully consider each of these in our continuing effort to improve operations. If you feel you have a problem, present the situation to the Director so that the problem can be settled by examination and discussion of the facts. Your suggestions and comments on any subject are important, and we encourage you to take every opportunity to discuss them with us. Your job will not be adversely affected in any way because you choose to use this procedure. If at any time you do not feel comfortable speaking with the Director, discuss your concern with any other member of management with whom you feel comfortable.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

At America's Finest Charter School, it is unlawful to manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use a controlled substance, and such acts will be prohibited. If violation of this policy occurs, the employee will be advised of termination.

BENEFITS:

HEALTH INSURANCE

Forms of Health Coverage Offered at AFCS

AFCS offers insurance plans for full time employees that include medical, dental, and vision insurance benefits, we also offer Employee Assistance Programs. Available benefit plans may vary and may change from time to time at AFCS's sole discretion. Affected employees will be advised of any such changes as required by applicable law. Employees who opt out of health coverage are offered a stipend in lieu of health coverage.

Medical

Employees who meet the eligibility requirements are provided with medical insurance at AFCS's expense. Employees, who are eligible may purchase dependent coverage at

the employee's expense. Employees who sign up for dependent coverage must pay for the coverage through a payroll deduction.

Dental

Employees who meet the eligibility requirements are provided dental insurance at AFCS's expense. Employees, who are eligible may purchase dependent coverage at the employee's expense. Employees who sign up for dependent coverage must pay for the coverage through a payroll deduction.

Vision

Vision insurance is provided for full time employees on an individual basis at AFCS's expense. Employees who sign up family members for vision insurance must pay for the coverage through a payroll deduction.

Cessation of Benefits upon Termination

Regular insurance benefits cease on the last day of the month in which employment is terminated. Insurance benefits will be in effect during the summer months for returning employees.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION INSURANCE

If you are injured on the job, your medical and hospital expenses and a portion of lost salary may be payable under Workers' Compensation Insurance.

- **Reporting an injury:** You are responsible for reporting any job-related injury to the Office immediately.
- You will be asked to complete a simple form "Employer's First Report of Injury."

The office will provide you with information so you can seek medical attention as necessary under the Workers' Compensation Plan.

- You will receive a pamphlet "Facts for Injured Workers" which will give you additional information about your rights under Workers' Compensation Insurance.
- You should report any injury in a timely fashion, even minor ones not requiring immediate medical attention, so that appropriate records can be kept. Should a minor injury develop into a more severe problem you and the school may be in a better position to make a claim.

LEAVE POLICIES

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF LEAVES OF ABSENCE

America's Finest Charter School's policy is to grant certain leaves of absence to eligible employees on a non-discriminatory basis within the parameters of its policies and applicable law. Unless applicable law requires otherwise, the following policies will govern the noted leaves of absence.

In general, America's Finest Charter School offers eligible employees leaves for:
Short-term illness

Family and medical needs under the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”) and The California Family Rights Act (“CFRA”)

Pregnancy disability

Kin care

Bereavement

Jury duty

Personal business

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Sick Leave/Personal Necessity Leave

America’s Finest Charter School recognizes that there are times when employees have the need to take a brief period of time off due to short-term illness or injury to themselves or their legal dependents and/or Personal Necessity Leave. Salaried employees will receive their hours upfront and all hourly employees will accrue hours at the rate of 1-hour time off for every 30 hours worked.

When employees must be seen by a doctor for an absence, the employee is to present a doctor’s note to excuse the absence.

a. Maximum Accrual of Sick Leave Time

Each regular, salaried, full-time Certificated Staff and Confidential Administrative Assistants are eligible for **ten (10) days of sick/personal necessity leave time each contract year**. Other Classified, who are on salary, will receive **six (6) days of sick/personal necessity leave time each contract year**.

All hourly employees will accrue 1 hour of sick / personal necessity time after 30 hours worked.

The maximum each employee can save is **600 hours**, unless otherwise noted. Any hours beyond the 600 hours for Certificated staff will be added to STRS.

b. Certificated employees need to request time off on Bamboo HR

See Andrea Vazquez if you need assistance.

<https://americasfinestcharterschool.bamboohr.com/login.php>

c. Cash Redemption for Sick/Personal Necessity Leave

Sick/personal necessity leave benefits are intended to assist eligible employees who must miss work due to an illness or injury or personal necessity leave. Accordingly, except for the Confidential Administrative Position, **no** other sick leave benefits are cashed out or paid upon retirement or termination of employment unless approved by the Executive Director. However, for participants in the STRS program, unused sick leave balances at retirement may be calculated as extra time worked and thereby increase retirement benefits.

Confidential Administrative Assistant positions may elect to have sick/personal necessity leave

time paid out each year on the 7/10 paycheck. Any cashed out hours will be deducted from the employees sick/personal necessity leave balance. The Confidential Administrative Assistant(s) must leave a minimum balance of 160 hours of sick/personal necessity leave in their bank at the time of this transaction. Upon leaving their position at the school, the Confidential Administrative Assistant(s) are entitled for a payout of any remaining balance of hours that they have accumulated in their banks.

Family and Medical Leave

Family and medical leaves of absence may be available to eligible employees. The following section details when unpaid leave may be taken according to applicable laws and AFCS policies. When employees have accrued sick leave, they may use such leave to continue being paid during these periods. In addition, when accrued sick leave benefits are exhausted, other benefits may be available; such benefits are described below in section g.

a. Circumstances Under Which Family and Medical leave is Available

An eligible employee may request a family and medical leave for any of the following reasons:

- The birth of the employee's child;
- The placement of a child with the employee in connection with an adoption or foster care;
- To care for a child, parent, domestic partner, grandparent or spouse who has a serious health condition; or,
- Due to a serious health condition that prevents the employee from performing one or more of the essential functions of his or her position.

b. Determining Eligibility for Family and Medical Leave

To be eligible for an unpaid medical leave of absence, an employee must:

- Have completed one year of continuous service;

c. Maximum Time Off for Family and Medical Leave

Subject to the conditions of this policy an eligible employee may request up to 12 weeks family and medical leave during a 12-month period.

d. Requesting Family and Medical Leave

Requests for leave should be made in writing as far in advance as possible. Employees must provide proper notification as a condition of eligibility for a leave. The employee must:

- (1) Notify the Administrative Assistant in writing of the need for such a leave; and,
- (2) Include the date the leave will begin and the anticipated duration of the leave in the notification.

e. Certification of a Healthcare Provider

If an employee is requesting a leave due to a serious health condition of the employee or a family member, the employee must support the request with a certification issued by the health care provider of the individual with the serious health condition. The certification should include the following information:

- (1) The date, if known, on which the serious health condition commenced;

- (2) The probable duration of the condition;
- (3) An estimate of the amount of time that the health care provider believes that the employee needs to care for the individual requiring the care; and
- (4) A statement that the serious health condition warrants the participation of a family member to provide care during a period of the treatment or supervision of the individual requiring care.

If an employee requests intermittent leave for planned medical treatment, the certification should specify the dates on which such treatment is expected to be given and the duration of the treatment.

If the time estimated by the health care provider under (3) above expires, the employee must submit a recertification if the employee desires additional leave. In addition, extensions will not be granted that causes the total period of the leave to exceed the 12-week limitation identified above.

f. Benefits During Family and Medical Leave

An employee who is granted a family and medical leave of absence must use any sick leave benefits during the period of the leave. Any portion of a leave that occurs after all sick leave benefits have been exhausted shall be without pay. For purposes of this policy's 12-week limitation, any paid and unpaid portions of the leave of absence shall be added together whether or not they are taken consecutively.

During an employee's medical leave, no sick leave benefits will accrue.

Health insurance benefits ordinarily provided by AFCS, and for which the employee is otherwise eligible, will be continued during the period of the leave if the employee elects to continue paying his or her share of the premiums for such coverage. If the employee wishes coverage to continue, the employer will continue to pay its share of the premiums for the period of the family and medical leave, up to a maximum of 12 weeks. The cost of dependent coverage normally borne by the employee will remain the sole responsibility of the employee. The employee must pay his/her share of the premiums for employee and dependent coverage by making timely payments to the employer, in care of the Back-Office Provider at the same time as such payments would be made if they were paid via payroll deductions.

g. Compensation During Family and Medical Leave

If an employee has exhausted all accrued sick leave, any subsequent family and medical leave will be unpaid. However, there are certain compensation programs that may be available to employees who are granted family and medical leave depending upon whether the employee is eligible. Specifically, employees may be eligible to apply for:

- State Disability Insurance benefits ("SDI")
- Paid Family Leave or Family Temporary Disability Insurance benefits ("FTDI")

Whether you will qualify for one or a combination of these depends on the type of leave you are taking. For example, SDI is only available if an employee is disabled. Please see the Business Office to inquire about the eligibility and application requirements for each of these.

h. Return to Work

Except where the law authorizes a different result, an employee who complies with the provisions of this policy will be guaranteed reemployment upon expiration of an approved leave, provided that the total period of the leave does not exceed 12 weeks.

Pregnancy Leave

An employee who is temporarily disabled and unable to work due to a pregnancy-related condition, is eligible to take an unpaid leave of absence for the period of her disability, provided such period does not exceed four (4) months.

An employee may be entitled to a maximum of (7) seven months of pregnancy leave if for any period or periods of actual disability caused by an employee's pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions up to four (4) months (equating to 88 work days for a full-time employee and less, on a prorated basis, for a part-time employee) for pregnancy. The total period of all absences related to the same medical condition shall be considered part of the same leave and may not exceed the four (4) months as defined here.

a. General Required Notifications to America's Finest Charter School

Employees requiring a pregnancy leave must notify AFCS in writing of the need for such a leave at least thirty (30) days in advance of the date on which the leave is to commence where possible.

The required notice must specify that a need for a medical leave exists, the date such leave will begin, and the expected duration of the disability.

The notice must be accompanied by a medical certification of a health care provider that verifies the existence of the medical condition, the anticipated duration of the disability, and the dates the leave is expected to begin and end.

An employee who requests such a leave may be required to provide additional medication certifications from time to time thereafter in order to provide updated information regarding the employee's condition.

b. Intermittent Leave

The pregnancy disability leave does not need to be taken in one continuous period of time, but can be taken on an as-needed basis. For example, time off needed for prenatal care, severe morning sickness, doctor-ordered bed rest, childbirth, and recovery from childbirth would all be covered by the employee's pregnancy disability leave. However, appropriate health care provider certifications may be required as noted above.

c. Employee Compensation While on Disability Leave

Employees who are granted a medical leave of absence due to a pregnancy-related condition, may utilize any accrued sick leave benefits during the leave. Any portion of a leave that occurs after all sick leave has been exhausted shall be without compensation with the exception of compensation that may be derived from state disability insurance.

Employees may be eligible for SDI, FTDI and/or LTDI while on pregnancy disability leave.

Please contact the business office regarding these alternative forms of compensation.

d. Employee Benefits While on Disability Leave

The total period of all absences related to the same medical condition shall be considered part of the same leave and may not exceed four (4) months in the case of pregnancy disability leave. For purposes of this four (4) month limitation, any paid and unpaid portions of the leave shall be added together.

AFCS will continue to offer health insurance to eligible employees on pregnancy leave on the same terms and conditions as when working for a maximum of four (4) months. Employees must make arrangements with AFCS regarding their share of premium payments prior to departing on leave. If an employee fails to return after the maximum allowable disability leave under this policy, the employee may elect to continue health insurance coverage through COBRA and will be required to pay 100% of the premium.

e. Reinstatement After Disability Leave

Subject to the exceptions provided by law, employees returning to work from leaves necessitated by a pregnancy-related disability, within the approved time frames and parameters established under this policy, will be reinstated to their same positions. Please note, however, that employees have no greater right to their positions at reinstatement than if they had been continuously employed rather than on leave. Accordingly, if an employee would have been laid off or reassigned to another position had the employee not gone on leave, such employee would not be entitled to reinstatement to the same position.

f. Extension of Leave Time

Requests for extensions of a leave of absence will be considered if they are received by Explorer in writing before the expiration of the approved leave, are supported by proof of continued disability in the form of a certification by a healthcare provider, and request extensions that do not cause the total period of absence to exceed four (4) months in the case of pregnancy related medical leaves.

g. State Disability Insurance

If an employee has a qualified disability and has exhausted sick leave benefits, they may be eligible to receive benefits under California State Disability Insurance (“SDI”). However, the SDI benefit typically amounts to only a percentage of regular wages.

Furthermore, if an employee is no longer disabled due to pregnancy and thus, no longer eligible for disability benefits under SDI, she may still be eligible to take additional time off with a portion of her wages paid through another program administered by the California Employment Development Department (“EDD”). Specifically, she also may be eligible to receive benefits through a program known as the California Paid Family Leave Insurance Program. The terms and conditions of the availability of this insurance are described in an information sheet published by the EDD.

The EDD State Disability Insurance pamphlet and fact sheet are available on line at <http://www.edd.ca.gov>. These will explain the rules regarding both state disability insurance benefits as provided by the State of California and what you must do to apply for those benefits.

Kin Care Leave

An employee who requests and is granted an unpaid leave of absence for family leave may be eligible for up to six (6) weeks' partial wage replacement benefits through the EDD Paid Family Leave Insurance Program also referred to as Family Temporary Disability Insurance benefits or (FTDI) benefits, where the leave is a leave taken to care for a seriously ill child, spouse, parent or domestic partner, or to bond with a minor child within one (1) year of the birth or placement of the child with the employee in connection with foster care or adoption.

The requirements that must be met to qualify for FTDI are available online at <http://www.edd.ca.gov>. Employees must apply and qualify for FTDI benefits with the EDD in order to receive such benefits.

Please note that FTDI is a partial wage replacement benefit, but that it does not provide job protection or reinstatement rights.

Bereavement Leave

Each employee will be provided with three (3) paid bereavement days for family members. For purposes of this policy, family members will be defined as members of the employee's or spouse's/domestic partner's immediate family which means the employee's spouse or domestic partner or current significant other, parents, grandparents, current mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister or brother-in-law, child or grandchild, brother, sister and any other person living in the immediate household of the employee. Employees should make their requests for bereavement leave to the principal or Administrative Assistant as soon as possible.

Jury Duty

AFCs encourages its employees to participate in the judicial process from the vantage point of a juror. Regular full-time employees will be excused from work for required court duty.

If an employee is excused entirely or in sufficient time to permit him or her to return to work, he/she must report to work. Employees may keep any mileage allowance or juror fee paid to them by the courts for jury service.

Employees should notify the principal or business manager immediately when they receive notice to report for jury or witness duty.

Ladder or step system of employees - dress code, attendance, not calling out, gives opportunities to grow. Do we need a formal document to follow - FRISK - Create a ladder - verbal warning, a written warning, FRISK, potential termination.

Shared spreadsheet with Andrea on where staff are at on the ladder. Google form with administrator having rights.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Permission to attend conferences or other professional growth activities must be worked out with the Director, in accordance with budget allocations for such activities.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

The role of the teacher is to provide for children a high-quality education, in an environment that is not only safe, but also in an atmosphere that promotes opportunities to expand their educational horizons and develop understanding and acceptance of other members of the school community.

It is the obligation of the teacher to work in concert with America's Finest Charter School and to follow the guidelines and policies as set down by the charter.

The teacher will report directly to the Principal. The Principal will be responsible for the ongoing evaluation and monitoring of the classroom teaching.

America's Finest Charter School strives to meet the needs of all children regardless of their physical or developmental challenges. Under federal law, all children are entitled to "a free and appropriate education" regardless of special needs or disabilities. If a teacher feels it is necessary, s/he should inform the principal and a Student Study Team will be called together as needed (teacher, resource teacher, principal) based on each child's special circumstances.

In the event a learning or physical challenge is hindering a student's progress significantly and is documented through appropriate observation and testing, a student may qualify for participation in a formal Individualized Education Plan (IEP) . This process designates a clearly identified group of professionals who along with the parents implement a specifically designed education program complete with formal methods, time frames, and documentation procedures.

Students may enter the school with an active IEP. In these cases, the Special Education team will determine the best way to provide continuity of service.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES: CURRICULUM

- To work with the Principal/Director and staff to develop and implement curriculum and projects that meet California Core Standards, reflect the school philosophy and address the educational needs of the students.
- To evaluate the individual needs of the students, develop classroom practices that address those needs and reflect the curriculum.
- To develop and implement classroom curriculum based on Balanced Literacy, Balanced Math and Project Based Learning.
- To provide for classroom learning opportunities that are child-centered; age

appropriate, and challenging for each student.

- To create a classroom environment that reflects enthusiasm for learning and the creativity of the teacher.
- To help students problem solve and take responsibility for their actions.
- To research and utilize the community resources available to the school and plan and organize field trips that are curriculum appropriate and expand the learning opportunities of children.
- To assure that students are prepared for Standardized Testing.
- To report data from student assessments so that the entire faculty can reflect upon and improve their practice.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES: COMMUNICATION

- To maintain regular communication with all parents. This communication may take the form of newsletters, e-mails, phone calls, and special notes home.
- To regularly schedule parent conferences held at least two times during the school year.
- To communicate to students and parents the classroom expectations regarding academic performance, conduct, and classroom interaction with other students and the teacher.
- To work with the parents in the development of short and long term goals for students.
- To communicate with fellow teachers, respect differences, and learn from one another.
- To communicate professionally and regularly with the Principal, addressing any concerns directly to him/her.

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES: CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL

- To create a classroom environment that establishes clear, consistent expectations for students.
- To create opportunities for students to learn proper classroom decorum through modeling, affirmation, language and role playing.
- To treat all students with respect, dignity and to, by example, show the students how individuals learn to get along with others.
- To allow students the opportunity to learn how to solve their problems independently with appropriate level of interaction from the teacher.
- To maintain the same expectations out of the classroom as in the classroom.
- To be active in the supervision of students, both in the classroom and throughout the school.
- To hold all students accountable to the student code of conduct

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES: ADDITIONAL

- To work with the Principal in the preparation and execution of safety procedures: fire, earthquake, and other potential disaster situations.
- To work with staff in the maintenance of a clean, healthy environment.
- To encourage parent participation in the classroom, volunteering, sharing talents, and sharing learning opportunities outside the classroom.

- To attend all scheduled faculty meetings and in-services.
- To develop, in consultation with the Principal, goals and objectives for each school year.
- To meet regularly with the Principal to review and evaluate these goals and objectives.
- To receive evaluations from the Principal.
- To maintain an open classroom, understanding that the school has many visitors and that classrooms reflect who we are and what we do.
- To participate in general parent meetings and special evening presentations sponsored by the school.
- To exemplify the best ideals of the teaching profession.
- To work to improve the academic achievement of each and every student.

THE ROLE OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE

The role of the instructional aide is to support teachers and our SPED department in providing children a high-quality education, in an environment that is not only safe, but also in an atmosphere that promotes opportunities to expand their educational horizons and develop understanding and acceptance of other members of the school community.

It is the obligation of the instructional aide to work in concert with America's Finest Charter School and to follow the guidelines and policies as set down by the charter.

The instructional aide will report directly to the Principal and/or the SPED Coordinator. The Principal as well as the SPED coordinator will be responsible for the ongoing evaluation and monitoring of the classroom instructional aides.

The SPED team will guide the Instructional aides in the implementation of a student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) .

INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE RESPONSIBILITIES: CURRICULUM

- To work with the teacher/SPED teacher/principal to implement curriculum and specialized academic instruction that meets California Core Standards, reflect the school philosophy and address the educational needs of the students.
- To assist in providing classroom learning opportunities that are child-centered; age appropriate, and challenging for each student.
- To help maintain a classroom environment that reflects enthusiasm for learning and the creativity of the teacher.
- To help students problem solve and take responsibility for their actions.
- To complete the Specialized Academic Instruction tracking sheet provided by a student's case manager for services rendered as listed in a student's IEP

INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE RESPONSIBILITIES: COMMUNICATION

- To maintain regular communication with teachers, SPED coordinator, and Principal.
- To communicate to students the classroom expectations regarding academic performance, conduct, and classroom interaction with other students and the

teacher.

- To work with the SPED coordinator and classroom teacher in the development of short and long term goals for students.
- To communicate with fellow employees, respect differences, and learn from one another.
- To communicate professionally and regularly with the Principal, addressing any concerns directly to him/her.

INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE RESPONSIBILITIES: CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL

- To maintain a classroom and school environment that establishes clear, consistent expectations for students.
- To treat all students with respect, dignity and to, by example, show the students how individuals learn to get along with others.
- To allow students the opportunity to learn how to solve their problems independently with appropriate level of interaction from the teacher.
- To maintain the same expectations out of the classroom as in the classroom.
- To be active in the supervision of students, both in the classroom and throughout the school.
- To hold all students accountable to the student code of conduct

INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE RESPONSIBILITIES: ADDITIONAL

- To work with the teacher/Principal in the preparation and execution of safety procedures: fire, earthquake, and other potential disaster situations.
- To work with staff in the maintenance of a clean, healthy environment.
- To attend all scheduled in-services related to your responsibilities
- To receive evaluations from the Principal.
- To maintain an open classroom, understanding that the school has many visitors and that classrooms reflect who we are and what we do.
- To monitor students outside of the classroom at lunch, recess, and/or PE
- To be punctual in their attendance by being on time to school and returning to lunch after 30 minutes.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Teachers need to arrive at school no later than 8:15 am. Teachers are expected to work on campus until 4:15 pm. All other classified staff are required to arrive by their contractually agreed upon start time, and are expected to work on campus through their contracted hours.

ATTENDANCE

Each teacher is responsible for taking attendance by 9:15 a.m. each morning.

CARE OF CHILDREN IN CASE OF INJURY OR ILLNESS

First Aid supplies are kept in the school office, and minor first aid may be administered by the

teacher. Depending on the nature of the illness/injury, a child should be accompanied to the office by a teacher or another adult or child for additional care as necessary. **Any staff involved when a child is injured at school is to fill out an injury report form and return to the front office.**

EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE

Employees are to come to work in Business Casual attire.

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

To be reimbursed for all authorized expenses, you must submit an expense report/voucher accompanied by original receipts to Andrea Vazquez. All reimbursement requests must be approved by the Director. Please submit your expense report as you incur authorized reimbursable expenses. There is usually a two-week waiting period from submission of check request to receipt of the reimbursement check.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff meetings are held on Thursday Afternoons at the TK-8 and at the high school campus. Staff meetings are held occasionally to go over school business. Teachers are expected to attend all professional development and faculty meetings unless excused by their supervisor.

FIELD TRIPS

Classroom teachers are responsible for making their own field trip arrangements. Field trips are encouraged as part of the school curriculum. All out-of-class activities, however, must be directly related to curriculums being studied. There are forms for Parent Permission slips, bus reservations and lunches for field trips in the office.

Copies of emergency treatment and notification signed by parents must be on file in the office for every student on the trip.

Field Trip Request Process

1. At least two weeks prior to the field trip, complete this [bus request form](#) and [this field trip request form](#). Email **both** of them to your principal. (Paper copies will no longer be accepted.) Please be specific on how this field trip relates to the standards you are studying.
2. Your principal will double check the transportation schedule, and the master school schedule. If there are no conflicts, your principal will forward your bus request to the transportation director. If the transportation director approves, you will receive a signed copy of the completed field trip form along with a phone number for your driver to print and send home for parent signature.
3. If you need extra chaperones, and plan to ask an AFCS employee who is not an aide at your grade level, please ask your principal for permission before asking

the employee to attend. Please share the [Parent/Chaperone Expectation](#) document with all chaperones so they understand their responsibilities and expectations.

4. Please contact Ms. Margarita (margarita@americasfinestcharterschool.org) or Ms. Maria to let her know how many school lunches you will need to take for students.

FIRE DRILLS / DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Fire drills will be held regularly. Disaster Preparedness drills will be held at least once a year. Maps and specific evacuation directions will be given to all employees.

FUND RAISING

No request for funds should go to parents or to other members of the community unless first cleared through the Director. Any funds or gifts-in-kind which come into the school, solicited or unsolicited should be reported to the Director as a common courtesy, any contributor of money, gifts-in-kind, or special gifts to teachers should receive a thank-you note from both the school and the teacher.

PERSONAL PHONE CALLS

Please keep your personal phone calls to a minimum—they must not interfere with your work or prevent access to your classroom.

PERSONAL USE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

To use AFCS equipment for personal benefit, during or after work hours, you must have authorization from the Principal. As an employee of AFCS, you accept full responsibility for any and all liabilities for injuries or losses which might occur. You are responsible for returning the equipment in good condition and agree that you will pay for any damages that occur while using the equipment for personal projects. Employees must have authorization from the Principal before removing equipment from the school premises.

SAFETY RULES

Safety is everybody's business. Safety is of prime importance in protecting you and our children. Please report all injuries to the office immediately, even if minor. Below are some general safety rules:

- Avoid overloading electrical outlets with too many machines.
- Use flammable items, such as cleaning fluids, with caution.
- Ask for assistance when lifting heavy objects or moving heavy furniture.
- Keep cabinet doors and file and desk drawers closed when not in use.
- Keep your work area clean and orderly, and aisles clear.
- Stack materials only to safe heights.
- Watch out for the safety of other employees and students.

- The use of astro jumps, large inflatable slides, bounce houses, trampolines, Velcro jumps, or any other rebounding or inflatable devices including sumo wrestling outfits, jousting poles, etc.) is prohibited on district property or for school-sponsored events. The ONLY exceptions are mini-trampolines or similar devices that are used for special education or adaptive physical education programs.
- The use of “dunk tanks” is prohibited on district property or for school-sponsored activities without exception.
- All other recreational equipment such as climbing walls MUST be approved by Safety Management or Risk Management on a case-by-case basis. Additional insurance requirements will be enforced for all items approved.
- The use of mechanical rides MUST be approved by Risk Management prior to the scheduling or allowance, and will be subject to additional insurance requirements. Mechanical or motion “thrill” rides are prohibited.

MANDATORY SAFETY TRAININGS

All school employees are required to complete the following safety training on a yearly basis. These trainings must be completed by September 15th each school year, or within 30 days of the employment start date. These trainings are available through an online platform Vector Training. You will receive a link to these trainings through your school issued email address.

- Sexual Harassment Prevention for Non-Managers
- Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Prevention
- Mandated Reporter: Child Abuse and Neglect
- Suicide Prevention Training for Teachers in Grades 7-12

SECURITY

Maintaining the security of AFCS is every employee’s responsibility. Develop habits that ensure security. Below are general measures you should follow:

- Cash is turned in daily to the campus designee. (TK-8 - Financial Administrator, high school - principal)
- Know the location of all alarms and fire extinguishers, and familiarize yourself with the proper procedure for using them, should the need arise.
- When you leave the premises, make sure that all entrances are properly locked securely, and alarmed, if necessary.
- School Police must be called when you arrive on campus, and when you leave campus outside of the normal school days/ hours (Monday-Friday 7am-6pm)

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Federal and State laws require all public-school districts to provide a “free and appropriate education for all children with disabilities.” Both Federal and State legislation mandate timelines for referral, assessment, certification, placement, and provision of appropriate services to all students with exceptional needs. America’s Finest Charter School shall adhere to the El Dorado SELPA’s Local Plan for Special Education and other policies, procedures and requirements of said SELPA regarding services to special education students. Any student who wants to attend America’s Finest Charter School shall not be denied admission based on

disability.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

If it is necessary to have a substitute, arrangements should be made by the teacher through Bamboo HR and their immediate supervisor. It is expected that teachers have available in their classrooms a substitute folder with detailed lesson plans, seating chart, schedule and emergency procedures. The front office will have a key to allow substitute teachers into the classrooms upon arrival.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

AFCS employees are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of sensitive information obtained during the course of their employment with AFCS (“AFCS Information”). AFCS Information includes: personnel files and information; student files and information; family files and information; computer records; financial data; procedure descriptions; No employee may use or disclose any AFCS Information to any third party unless the disclosure is either a regular reporting requirement of the employee’s job position or unless the disclosure is approved. Moreover, in the case of student and family information, parent/guardian consent may also be required prior to disclosure. This obligation to maintain the confidence of such AFCS Information survives the employment relationship. Accordingly, employees who depart from AFCS may not reveal confidential AFCS Information after their departure.

Employees who have any questions regarding this policy in the course of their work should ask the Principal for clarification.

All student records are kept in the school office. Procedures for parents who wish to access records are detailed in the America’s Finest Charter School Parent Handbook.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE:

Please email the signed copy of this page back to Andrea by August 22, 2023. Thank you.

I _____ received the America’s Finest Charter School Staff Handbook.

I have read the Staff Handbook. I understand it and will abide by the policies and regulations.

Signature

Date