

Katherine Anne Porter School

**Employee Handbook
2011**

Employee Handbook

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Introduction

Welcome to the Katherine Anne Porter School. The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information that will help you with questions you have regarding the school and its policies. This handbook is intended to provide a general roadmap to navigating a successful year. It does not include all school policies and procedures. The ones included are summarized and subject to change. Any suggestions for additions or subtractions to the handbook for the purposes of improvement may be submitted in writing to the Principal.

**The Katherine Anne Porter School
Board of Trustees**

Mark Genfan, President
Susie Blake, Vice President
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Welcome Message From Dr. Yana Bland

The Katherine Anne Porter School offers an educational curriculum designed to nurture individual interests, foster an appreciation for life-long learning, and enhance community responsibilities. In small classes, using an integrated and practical approach, students are encouraged to become lifelong learners while earning an accredited high-school diploma. Our aim is that each student will go on to the college and/or the career of her/his choice. The free charter school is founded on the belief held by renowned Texas writer, Katherine Anne Porter, that, “knowledge of great art and great thought is a good in itself, not to be missed for anything.”

The Katherine Anne Porter School has been recognized by the IRS as a 501c3 non-profit organization providing free educational services. Chartered by the Texas Educational Agency in 1998, the KAP School does not discriminate on grounds of race, gender, or class.

What is it to be a KAPS’ Professional Team Member? It is to be intensely interested in your students’ learning and academic success, to collaborate closely with your peers, and to help improve KAPS’ educational services. The Katherine Anne Porter School advances a global view of the world and encourages local activism to improve the living conditions and learning opportunities for all people. KAPS provides a generous and comprehensive education that encourages students to think historically, critically and creatively.

The four foundations of the KAP School are 1) academics first, 2) full participation in learning, 3) mutual respect, and 4) community service. These are the four foundations of success for KAPS staff and students. With these foundations and a strong belief that each student can feel comfortable and succeed at KAPS, the open, friendly environment allows teachers to be very effective. Despite growing poverty and hardships among many Texan students, good instruction itself has the largest influence on achievement, must larger than socio-economic or race/gender factors.

The professional learning community at KAPS seeks out, refines, and celebrates instructional practices that have the most positive effect on student achievement. Focused teacher collaboration and a clear, viable curriculum are two elements of success. Teacher teams will clarify the essential learning outcomes that must be taught and then monitor their success by sharing student work. Monitoring student learning provides teacher teams the opportunity to reflect on results, discuss problems, and ask for support from the team leader or administrator on a frequent, timely basis.

Teachers are encouraged to clarify what students are expected to learn each day, often giving examples of the kind of work expected so that students can analyze and discuss the samples; teachers will explain and model each skill, with the students' involvement and with the use of technology when possible (e.g. overhead projector). Students will practice the new skills briefly in pairs, then individually, while the teacher checks for understanding by calling on students randomly to share. Feedback from the teacher to the students on their work is essential. Positive feedback whenever possible encourages the learning process.

The KAPS learning community enjoys a small school and small classes in which relevance, rigor, and relationships can be fostered. Students are much more likely to learn if the subject matter is in some way relevant to them. They are more likely to remember the information and to improve their skills if there is rigor in class and high standards. Students are more likely to open their minds and listen well and collaborate with their peers and teachers if the instructors encourage positive relationships built on mutual respect.

The Katherine Anne Porter School Expectations of Employee Conduct

Employees are expected to observe the following standards of conduct:

- Recognize and respect the rights and property of students, parents, other employees, and members of the community
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and coworkers
- Report to work in due time to properly prepare for assignments
- Notify the front office, Principal, or Superintendent in advance or as early as possible in the event that they must be absent or late. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, tardiness and failure to follow procedures for reporting an absence may be cause for disciplinary action
- Know and comply with department and district policies and procedures
- Express concerns, complaints, or criticism in a timely manner and through appropriate channels
- Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to the front office immediately
- Use district time, funds, and property for authorized district business and activities only

All employees, as public servants, must follow the *Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators*, which is reprinted below:

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

Enforceable Standards

Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.

Standard 1.1. The educator shall not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district or educational institution.

Standard 1.2. The educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert or use monies, personnel, property or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses or pay.

Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies and other applicable state and federal laws.

Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.

Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.

Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional or citizenship rights and responsibilities.

Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, or family status.

Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC under this chapter.

Ethical Conduct Toward Students.

Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 3.2. The educator shall not knowingly treat a student in a manner that adversely affects the student's learning, physical health, mental health or safety.

Standard 3.3. The educator shall not deliberately or knowingly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, national origin, religion, or family status.

Standard 3.5. The educator shall not engage in physical mistreatment of a student.

***Standard 3.6.* The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student during student's enrollment or for four years after the student has either graduated or ended his/her enrollment.**

Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or knowingly allow any student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

Standard 3.8 The educator shall not communicate or engage in social networks or social networking websites, or any form of digital communication, with students, other than on official KAPS websites.

Sexual Harassment

Statement of Policy

The Katherine Anne Porter School strives in every possible way to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for all of its members. In order to ensure academic rigor, commitment to community, and instill the love of life-long learning, all the members

of the Katherine Anne Porter community must work in unison to ensure to the best of our ability an environment free of unwelcome behavior which creates a hostile environment in any way. In no way, shape, or form will any manifestation of harassment based upon sex or gender be permitted or tolerated.

Much like other forms of discrimination and harassment, sexual harassment creates an environment in which the very foundations of the school are at best threatened and at worst destroyed. Members of the Katherine Anne Porter School who believe themselves to be the victims of such behaviors or individuals with questions regarding this policy should immediately contact the Principal of the Katherine Anne Porter School.

Definition:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment includes illegal sexual discrimination; unwelcome advances; requests for sexual favors; and any other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Submission to any of form of Sexual Harassment cannot be made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment, or used as a basis for any employment decisions. The Katherine Anne Porter School bans all behavior that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Employee-Employee. Sexual Harassment of a coworker is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. Sexual Harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct under the following conditions

- Submission to such conduct is explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions
- The conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or otherwise offensive work environment.

Employees who believe that they have been sexually harassed by another employee are encouraged to come forward with complaints. The Katherine Anne Porter School will promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment and will take prompt

appropriate disciplinary action against employees found to have engaged in conduct constituting sexual harassment of other employees.

Employee-to-Student: Sexual harassment of students by employees is a form of discrimination and is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment of students includes any welcome or unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other oral, written, physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature. Romantic relationships between Katherine Anne Porter employees and students are strictly prohibited. Other prohibited conduct includes the following:

- Engaging in sexually oriented conversations for the purpose of personal sexual gratification
- **Communicating with** students at home or elsewhere and engaging in inappropriate social relationships
- Engaging in physical contact that would reasonably be construed as sexual in nature
- Enticing or threatening students to get them to engage in sexual behavior in exchange for grades or other school related benefits

Sexual abuse of a student by an employee violates a student's constitutional right to bodily integrity. Sexual abuse may include, but is not limited to, fondling, sexual assault, or sexual intercourse.

Employees who suspect a student is being sexually harassed or abused by another employee are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal. All allegations of sexual harassment or sexual abuse of a student will be reported to the proper authorities, as required by law. Employees with questions or concerns relating to the alleged sexual harassment of a student should contact their principal, supervisor, or the Superintendent.

Non-Retaliation Policy: It is, also, expressly prohibited for an employee to retaliate against employees who bring sexual harassment charges or assist in investigating charges. Retaliation is a violation of this policy and may result in discipline, up to and including termination. No employee will be discriminated against, or discharged, because of bringing or assisting in the investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment.

Tobacco Use

The Katherine Anne Porter School is committed to modeling healthy appropriate behaviors. Smoking or using tobacco products is prohibited by law on all campus property and at all school-related and school-sanctioned activities. Drivers of school-owned vehicles are prohibited from smoking while inside the vehicle or while in route either to or from a student pick up or drop off, while in possession of a school vehicle, or while acting as a representative of the school.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

All employees are required by state law to immediately report any suspected child abuse or neglect to law enforcement agency, Child Protective Services, or appropriate state agency (e.g.: state agency operating licensing, certifying, or registering a facility) within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. Reports to Child Protective Service can be made to a local office or to the Texas Abuse Hotline (800.252.4500). Under state law, any person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent.

Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the campus principal. Employees are not required to report their concern to the principal before making a report to the appropriate agencies. In addition, employees must cooperate with child abuse and neglect investigators. Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report to the appropriate state agency. Interference with a child abuse investigation by denying an interviewer's request to interview a student at school or requiring the presence of a parent or school administrator against the desires of the investigator is prohibited.

Student Confidentiality

It is incumbent upon all employees to protect student confidentiality at all times. Matters of discipline, demographic information, Special Education or 504 information, all assessment information including TAKS scores, medical records and history, and any legal information that an employee may have become privy to are all confidential issues. Employees are expressly prohibited from discussing confidential student matters with anyone who does not have a direct and immediate legitimate educational interest with that student. If there is any doubt as to what is confidential or with whom confidential matters may be discussed, employees must direct questions to the Principal for clarification.

Student records are confidential and protected from unauthorized inspection or use. Employees should take precautions to maintain the confidentiality of all student records. Employees are not permitted to remove files from the administration area without express permission. The following are the only people who have general access to a student's records:

1. Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes
2. The student, if they are 18 years of age or older
3. School officials with a legitimate educational interest

Classroom Management

At all times, teachers should strive to create a positive and healthy classroom environment which contains high levels of rigor and relevance for the students. A positive classroom setting combined with a well planned management strategy will reap rewards of student participation and success as well as smooth and efficient daily lessons. Clarity of expectations, consistency in application of policy, and repeated positive feedback all contribute to an environment conducive to lifelong learning.

The Student Referral Form is the digital method of bringing a particular student's behaviors to the attention of the administration. This digital form is used to document student behavior when a robust set of in class interventions have been implemented without success. These interventions include but are not limited to student conferences, contact with parents or guardians, student parent conferences, involvement of the school counselor, and assignments of detention. When referring a student to the attention of the administration, teachers should provide a comprehensive list of the strategies employed to address and improve student behavior. This form is available in the teacher folder in My Computer.

General Procedures

Grading and Attendance

The Katherine Anne Porter School utilizes a grading software program named **GradeBook**. All instructional staff is required to maintain accurate attendance and grading records by use of this software. All grading data must be current to within one week. All attendance data must be current to the current day. Instructional staff must provide 18 grades per 6 week grading periods, at a minimum. Employees must notify the attendance clerk if there is an error or discrepancy in their student attendance records.

Employee Involvement

The Katherine Anne Porter School has many on-site committees charged with analyzing and implementing policy decisions. These committees are also charged with making recommendations to the Katherine Anne Porter School faculty and administration regarding current and future policies. The intent of these committees is to provide school-wide input on matters and policy that affect all of the Katherine Anne Porter Community. All staff, whether full or part time, are highly encouraged to participate in this process in order to ensure that all stakeholders in the Katherine Anne Porter School have an opportunity to have their voices heard. The Principal and Superintendent shall serve as standing members on all committees.

Inclement Weather Closings

In the event of weather conditions that may affect school opening or dismissal, all staff will participate in a phone tree to disseminate any applicable information. The superintendent of schools will make the decision on canceling a regularly scheduled school day based upon the best information at her disposal. The school will notify the following media outlets: NEWS 8, KXAN, KEYE, and KVUE. The school website will also display the most current information.

Purchase Orders

An employee who wishes to purchase items for the school or related to school purposes must submit a completed Purchase Order for the Superintendent's signature. No reimbursements will be made for purchases made without the express permission of the superintendent or her designee. Because the Katherine Anne Porter School is a 501(c)3 organization, a tax exempt form must be used. Purchase orders and tax exempt forms may be obtained from the front office.

Intra School Communication

In order to promote and maintain an environment characterized by high levels of communication, each staff member will be assigned an email address from the Katherine Anne Porter School. This address should be considered an official channel of communication and will be used to disseminate information accordingly. In addition, employees will be provided with a mailbox in the staff workroom. These mailboxes will also be used for official communications as well as in satisfying day to day needs. It is incumbent upon individual employees to ensure that they have checked their email accounts throughout the day and their physical mailboxes both before and after school. If assistance is needed for the use of the email server, direct the appropriate concerns to the Technology Director.

Parental Communication

Positive and constructive communication with the parents of the Katherine Anne Porter School's students is mandatory. All teachers are required to keep a log of their accumulated communications with parents. This log must include the date and time of the communication, reason for the communication, and result of the communication. Attempted communications must also be logged. These logs will be checked as part of the employee evaluation.

School-wide Activities

All full time employees are expected to participate in school related activities that are scheduled outside of the normal hours of operation. These activities include but are not limited to school fund raisers, Open Houses, and Welcome Back Nights. In

addition, the school participates in many community events and activities which require staff support. To ensure that the school is both adequately represented and the burden is dispersed amongst the staff, all members of the staff are required to participate in at least three activities per semester. Additionally, each full-time employee is required to work three Market Day parking lot shifts per year.

Special Education (IDEA) and Section 504

The Katherine Anne Porter School provides services to students with disabilities as mandated and defined by the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA). All curricular modification and classroom accommodation needs for each student receiving services under IDEA will be defined by the Katherine Anne Porter School Special Education Coordinator. All information surrounding students with special needs is extremely confidential and shall only be shared with on campus individuals who have an immediate and legitimate educational interest. All provisions of service, as adopted by the Special Education Admission Review and Dismissal Committee, shall be implemented campus wide at the classroom level. All questions and concerns about any aspect of service provision to these students should be directed to the Coordinator. In addition, it is the duty of the individual classroom teacher to initiate and maintain a comprehensive log of service provision to every student receiving services. This log will be reviewed during professional evaluations. It may also be requested by the administration at any time in order to optimize service provisions for each student.

Personal Information

It is important that the personnel records of The Katherine Anne Porter School be accurate at all times. In order to avoid issues or compromising your benefit eligibility or having W2's returned, The Katherine Anne Porter School expects that employees will promptly notify appropriate personnel representatives of any alterations in name, home address, telephone number, marital status, number of dependents, or any other pertinent information which is subject to change.

District records are public information and must be released upon request to appropriate entities. You may elect to withhold certain information from public access and inclusion in staff directories such as address, phone number, Social Security number and any information that reveals whether you have family members. To do so, please submit a dated written request to the Principal of the Katherine Anne Porter School.

Employment

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Katherine Anne Porter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, genetic identification, political affiliation, or disability in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs to employees.

Notification of Employment Openings

Employment openings shall be posted on internet sites, including Craig's List. In addition, information concerning employment openings will be available on the Katherine Anne Porter School website, www.kapschool.org.

Working days

All Katherine Anne Porter Employees are expected to work according to the published school calendar. Full time teachers must by law teach for 180 days per year and attend In-Service trainings and staff development workdays for an additional 7 days per year. School hours are 7:45 am until 3:35 pm. Staff must be on site during these hours unless prior approval of the Principal has been obtained. Part time staffers must be on campus no later than 10 minutes prior to the start of their first class.

Every full time teacher will be scheduled for one class section per day for instructional preparation and school related activities. Teachers leaving campus during their conference period are asked to sign out in the office and leave a contact number. It is recommended that teachers use their conference periods to complete lesson plans, contact parents and enter student grades.

Pay and Benefits

Pay dates occur on the 25th of each month for the current month. If a payday falls on a day where school is not in session, the official pay date is the first official in session day according to the publicized school calendar following the 25th. Pay rates vary for particular positions. The pay scale for full time teachers may be found on the Katherine Anne Porter School website at www.kapschool.org. Part time teachers are those that have less than 7 scheduled work periods per day. The salary schedule is based on a combination of level of education and Years of Service. It is the employee's responsibility to submit an accurate Years of Service record (TEA form FIN-115) in accordance with the TEA in order to receive the correct pay level. Years of Service records submitted after the hire date, which reflect a higher pay level will not be retroactively remunerated. All hourly employees must have their hours submitted to the Administrative Assistant no later than the 15th of each month. If the 15th should fall on an out of session day, the hours shall be due on the last day in session prior to the 15th.

Paychecks are distributed to employees in their assigned mailboxes in the Teacher Workroom.

Automatic deductions for all full time employees include Texas Teacher Retirement System (TRS), federal income tax, and Medicare. Employees may elect to participate

in TRS Active Care and have the employee portion deducted from the paycheck. Automatic deductions of salary will be made for unpaid or unauthorized absences and outstanding debts to the school, such as cafeteria charges.

Supplemental Insurance may be provided through third party vendors. More information on possible supplements may be obtained in the front office.

All personnel employed on a regular basis for at least one-half time of the normal work schedule are eligible to become a member of TRS. Substitutes not receiving retirement benefits who work at least ninety days a year are also eligible for TRS membership and to purchase a year of creditable service. **All personnel employed on a regular basis for at least ten hours a week are eligible to become TRS Active Care members.** All questions regarding TRS may be directed to TRS of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698.

Employees may elect to participate in a Cafeteria Plan, which allows eligible employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pre-tax basis. All employees must accept or reject this provision on an annual basis during a specified window of time.

Any mathematical errors in pay should be directed to the superintendent. All other concerns about paychecks will be considered employment issues and will be resolved through the employment grievance process.

Professional Development

The Katherine Anne Porter School is committed to providing current, topical, and comprehensive employee training. Continued training in order to provide the best possible student services and to stay abreast of recent developments in an employee's field is highly recommended. Scheduled In-Service days are mandatory for all employees so that the Katherine Anne Porter School may maintain a highly functional and effective educational environment. In addition to scheduled In-Service days, The Katherine Anne Porter School staff meets briefly every week. Failure to promptly attend scheduled In-Service days and staff meetings without obtaining reasonable prior authorization from the principal or superintendent may lead to documentation and disciplinary action.

In addition to the mandatory on campus in service days, each full time employee must attend a minimum of 6 hours of training per year within their field or related to campus programming.

Leaves of Absence

A full time employee has five state days leave at full pay, and five local days leave with pay deducted at the rate it costs the school to provide a substitute (currently

\$60.00/day), contingent on the completion of the year's assignment. If more than ten days of leave for health or family emergencies is taken, then salaries will be deducted by the full amount of the daily wage of the staff member. However, if you are donated a local day of leave by another staff member, only the substitute rate will be deducted from the employees salary. A staff member may donate up to five days of unused local leave per year on an individual basis.

If an employee does not complete the year's assignment, for any reason, s/he will only be reimbursed for the number of days **worked**. Any days of leave taken over the accrued amount will be deducted from the final paycheck.

A part-time teacher who teaches at least four classes earns 3 days paid leave over the academic year. If the part-time employee does not complete the year's assignment, for any reason, s/he will only be reimbursed for the number of sick days accrued.

The Principal authorizes professional leave. For a planned absence, an employee must give at least one week's notice. Staff is expected to cooperate in the search for qualified substitutes and to prepare the substitute for professional performance. Five days of sick leave per year of full time service to the Katherine Anne Porter School may be accumulated as paid leave up to a limit of 15 days for use in case of a verified family or medical emergency. A person may take six weeks maternity or paternity unpaid leave and return to work. If a person quits or is terminated s/he will forfeit any accumulated sick leave.

Evaluation Procedures

Staff evaluations are done once each semester. The first semester, teachers are required to fill out a pre-evaluation form that explains the lesson they will be teaching, the basis for the lesson, the type of evaluation used, and the special learning needs addressed. The first evaluation is scheduled with the teacher.

The evaluation is based on five areas: 1. Instructional techniques, which include planning and differentiation. 2. Assessment of students. 3. Learning environment that includes classroom management. 4. Community relations – parental contacts and 5. Professionalism, including appropriate professional behavior. Evaluation is on a one through four scale. 1= unsatisfactory, 2= below expectations, 3= proficient and 4= clearly outstanding.

Second semester evaluations will be conducted without prior notice.

Teachers should always have the following available: lesson plans, Special Education and Section 504 accommodation/modification records, parent communication logs and GradeBook access.

Corrective Action Plans

Corrective Action Plans are provided to employees who have not met their employment obligations. Corrective Action Plans will be provided to the employee by the Principal and/or Superintendent with the lead teacher or their designee present as a witness. A signature of receipt from the employee is required. This signature, as outlined in the plan, is not an agreement with the contents of the plan, but merely an acknowledgement that it was received. Failure to implement the recommendations within the plan or accumulated Corrective Action Plans for repeated or multiple deficiencies is grounds for termination. Clarifications and disagreements should follow the grievance procedure as outlined below.

Grievance Procedures

All employee grievances related to employment, which include but are not limited to, wage or salary, duties, expectations, and working conditions and environment are handled first by the Katherine Anne Porter School Employment Committee. The Committee is comprised of the Katherine Anne Porter lead teacher and two volunteer teachers. The Principal and Superintendent sit on the committee as necessary but will recuse themselves to allow for an appeals process. To gain an audience with the Employment Committee, the employee must provide the lead teacher with a written request for a meeting and include a detailed summary of the grievance. The Employment Committee shall hear the employee grievance and attempt to resolve the matter to the best of their ability. If the resolution is unsatisfactory, the employee may request a meeting with the Principal to further address the situation. If the resolution provided by the Principal remains unsatisfactory, the employee may request a meeting with the Superintendent to further address the situation. At the discretion of the Superintendent, the matter may be placed on the agenda for review by the Board of Trustees. This procedure is intended to provide multiple layers of appeal so that all parties may reach a satisfactory resolution to a potential grievance. Failure to adhere to this policy will result in no action being taken on the grievance the grievance. At all times, grievances should be resolved as close to the point of origin as possible. Any higher appeal level may return the grievance for resolution at an administrative level closer to the point of origin.

Termination of Employment

The Katherine Anne Porter School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Principal
515 FM 2325 Wimberley TX 78676
512.847.6867

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, see list of [OCR enforcement offices](#) for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-(800)-421-3481

The following are sufficient grounds for non renewal of employment. This list is not exhaustive and may be modified as needed.

1. Deficiencies pointed out in observation reports, appraisals, or evaluations, supplemental memoranda, or other communication.
2. Failure to fulfill duties or responsibilities.
3. Incompetence or inefficiency in the performance of required assignments.
4. Inability to maintain discipline in the classroom or at assigned school-related functions.
5. Insubordination or failure to comply with official directives.
6. Failure to comply with Board policies or administrative regulations.
7. Conducting personal business during school hours when it results in neglect of duties
8. Reduction in force because of financial exigencies or program changes.
9. Drunkenness or excessive use of alcoholic beverages; illegal use of drugs, hallucinogens, or other substances regulated by the Texas Controlled Substances Act.
10. The possession , use, or being under the influence of alcohol, alcoholic beverages, or drugs and narcotics as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act, while on school property, working in the scope of the employee's duties, or attending any school or district sponsored activity.
11. Conviction of a felony or any crime involving moral turpitude.
12. Failure to meet the District's standards of professional conduct.
13. Failure to comply with reasonable District requirements regarding advanced coursework or professional improvement and growth.
14. Disability, not otherwise protected by law, that impairs performance of required duties.
15. Immorality, which is conduct the Board determines is not in conformity with the accepted moral standards of the community encompassed by the District. Immorality is not confined to sexual matters but includes conduct that is not consistent with rectitude, or indicative of corruption.
16. Any activity, school related or otherwise, that because of publicity given it or knowledge of it among students, faculty, and community, impairs or diminishes the employee's effectiveness in the District.
17. Failure to maintain an effective working relationship or maintain good rapport with parents, the community, or colleagues.
18. A significant lack of student progress.
19. Assault on an employee or student.
20. Falsification of records or other documents related to the District's activities.
21. Misrepresentation of facts to a supervisor or other District official in the course of District business.

22. Failure to fulfill the requirements of a Campus Improvement Plan.
23. Any attempt to encourage or coerce a child to withhold information from the child's parent, school officials, or other legal authorities including law enforcement.
24. Reasons for constituting good cause for dismissing the employee.

Final authority with regards to termination resides with the Superintendent. If an employee has been terminated and wishes to request an audience with the Board of Trustees, s/he must submit a written request to the Board President. This request must be received by the Board President no later than 15 days after the date of termination. This request must include a brief but exhaustive summary of any and all information that the employee wishes to bring to the attention of the Board.

When a timely request for a hearing is received by the Board President, the hearing shall be heard not later than the 15th day after receipt of the request, unless a mutual agreement between the parties for a delay has been reached. The employee will be given notice of the date of appearance within a reasonable timeframe.

The appearance shall be conducted in a closed meeting with only the members of the Board, the employee, the Superintendent, their representatives, and such witnesses as may be called into attendance. Witnesses may be excluded from the hearing until it is their turn to appear. The conduct of the meeting will be under the Board President's control. The employee may request an open meeting and the Board shall consider the request. If the Board determines the administration was acting correctly and not in an arbitrary or capricious manner, it shall notify the employee by written notice not later than 15 days after the date of the hearing.

Intent to Return

All employees must submit a letter of intent to return for the following school year no later than May 1st of the current school year. This letter must be submitted to the Principal. Employees who fail to turn in a letter of intent to return shall have their position considered open for new hire. Any employee who has not provided a letter of intent to return may still apply for the position and will be considered with all other applicants.

Exit interviews for all employees not returning will be conducted in order to maintain a high level of employee satisfaction. These interviews will be scheduled at times and in manners convenient to both the school and the employee.

Disclaimer

This handbook does not constitute a contract for employment for any period of time but merely sets forth policies and procedures in effect on the date it was issued. This handbook may be amended from time to time without prior notice to employees.

Additional policies and procedures specific to particular job classifications may be added or modified as needed and supersede those set forth in this handbook. Both the Katherine Anne Porter School and an employee have the right to terminate the employment relationship at anytime, with or without cause or notice. Please understand that no supervisor, or representative of the Katherine Anne Porter School other than the Principal and Superintendent, has the authority to enter into any agreement with you for employment for any specified period of time or to make any promises or commitments contrary to the foregoing.

Acknowledgement Form

The Katherine Anne Porter School Employee Handbook

This employee handbook has been prepared for your information and understanding of the policies, philosophies and practices and benefits of The Katherine Anne Porter School. PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY. Upon completion of your review of this handbook, please sign the statement below, and return to the administrative assistant by the due date. A reproduction of this acknowledgment appears at the back of this booklet for your records.

I _____, have received and read a copy of the Katherine Anne Porter School Employee Handbook which outlines the goals, policies, benefits and expectations of The Katherine Anne Porter School, as well as my responsibilities as an employee.

I have familiarized myself, at least generally, with the contents of this handbook. By my signature below, I acknowledge, understand, accept and agree to comply with the information contained in Employee Handbook provided to me by The Katherine Anne Porter School. I understand this handbook is not intended to cover every situation which may arise during my employment, but is simply a general guide to the goals, policies, practices, benefits and expectations of The Katherine Anne Porter School.

I understand that any unpaid debts to the Katherine Anne Porter School such as cafeteria bills or outstanding school property will be deducted from the final paycheck.

I understand that The Katherine Anne Porter School Employee Handbook is not a contract of employment and should not be deemed as such, and that I am an employee at will.

(Employee signature)

Please return to the Principal no later than: _____