

STAFF HANDBOOK 2025-2026



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I. DISCLAIMER AND TENNESSEN WARNING

A. DISCLAIMER

Nothing in this handbook or in any other written or unwritten policies or practices of the Rochester Beacon Academy ("RBA") creates, is intended to create, or can be construed or interpreted as creating an express or implied contract, covenant, promise, or representation between RBA and any employee. The terms of any employer-employee relationship shall be solely and exclusively defined by each employee's agreement with RBA. Nothing within this handbook creates, can be construed or interpreted as creating, or is intended to imply or guarantee any specified or minimum term of employment. **Your employment with RBA is "at-will," which means that either the employee or RBA may terminate employment at any time for any reason, or no reason at all.**

This handbook supersedes, revokes, and replaces any earlier RBA handbook. This handbook is intended as a general guide to the policies and procedures of RBA. It does not attempt to cover all RBA practices, policies or procedures. Employees are responsible, as a term and condition of their employment, for reviewing and familiarizing themselves with the Board of Directors' policies, which are controlling and overrule this handbook to the extent there may be a difference between the policy and this handbook.

This handbook should be seen as an informational guide only. Any deviation from the policies and/or practices stated in this handbook is within the sole discretion of RBA and shall not be construed to constitute precedent that would affect any future action, nor shall any such deviation alter the employment at-will relationship. Should any applicable local, state, or federal law or judicial decision render any of RBA's policies or practices invalid or inoperative, it shall not invalidate any other of RBA's personnel policies or practices.

For those employees who have a written agreement with RBA, the terms of that agreement supersede, and take precedence over, any conflicting provisions contained in this handbook. Where the agreement is silent on a particular issue, the provisions of this handbook will generally apply.

The policies and procedures outlined in this handbook may be eliminated, revised, augmented, suspended, or changed at any time, with or without notice, at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors. Changes will be effective on the dates determined by the RBA Board of Directors. Upon those dates, all prior policies and procedures will be null and void.

B. TENNESSEN WARNING FOR EMPLOYEES

In accordance with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, RBA is required to inform employees of their rights as they pertain to the private information we collect from them. The information we collect from employees is classified by law as either public (anyone can see it), private (the public is not given access, but you are), or confidential (even you cannot see the information). As an employee of RBA, much of the data that we have about you is classified as public according to Minnesota Statutes, section 13.43, subdivisions 2 and 3.

The information we request from you from time to time during your employment may be used for one of more of the following purposes:

- To distinguish you from all other applicants or employees and identify you in our personnel files;
- To determine your eligibility for employment or promotion and make employment decisions about you and evaluate your performance;
- To contact you or other significant persons in an emergency;
- To enroll you and your family members for health insurance and other benefits programs;
- To enroll you for pension plans;
- To account for wages paid;
- To justify travel expense reimbursement;
- To account for other employer paid fringe benefits;
- To compile Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action reports;
- To make decisions regarding your eligibility for sick leave, family and medical leave, parenting leave and other leaves;
- To make decisions regarding your eligibility for workplace accommodations, including accommodations for disabilities;
- To comply with workers compensation requirements in the event of an injury; and
- To provide information during workplace investigations.

In most instances, the information which you are asked to provide is not required to be provided by law, but it may be the case in a particular circumstance. It is generally to your benefit to provide it. Without the requested information, RBA may not be able to determine your eligibility for employment opportunities, compute your wages, or grant you other benefits.

Federal law permits government agencies to require an individual to provide his/her social security number for the administration of any tax. Please be aware when you are asked to give your social security number on Revenue forms, this collection is mandated by law. This information will be shared with the Minnesota Department of Revenue, the Internal Revenue Services, and security tax programs. In most other cases the disclosure of your social security number is voluntary.

The information you provide may be shared with individuals within RBA whose job duties reasonably require access and individuals outside of RBA whose duties require access, such as insurance vendors, consultants, attorneys and retirement plan employees.

Information may also be shared with other agencies authorized by law to receive specific data, including but not limited to:

1. Absent/non-supportive parents;
2. Civil/human rights complaints;
3. Worker's Compensation;
4. Unemployment Compensation;
5. Labor Contracts; and
6. Child/vulnerable adult abuse.

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact the Executive Director. The information in this notice applies to future information requested and provided to the RBA during the course of your employment, whether the contact is in person, by mail, or by phone.

II. SCHOOL HISTORY, MISSION, AND VISION

Rochester Beacon Academy ("RBA" or "School") was **founded** by a group of parents and educators who wanted another option for children in the Rochester area; one that honored different ways of learning and diverse minds. They also wanted the school to be one where their children could feel welcomed and safe. They were awarded Charter School status in January of 2014, and opened their doors to students in August of 2015.

MISSION: RBA equitably meets the unique needs of students by inspiring integrity, cultivating compassion, and practicing perseverance.

VISION: RBA will welcome all students with open arms, transforming them into confident, resilient adults and preparing them to be leaders in their community.

III. SCHOOL REGULATIONS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

A. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES OF ALL STAFF

Please reference your specific work agreement for your official workday times. Any part-time staff will have prorated hours and their official work agreements will reflect such.

The building will typically be open from 7:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M. but the hours during which the building is open may vary at RBA's discretion.

B. AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

Your employment at RBA is at-will, meaning that either the employee or RBA may terminate the employment relationship, at any time, for any reason or no reason.

C. BUILDING MAINTENANCE & FACILITY USE

RBA leases space from the Congregational Church UCC. It is important that we maintain a positive relationship, respecting their property and operations. To that end, all staff are responsible for the maintenance and cleanliness of our space. Teachers are required to keep classrooms orderly. A classroom should look like a place of learning. Staff Teams will be assigned various areas of the building to clean on a weekly basis. It is expected that those areas are kept in a neat working order. When a maintenance issue arises in the building, staff must notify the Office Manager in a timely manner so a work order can be made to correct the problem. All staff must immediately report any unsafe or hazardous condition within the building, or other property owned or leased by RBA, to the Office Manager.

D. CALENDAR

The Board of Directors and Staff of RBA shall develop an annual calendar. The calendar shall conform to the statutes and regulations of the State of Minnesota and any other agencies affecting Minnesota public schools and their programs. The RBA Board of Directors approves the calendar before it is submitted to the Minnesota Department of Education ("MDE"). RBA makes an effort to put the school calendar on its website in a timely manner.

E. COMMUNICATION

RBA values efficient and effective communication. Staff members are expected to respond to stakeholders (including students, parents, coworkers, supervisors, and members of the Board of Directors) within 24 hours of receiving communication, excluding holidays and weekends. Any communication (e-mail, text messages, etc.) sent using RBA's computers or other equipment or using RBA's e-mail or other software is subject to review and inspection by RBA, at any time, with or without notice. Regardless of the form of communication, all communication with any stakeholder in an employee's official capacity as an RBA employee is subject to all applicable RBA policies, laws, and provisions of this handbook or other RBA handbooks/guidance documents.

For more information about communication expectations, please refer to the Communication Plan posted on our website.

F. CONFIDENTIALITY

All information created, collected, or maintained by any RBA employee in the employee's official capacity with RBA, including information concerning employees, students and their families, donors, and organizations with which RBA does business are "government data" subject to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act ("MGDPA") and must be maintained and disclosed only in accordance with applicable provisions of law. Likewise, all records regarding students created, collected, or maintained by any RBA employee because the student is or was a student at RBA are "education records" subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"). All employees must keep confidential any sensitive or personal information regarding an employee, student, parent/guardian, or school situation, as

required by the MGDPA, FERPA, and/or other applicable law. Employees must discuss concerns and other confidential matters, or other data governed by the MGDPA, the FERPA, or other applicable law, only with professional staff members who "Need to Know" or with the parent/guardian directly involved with the situation. Talking about students or their families while off school grounds is prohibited and subject to discipline. Talking disparagingly about students, staff, or their families, while on or off school grounds, is also prohibited and subject to discipline. Employees are to reinforce confidentiality with any classroom/parent volunteers. If you are unsure about sharing information, please see the Executive Director or designee.

G. DISCIPLINE

1. Corporal Punishment and Prone Restraint

Corporal punishment is prohibited by all employees upon a student to reform or penalize for unacceptable conduct. Corporal punishment is defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.58, subdivision 1(a), as conduct involving hitting or spanking a person with or without an object, or unreasonable physical force that causes bodily harm or substantial emotional harm.

RBA is a hands-off school and will call law enforcement to assist with student and staff safety. However, reasonable force may be used by an employee upon or toward a student without the student's consent in the exercise of lawful authority to restrain a student from self-injury or injury to any other person or property. An employee who employs or observes corporal punishment or physical restraint upon a student must report the incident immediately to the Executive Director or designee.

Only staff members with current CPI Certification may physically restrain Special Education students. Physical restraints may only be conducted on special education students when immediate intervention is needed to protect a child or other individual from physical injury. Emergency does not mean circumstances such as: a child who does not respond to a task or request and instead places his or her head on a desk or hides under a desk or table; a child who does not respond to a staff person's request unless failing to respond would result in physical injury to the child or other individual; or an emergency incident has already occurred and no threat of physical injury currently exists. Physical restraints must only be used on special education students in accordance with applicable law.

*Employees shall not use prone restraint. Under Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.58, subdivision 1(b), prone restraint means placing a child in a face-down position. Employees shall not inflict any form of physical holding that restricts or impairs a pupil's ability to breathe; restricts or impairs a pupil's ability to communicate distress; places pressure or weight on a pupil's head, throat, neck, chest, lungs, sternum, diaphragm, back, or abdomen; or results in straddling a pupil's torso. An employee who employs or observes corporal punishment or physical restraint upon a student must report the incident immediately to the Executive Director or designee.

2. Removal from Class

Students may be removed from class for willful conduct, which disrupts the rights of others to an education or a teacher's right to teach. Students can also be removed from class for willful conduct, which endangers school personnel, the student, other students, or the property of the school. A student may only be removed for the remainder of the day by the Executive Director or designee. If a student has been removed for the remainder of the day, this counts as a full-day suspension. In order to help with a successful re-entry, arrangements may be made for a restorative circle on the day the student returns to class/school. The team will discuss restorative measures and/or further discipline.

Any student suspended for "the remainder of the day" must remain at school unless released to parent/guardian, or parent/guardian gives permission to release, the student is 18 years old, or the student has been emancipated and the school has documentation on file. The student shall remain in a designated area, with the designated administrator, until released. If a student should leave the building after being suspended for the remainder of the day and has not been released, the parent/guardian should be notified immediately, and procedures taken to ensure the student's safety.

During rare circumstances, for safety reasons, an area may have to be cleared for a student who is dysregulated. This decision requires that the Executive Director or designee be made aware and appropriate documentation occurs thereafter (Evacuation Form).

A student must be removed from class immediately if the student engages in assault or violent behavior. For purposes of this paragraph, "assault" is an act done with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death; or the intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm upon another. The removal shall be for a period of time deemed appropriate by the principal, in consultation with the teacher.

3. Trespassing

RBA only leases the following areas within the Church. Any student who goes into areas not described herein will be considered trespassing and will be subject to disciplinary action. The following areas have been leased by RBA:

Office/Classroom #1, Classroom #2, Classroom #3, Classroom #4, Classroom #5, Classroom #12, Classroom #13, Classroom #14, Classroom #15, Classroom #17, Classroom #18, Classroom #19, Storage Closet East Hall, Storage Closet West Hall, Lower Level East Hallway, Main Entrance/Foyer, Commercial Kitchen, Women/Girls Bathroom, Men/Boys Bathroom, Lower-level ADA Bathroom, Elevator, West Hall Stairway, Upper-level ADA Bathroom, Upper-level West Hallway.

If students leave school grounds without permission, staff may follow students for safety purposes. In addition, RBA may call the Non-Emergency Police number to provide assistance. Parents may be called when this occurs. Discipline could occur as a result of leaving school property.

4. Dismissal

“Dismissal” means the denial of the current educational program to any student, including exclusion, expulsion, and suspension. Dismissal does not include removal from class. RBA may dismiss a student as a form of discipline in compliance with Policy 506, which is located on our website.

H. EMERGENCY DRILLS

Rochester Beacon Academy, in compliance with local and state regulations, maintains an emergency drill calendar. The school will conduct drills as required by law, which is five lockdown drills, five fire drills, and one tornado drill per academic year. RBA elects to do an Emergency Evacuation Drill one time per year as well.

1. Emergency Evacuation Drill

RBA elects to do an Emergency Evacuation Drill. In order to practice a safe building site evacuation, information will be given to staff over the walkies by administration. Should you be told to evacuate the building by the administration, you should find the nearest exit and leave the building. Take a headcount before walking towards the First Unitarian Universalist Church. Once we get to our safe spot, we will initiate relocation procedures via the RBA Crisis Manual.

2. Fire Drills

When the fire drill announcement comes via your class phone, staff should use the calling tree to call the next person and escort their students quietly and in an orderly fashion outside via the Fire Drill Evacuation Map. This map is located in all rooms in our building near the door. All students and staff should meet on the south side of the parking lot, with students lined up with their classes and quiet. Staff should take a head count and immediately report any missing students to administration. When the “all clear” is given, everyone can re-enter the building. Please note, we do not pull the fire alarm for drills, as this can be very frightening for some of our students.

3. Lockdown Drills

RBA practices both hard and soft lockdowns. To practice a drill, we will use walkie talkies.

Upon receiving the alert, staff will be notified if the drill is a soft or hard lock down. Staff should immediately lock their door.

In the event of a hard lockdown, staff should also close the blinds, shut the lights off, and hide in a safe spot in the classroom away from doors and windows when possible. Everyone should remain silent and hidden until the "all clear" has been given. The "all clear" is communicated by administration.

In any lockdown, staff should immediately report any missing students to the front desk via email.

In the event of a medical emergency or dysregulated student, staff in the immediate area will be asked to lock their doors and keep teaching, but remain in their room until administration comes and gives the "all clear."

4. **Tornado Drill:** When the tornado drill announcement comes over the walkies, staff should escort their students quietly and in an orderly fashion to their designated room via the Tornado Drill Evacuation Map. Students should sit quietly on the floor in the tuck position, until administration gives the "all clear." Staff should immediately report any missing students to the front desk via the school phone.

I. EXPECTATIONS AND DUTIES – LICENSED STAFF

Licensed staff will be expected to fulfill the duties of a licensed staff member, as described in the work agreement, position description, and directives received by the staff member. The specific duties include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. Curriculum Design and Mapping;
2. Instruction;
3. Assessment;
4. Parent Contact;
5. Supervision or meetings as outlined by administration;
6. Social-Emotional needs of their students;
7. Parent-Teacher Conferences ;
8. Fundraising/Extra-Curricular Events;
9. Staff will be provided prep;
10. Staff will be expected to attend meetings;
11. Staff may be asked to cover duties as needed during their prep period
12. Professional Development and/or Compliance Trainings (i.e. sexual harassment, mandatory reporting, etc.);
13. Gradebook kept up to date, as well as other records; and
14. Other duties as assigned and/or outlined in worker agreement.

The position of licensed staff is exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Licensed positions are generally full-time positions, although RBA reserves the right to create part-time licensed positions as it sees fit.

Regular and prompt attendance is an essential function of the job for all RBA employees. A regular workday will generally be eight (8) hours in length, but licensed staff members and other exempt staff members are expected to work the number of hours necessary to perform his/her job duties and to meet the professional expectations of the job. In light of the exempt status of the position, additional hours worked beyond a forty-hour workweek will not

constitute overtime for exempt licensed staff members or other exempt staff members.

It is the duty and obligation of the licensed staff to ensure that they maintain a valid professional license. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, completing required professional development, training, or other methods for recertification as outlined by the Minnesota Department of Education. Licenses must stay current in order to continue with assigned duties. Failure to maintain a current license is grounds for discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

The Board retains the right to modify the licensed staff's written job description as it sees fit with or without notice, to oversee and direct the licensed staff's performance as they see fit, and to review the licensed staff's performance as it sees fit.

Licensed salary schedule is located in Appendix A.

All licensed staff will be eligible to enroll in RBA's insurance plans. Licensed staff are eligible to participate in TRA and contributions to TRA will be made in accordance with applicable law.

J. EXPECTATIONS AND DUTIES – NON-LICENSED STAFF

The duties of non-licensed paraprofessionals staff members are as described in the worker agreement, position description, and directives received by the staff. Specific duties include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. Supervision of students;
2. Assisting students with academic needs;
3. Helping students to understand their behavior and school expectations;
4. Escorting students to various places in the building;
5. Attending fall conferences and Prom; and
6. Other duties as assigned or outlined in the worker agreement.

Regular and prompt attendance is an essential function of the job for all RBA employees. The Board retains the right to modify the non-licensed paraprofessional staff written job description as it sees fit, with or without notice, to oversee and direct the non-licensed paraprofessional staff performance as it sees fit, and to review the non-licensed paraprofessional staff performance as it sees fit.

Non-licensed paraprofessional staff members may be eligible to enroll in RBA's insurance plans and must participate in the state's retirement plan (PERA) as required by law.

K. FACULTY MEETINGS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Executive Director or designee may call staff meetings or other meetings throughout the school year. A schedule will be provided as far in advance as reasonably feasible. All staff will be required to attend the scheduled meetings, unless attendance is excused, in writing, by the Executive Director or designee. Violation of this policy may result in discipline, up to and

including immediate termination of employment.

L. HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Rochester Beacon Academy is committed to providing a work and learning environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each employee has the right to work in an environment that is free of any type of discrimination or harassment. RBA prohibits any form of harassment or violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity or expression, or disability. Unlawful harassment applies to all phases of employment and academic status, including but not limited to recruitment, testing, hiring, upgrading, promotions or demotions, transfers, layoffs, terminations, suspensions, expulsions, rates of pay, benefits, and selection for training.

It is RBA's responsibility to prohibit harassment in the workplace and in connection with all extracurricular, athletic, and other programs sponsored by the school whether occurring at the school or at another location. Sexual harassment is a violation of the law and will not be tolerated. Employees who engage in harassment will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. Any employee, supervisor or administrator who is aware of or should be aware of harassing conduct of any nature by another employee, whether or not anyone complains about such harassment, but fails to report that conduct may be subject to discipline.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to or has knowledge of a harassing or offensive work or learning environment or other harassment shall report the incident orally or in writing to the Executive Director or designee. The Executive Director will investigate the charge. If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the report may be filed directly with the Board of Directors.

Retaliation against any person for having made a good faith complaint or report of harassment, or participating or aiding in an investigation of harassment, is strictly prohibited. Any person who believes that he or she has been subjected to retaliation should bring the retaliatory conduct to the attention of the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is the source of the alleged harassment, the charge shall be reported directly to the Board Chair. Retaliation will be considered a serious act of misconduct subject to appropriate discipline up to and including discharge. Any Employee whose allegations are found to be both false and brought with malicious intent will be subject to disciplinary action.

For more information regarding harassment, please refer to Policy #413: Harassment and Violence.

M. HEALTH OFFICE

1. Emergency Care Plans

Emergency care plans must be in place for all students with serious illnesses, such as diabetes, asthma, allergies to food or latex, seizures, bee stings, or any life-threatening health condition. Such

emergency care plans must also be incorporated into a student's Section 504 plan or individualized education program ("IEP"), as appropriate.

2. Student Medications

Administration of Student Medication is overseen by a licensed school nurse pursuant to State law. Staff assigned to the health office must be properly trained to administer medication with this oversight. A Physician Order for Medication **and** Parent/Guardian Authorization form needs to be completed for any and all medications to be dispensed at school. All medication (prescription or over-the-counter) must be kept in the health office. The only exception, with approval from the health office staff and parents, is for students who have an inhaler or EpiPen. All staff with questions about medication must refer those questions to the licensed school nurse.

3. Some students require administration of medications or medical procedures to be performed during the regular school day. In those situations, the following procedures will be followed:
 - a. Physician Order for Medication **and** Parent/Guardian Authorization form completed and on-file with the school before any medications will be dispensed by RBA staff.
 - b. Prescription medications must be provided in the original pharmacy container with a current label. Prescription medications brought to school in any other container will not be administered. Questions regarding dosage and administration of the medications will be directed to the prescribing physician or the parent/guardian, at the discretion of RBA staff.
 - c. Over-the-counter preparations must be provided in the original labeled container. Over-the-counter prescriptions, ex: Aspirin, Ibuprofen or Tylenol, will only be administered to a student according to the label directions, unless contrary written directions from a physician are provided.
 - d. When use of a medication has ceased, or is no longer needed by the student, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to collect unused medications from the school. Any unused medications will be disposed of by the school upon the written request of the parent/guardian or at the end of the school year.
 - e. No staff member shall provide students with over-the-counter medication under any circumstances.
4. All staff members who require the use of an Epi-Pen in the case of anaphylaxis will be asked to leave their Epi-Pen in the Administration Office.
5. Students may not share medications with anyone. Appropriate

disciplinary action may be taken, if necessary, upon a determination by the Executive Director or designee, after an investigation that a violation of this policy has taken place.

N. KEYS

All staff are responsible for their keys. Keys must be signed out for the school year under the following conditions:

1. Employees will be issued a key as deemed appropriate by the Executive Director or designee.
2. Employees may not lend school or classroom/office keys to non-employees under any circumstances. Non-employees wishing to use the building must contact the office manager to request permission to sign out a key, which may be granted or denied at RBA's sole discretion.
3. Employees may not, under any circumstances, duplicate building or classroom/office keys. If a new key is needed, see the office manager.
4. Lost building and/or classroom/office keys may result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination.
5. All lost, stolen, missing, damaged, or defaced building and/or classroom keys must be immediately reported to the office manager.
6. When an employee terminates employment or has employment terminated, keys must be turned in to the office manager, date determined by the Executive Director or designee.
7. All classroom, office and workroom doors must be locked nightly by the normal occupants.

O. FIELD TRIPS

Any student participating in an RBA field trip must have a signed "Field Trip Permission" slip on file. Staff who are organizing a field trip must have the field trip approved by Administration before sending home permission slips.

Staff who are chaperoning field trips must not allow any student to participate in a field trip without a valid Field Trip Permission Slip. The Office Manager has the field trip forms and will keep track of signed forms for each trip.

Students may NOT drive to any field trip. No staff may transport students on field trips, except as pre-approved by the Executive Director or designee in emergency situations.

P. FOOD

Hot lunch is provided by Byron Public Schools. Microwaves are available for students and staff to heat up their lunch. Staff may purchase lunch tickets

with either a check (made out to RBA) or cash. Tickets must be handed to the Kitchen Manager in order to receive Hot Lunch. The cost of a school lunch is \$4.95. Breakfast costs \$2.75 and is served from 7:15-7:45 daily. Money should be given to the Office Manager at the beginning of each day.

RBA is a closed campus for lunch. Students are not allowed to leave for lunch. Parents and legal guardians can pick their child up and take them out to lunch if they so choose. Staff members who observe a student leaving during the school day without being picked up by a parent or guardian must report the student to the Office Manager or designee immediately.

Occasionally, staff may order food for themselves. Staff who are having food delivered must have it delivered to the Congregational Church door upstairs.

Staff ordering lunch for students must have it pre-approved and arranged with both the Executive Director (or designee) and the parents or guardians BEFORE ordering. Staff may not order food for, provide food to, or share food with students without preapproval by both the Executive Director (or designee) and the student's parent(s) or guardian(s).

Q. MANDATED REPORTING (POLICY #420)

RBA employees are mandated reporters of maltreatment of minors pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 260E (as amended). It shall be a violation of this policy for employees to fail to immediately report instances of child neglect, or physical or sexual abuse when the school personnel knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years.

The report must be made to a local welfare agency, police department, county sheriff, or agency responsible for assessing or investigating maltreatment within 24 hours of learning of the maltreatment, and as otherwise required by law. The report should be made by telephone to 507-328-6400 (Olmsted or the county in which the child resides) and in writing to child protection services (as requested by them) and RBA's School Social Worker, Karissa Wilson, within 24 hours. All reports should be maintained for three years, but are not included in the cumulative file. If the employee is being accused of child abuse, the Executive Director or designee will report this to law enforcement, as well as the Minnesota Department of Education. The Executive Director or designee can/should provide assistance and direction to staff members in this area.

Anyone who reports child abuse/neglect in good faith is immune from any civil or criminal liability. Mandated reporters (educators, members of the clergy, and other professional "helpers") who fail to do so may be guilty of a misdemeanor.

R. MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

If it is necessary to use personal vehicles for school business, mileage will be reimbursed at the current rate approved by the Internal Revenue Service, via the proper documentation. Prior approval for mileage reimbursement must be given by the Executive Director or designee. The Office Manager has the

mileage reimbursement forms for completion. Staff must not use their personal vehicle to transport any student without the express permission of the Executive Director (or designee).

S. MUTUAL RESPECT

RBA is a professional work environment. As such, all staff members are required to treat each other with respect. This includes addressing concerns professionally and in person, giving each other the benefit of the doubt and offering help without judgment. Gossip, back-biting, retaliation, manipulation, purposeful or intentional exclusions, and acting with ill intentions will not be tolerated. Such acts must immediately be reported to the Executive Director or designee and may result in discipline, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

T. PREP TIME

In order to properly plan instruction for our students, certain staff need prep time. For teachers and other licensed staff, they will be given a period of 45 minutes of prep time daily. Prep time must be completed while on-campus. Any time a staff member leaves the building during their workday (excluding lunch), prior approval from the Executive Director or designee is required.

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1. Case Management

Case Management time MUST be completed at school. Case Managers are not permitted to leave school during the workday unless they have prior approval from the Executive Director or designee.

U. PURCHASING OF SUPPLIES

Funds are limited in any school, and RBA is no exception. Please be mindful of any financial requests made to the administration knowing that they may or may not be approved, at RBA's sole discretion, and it may take several weeks to get an order in due to cash flow. RBA has numerous charge accounts at a variety of vendors. Every effort should be made to utilize these accounts when making purchases. No charges are allowed to be made without the express written consent of the Executive Director or designee (Purchase Order Form). If you wish to use a vendor that does not have an account with RBA, you must contact the Executive Director or designee to open an account or to discuss other options. RBA will not reimburse any staff member for purchases without the prior written approval of the Executive Director and a receipt for the purchase. Should you have a supply need, you must do the following:

1. Get a written price quote with the vendor name and address, and total money being asked for.
2. Turn the quote and Purchase Order form in (stapled together) to the Office Manager.
3. Once a decision has been made regarding the request, you will be informed.

V. SCHOOL CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

The decision to close school is never taken lightly. Every attempt will be made to close school prior to 5:30 am. In the event that school must be delayed or closed because of inclement weather, families will receive an email. An announcement will also be posted on our website. In addition, we will post on the following TV stations: KTTC & KAAL. At the time of notification, staff and families will know if it is an online learning day or a flex day.

RBA serves students from multiple school districts. If the student's district of residence is delayed or closed, the student should consider themselves delayed or closed as well. In these cases, the student will be excused for attendance purposes. This does **NOT** apply to staff.

Weather Inclement Learning Days (WILD DAYS) Bingo Cards will need to be updated and sent to admin by 9/12/2025.

W. SPECIAL EDUCATION RIGHTS

Special Education is a continuum of services available to eligible students with disabilities. Guided by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Minnesota regulations, RBA ensures all special education students receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). This is guided by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) development process, which results in a comprehensive, legal plan addressing needs specific to the individual student. Each student with an IEP has a case manager who will oversee their plan and subsequent due process rights. These people serve as the point of contact for students with special education needs. Per law, RBA employs a Special Education Director.

1. Child Find

RBA identifies, locates, and evaluates children suspected of having a disability and needing special education services to address that disability. It is the responsibility of RBA's employees to comply with IDEA and its Child Find obligations.

2. All students with disabilities, including students with disabilities who qualify for services under the IDEA, are protected from discrimination on the basis of disability by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Minnesota Human Rights Act, and other applicable law. Staff members must not discriminate against any student on the basis of disability, or on the basis of any other characteristic protected by state or federal law. Staff members must review Policies 505 for additional details regarding their obligations to not discriminate against students and their obligations to respond to reports of alleged harassment.

X. TECHNOLOGY (POLICY #524)

RBA has established the following policy that governs the use of electronic communication systems at the workplace, including computers, email, the Internet, and telephone communication systems. The definition of workplace includes all places where you perform work for RBA and this applies to your

use of computers, email, the Internet, and telephone or electronic communications systems not owned or operated by RBA but used by you in the course of your employment with the school. RBA reserves the right to amend these policies at any time without notice. An employee's use of RBA's electronic communications systems, computers, telephones, email systems and/or Internet systems constitutes the employee's agreement to abide by the policies governing RBA communication systems as set forth below or as modified in the future.

1. Educational Use

All RBA computers, Internet, email, electronic, and telephone communication systems are to be used primarily for educational purposes, meaning that the use of such equipment and systems must be school-related. Limited, occasional, or incidental use of these systems for personal purposes is acceptable, if done in a professional manner that does not interfere with business.

2. Business Form

Computer, Internet, email, and voicemail messages sent by RBA employees working in their official capacity reflect RBA's image. They should be composed in a professional manner that is similar to messages sent on RBA letterhead. Employees should keep in mind that electronic files are subject to review by others. Therefore, it is expected that employee statements in electronic messages and files will reflect favorably on RBA and on the employee.

3. File Management

In order to keep the electronic communication systems and computer systems running efficiently, employees should delete unnecessary electronic messages stored in the system, as well as computer files that are no longer needed.

4. RBA Property

In addition to the system hardware and software, all electronic files and electronic messages created, maintained, sent or received through RBA's software, hardware, email, and other accounts are the property of RBA, whether composed, received, or sent by the employee. Internet, email, and voice-email messages, and other electronic files are property of RBA. RBA reserves the right to review, monitor, or inspect all such equipment, systems, messages, email and other accounts with or without notice. No employee shall have a reasonable expectation of privacy in any document stored on any RBA computer, hardware, or software or any email or other message or received by, or maintained in any RBA software, email system, or other account.

5. Privacy and Passwords

Since all messages sent or received using RBA's software, emails, or other accounts, are the property of RBA, employees must not expect that messages are private. In addition, employees should be aware

that deleted files may be retrieved and read by RBA. RBA reserves the right to retrieve, monitor, or review any messages in the RBA system, and to review all email and Internet use, with or without notice to the employee. RBA may disclose such messages or use for any purpose as required or authorized by law without notice to the employee and without seeking permission of the employee. Passwords for RBA email and other accounts, hardware, and software must be disclosed to the Executive Director or designee upon request.

6. Solicitation Prohibited

Employees may not use computer, Internet, email, or voicemail systems to solicit for charitable or commercial ventures. Employees may not use the systems to proselytize for religious, political, or other causes.

7. Proprietary Information Restrictions

Receiving, downloading, sending or uploading of proprietary information is prohibited without prior authorization from the Executive Director. Such information includes copyrighted materials, trade secrets, proprietary financial information, or similar materials.

8. Anti-harassment Policies Applicable

School policies prohibiting sex-based harassment and other harassment are applicable to RBA computer, Internet, email, and voicemail systems. Images or messages that contain pornographic images or foul, inappropriate, or offensive language, or those containing racial or ethnic slurs, sexual innuendo, and other types of communication prohibited by applicable School policies, are prohibited. Accessing, or attempting to access, any Internet website that contains sexual content, pornography, offensive content or nudity would violate this policy.

9. Confidentiality

Employees are expected to respect the confidentiality of messages sent to others. Employees may not access or review computer, Internet, email, or voicemail messages that are not distributed to them. All emails and other communications sent by RBA employees are subject to the MGDPA, FERPA, and other applicable law.

10. Personal Social Networking on RBA-Owned Computers and Related Equipment

Employees should not use RBA-owned computers or related equipment to post to personal sites, including social networking sites. Employees' personal use of RBA-owned computers and related equipment should be minimal and must not interfere with their work duties or school/classroom activities. All personal social networking and other personal use of the RBA-owned computers and related equipment must comply with the terms of this policy.

11. Personal Social Networking While Off Duty and RBA's Responsibility

RBA has a duty to protect the reputation of the organization and its employees as well as guard against any liability and potential legal risk regardless of when and where social networking activity occurs. With this in mind, employees must use social media in a manner that follows the following guidelines:

- a. Individuals should exercise caution and good judgment when social networking.
- b. Individuals shall not represent that they are speaking or acting on behalf of RBA or presenting any interests of RBA.
- c. Individuals are not permitted to display RBA logo on any part of their online profiles.
- d. Individuals never have the right to post non-public, private, or confidential data, such as information related to students or their families (including educational data and education records, as defined in the MGDPA and FERPA), coworkers' personnel data, medical information, or claims or lawsuits against RBA, without obtaining the express written consent of the data subject and/or Executive Director, as appropriate.
- e. Individuals who use personal social media accounts are not immune from the law. In general, all users of social networking should be aware that the content of these social networking sites can be subpoenaed and used in criminal and civil trials.
- f. Individuals need to be aware that they have no reasonable expectation of privacy when social networking and use of personal social media accounts are subject to all pertinent RBA policy, as well as local, state and federal laws.
- g. Content that violates existing RBA policies that exhibit hate, bias, discrimination, pornography, libelous or otherwise defamatory content will not be tolerated.

12. Staff should not accept "friend" requests from students on any social media platform.

13. Except as authorized by the Board of Directors, no staff member is authorized to speak or give a statement on behalf of RBA, whether in person, through an electronic communication, using social media, or otherwise.

14. Personal Electronic Devices

Staff are expected to keep their cell phones put away (out of sight) while they are working with students. Smartwatches are allowed provided that all notifications are silenced and do not distract wearers from their job duties.

15. Notification and Reporting

Employees who observe violations of these electronic communication policies shall notify the Executive Director or designee immediately.

16. Discipline

Employees who violate this policy are subject to discipline, up to and including, immediate termination of employment.

17. Policy Changes

RBA reserves the right to modify or change the policies set forth above to comply with applicable law, to meet changing circumstances, or for any reason.

IV. EMPLOYMENT AT RBA

A. BACKGROUND CHECKS

All RBA employees, full or part-time, will complete a background check prior to working in our school. All offers of employment are conditioned on receipt of a background check report that is acceptable to RBA. Should a candidate fail to pass the background check satisfactorily, the current job offer shall be rescinded.

RBA will obtain the necessary written releases to permit a background check to occur. The school will request from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension any information in the Bureau's records concerning convictions against the given personnel for the endangerment of minors, vulnerable adults, or counsels. The school will ask previous employers of the given personnel whether those employers are aware of charges or convictions against the above personnel for endangerment of minors, vulnerable adults, or counselees. The employers to be asked are all those for whom the given personnel have worked within seven years.

B. CORRECTIVE ACTION POLICY

RBA employees may be subject to disciplinary action for failing to fulfill their duties and responsibilities, including, but not limited to, observance of work rules, policies and procedures, adopted by the Board and directives issued by their supervisor or the Executive Director. It is the policy of RBA to administer disciplinary penalties fairly and without discrimination. The existence of these policies in no way modifies the at-will nature of employment with RBA or creates any "just cause" or "for cause" standard of discipline or discharge. All at-will employment may be terminated by RBA or the employee for any reason or no reason, at any time.

RBA hereby reserves the right to take any disciplinary action at any time, depending on the severity of the infraction. Disciplinary actions include, but are not necessarily limited to: Oral Warning, Written Warning, Oral Reprimand, Written Reprimand, Probation, Suspension with or without Pay, and Dismissal. Other forms of discipline, including but not limited to, demotion or withholding a salary increase may be imposed as well. Nothing in this Policy shall require or shall be construed as requiring RBA to follow progressive discipline, creating a "for cause" or "just cause" termination standard, or otherwise altering the "at-will" nature of employment.

C. DISABILITY NONDISCRIMINATION

RBA shall not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities with regard to job application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, job training, or any other term, condition or privilege of employment. RBA shall make reasonable accommodations for the known physical and/or mental disability of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or employee, unless the accommodation would impose undue hardship on the operation of the business of the school. Any job applicant or employee wishing to discuss the need for a reasonable accommodation, or other matters related to a disability or the enforcement and application of this policy, must contact the Executive Director. Any employee found to be engaging in discrimination prohibited by the school's policy or law will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

D. DRESS CODE FOR STAFF

Staff shall dress in a professional manner that promotes a respectable academic atmosphere and models appropriate standards for students. Clothing must be neat, clean, in good repair, and appropriate for on the job appearances at all times. Examples of unprofessional attire include: excessively damaged jeans (i.e. large holes, holes near the buttocks, or that show pockets); tank tops; sweatpants; exposed undergarments; and clothing with inappropriate slogans or logos. Comfortable shoes are acceptable dress code for RBA so long as they are in good repair and clean in appearance. Staff who choose to wear leggings must make sure that their leggings are in good condition and have a shirt that covers their buttocks. Staff violating the dress code may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

E. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT

RBA provides equal employment opportunities for all applicants and employees. RBA does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, familial status, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, or other characteristics protected by state and federal law, including pregnancy and related conditions, as defined in applicable law. RBA prohibits discrimination and discrimination in the form of harassment of any individual for any of the categories listed above.

F. GRIEVANCES

Employees who have an employment-related problem, question, or complaint should first discuss the issue with the appropriate supervisor. At this level, employees have an opportunity to resolve their issues without conducting a formal grievance process. If this does not resolve the issue, the employee may talk with the Executive Director, who will work to resolve the situation. The Executive Director will keep the Business Manager and the School Board informed of any final written warnings or possible serious/legal issues and concerns.

Grievance Process for an employee with a job-related problem or complaint:

1. Discuss problem or complaint with appropriate staff member.
2. If the matter cannot be resolved, discuss the problem with the Executive Director, who may use mediation, to resolve the grievance. Restorative mediation is not optional in this case. The resolution by the Executive Director is final.
3. If the Executive Director is the subject of the grievance, the individual should take the complaint to the Chair of the Board of Directors, whose decision regarding the grievance is final.

G. IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE

RBA employs United States citizens and those non-U.S. citizens authorized to work in the United States in compliance with the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1324B (as amended) and other applicable law. 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, consistent with applicable law. Former employees who are rehired must also comply with these requirements.

H. SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

Your employment at RBA is at-will. The employment relationship therefore may be terminated at any time and for any or no reason by either RBA or you.

1. Resignation

Employees who wish to resign in "good standing" must notify RBA with a minimum of two weeks' notice. Failure to resign in good standing may result in the employee not being eligible for rehire. Employees are required to submit their resignation in writing to the Executive Director. An employee's last day must be a regularly scheduled workday. Accrued leave time or vacation time, if any, cannot be used in lieu of notice. An employee who is absent for two consecutive workdays and fails to properly report the absences, is considered to have resigned without proper notice and will be terminated for job abandonment.

Employees who resign after RBA has received a charge or complaint against them but before the resolution of the charge or complaint shall not be considered to have resigned "in good standing."

2. Layoffs

When RBA, at its sole discretion, determines that layoffs are necessary, RBA may give consideration to the employees' on-the-job performance, abilities, job knowledge and the potential for other jobs within RBA.

I. STAFF EVALUATION PROCESS

The intent of an evaluation is to improve an individual's practice, team functioning, and the overall success of RBA. Evaluations are meant to determine competence, assess strengths, provide support, assure continued growth through differential experiences, and monitor the organization's employment decisions. Evaluations should improve the delivery of services to students and be a continuous, constructive, and cooperative endeavor.

The evaluation process will be ongoing throughout the year and will generally consist of both formal and informal evaluations, as the Executive Director or Board of Directors sees fit. Evaluations may also include one or more of the following: self-rating system, peer ratings, student feedback, and parent rating, at the sole discretion of the Executive Director or Board of Directors. Evaluations may/can be used for compensation per state funding. RBA will comply with MDE's Evaluation Model for teachers.

Nothing in this evaluation procedure and neither the failure to complete, nor the results of any evaluation alters, or can be construed as altering, the at-will nature of employment at RBA.

J. WORK AGREEMENTS

RBA uses work agreements to outline expectations of employment, as well as compensation and benefit information. Each year, these work agreements are amended, if an employee is extended an offer to return to RBA for the following academic year.

All employees of Rochester Beacon Academy are "at-will" employees. At-will employees may be terminated at any time for any reason or no reason at all, with or without cause or notice, regardless of whether they have received a work agreement or offer of employment for a following school year. The employee can resign their position at any time.

V. LEAVES, BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION

A. BEREAVEMENT

RBA staff may request funeral leave (up to 3 days-not deducted from your PTO) for the death of an immediate family member (spouse, parent, child, foster child, sibling, grandparent, in-laws of the same or step-family of the same). This request should be brought to the Executive Director or designee.

Should you wish to attend the funeral of someone not covered by this policy, PTO can be used to cover your absence if you have time available in your account.

B. FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Eligible employees, as determined by the Executive Director or designee, may be entitled to take unpaid leave pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for the purposes described in 29 U.S.C. § 2612 (as amended). All such leave, including the responsibilities of RBA and its employees related to such leave, is subject to the conditions prescribed in the FMLA and the Department of Labor's regulations implementing the FMLA.

1. Restrictions on FMLA Leave

For additional information regarding FMLA leave, including the circumstances in which such leave may be taken, employees should consult the posted notices. In addition, as permitted by the FMLA, RBA places the following restrictions on eligible employees' use of FMLA leave:

- a. RBA has designated a "rolling" twelve (12) month period for purposes of determining employees' entitlement to FMLA leave. The "rolling" twelve (12) month period is measured backward from the date the employee uses any FMLA leave.
- b. Spouses employed by RBA are permitted to take a combined total of twelve (12) work weeks of FMLA leave during a single twelve (12) month period if the FMLA is: (1) due to the birth of a son or daughter of the employees; (2) due to the placement of a son or daughter with the employees for adoption or foster care; or (3) in order to care for a parent of the eligible employee.
- c. Employees who request leave under this policy based on: (1) their own serious health condition; (2) to care for a parent, spouse, or child's serious health condition; or (3) military caregiver leave, are required to submit a completed medical certification that complies with the requirements of the FMLA. Medical certification forms are available from Human Resources. RBA reserves the right to request a second opinion, at the expense of RBA, to the extent permitted by the FMLA. If the results of the employee's certification differs from the results of RBA's certification, RBA may obtain a third opinion at RBA's expense. RBA also reserves the right to require periodic recertification, to the extent allowed by the FMLA and to contact the certifying medical provider to authenticate or clarify the medical certification in lieu of seeking a second opinion. Separate certification may also be required regarding the nature of the family member's military service and/or the existence of a qualifying exigency, if leave is requested for that purpose.
- d. Except in emergency situations, the employee is required to

provide written notice of the need to take leave to his or her immediate Supervisor not less than thirty (30) days before the date the leave is scheduled to begin. If the leave is to begin in less than thirty (30) days, the employee shall provide such written notice as soon as practicable.

- e. Employees are required to use all accrued sick leave, personal leave, and any other accrued paid leave concurrently with leave provided under the FMLA. Employees with both accrued sick and personal leave are required to use sick leave before using accrued personal leave. The combined paid and unpaid leave cannot exceed the applicable twelve (12) week or twenty-six (26) week maximum FMLA leave time. FMLA leave may run concurrently with a worker's compensation absence if the on-the-job injury or illness also qualifies as a serious health condition under the FMLA.
- f. Subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of applicable plans, eligible employees are entitled under the FMLA to the same health insurance benefits provided by RBA while on FMLA leave to the same extent as if the employee were not on FMLA leave. Employees who contribute toward their health care coverage must continue to make that contribution while on leave, either through payroll deduction (if using paid leave) or by personal check (if using unpaid leave). If the employee fails to return to work after taking family or medical leave, RBA may recover the premiums paid by RBA for group health and life insurance unless the serious health condition of the spouse, child, parent or employee continues or for other circumstances beyond the control of the employee.
- g. Personal and sick leave will not be earned during a period of unpaid FMLA leave. FMLA leave, whether paid or unpaid, will not constitute a break in service for purposes of computing years of service.
- h. RBA requires a medical certificate attesting to the employee's fitness for duty prior to the employee being allowed to return to work. The fitness for duty report must be based on the particular health condition(s) for which the leave was approved and must address whether the employee can perform the essential functions of the job. The Human Resources Coordinator or designee may consult with a physician or other expert to determine reasonable accommodations for any employee who is a "qualified disabled" employee under the Americans with Disabilities Act. If a fitness for duty certification is required, RBA may deny reinstatement until it is provided.
- i. Records of FMLA leave will be kept along with normal personnel records except that any medical record(s) will be maintained separately in accordance with applicable laws.

- 2. Effect on Pension: Employees should contact the PERA or TRA,

as appropriate, for information about how FMLA leave may affect their retirement benefits.

3. Training: Employees who have missed training sessions while on FMLA leave will be given a reasonable opportunity to make them up upon returning to work.

C. INSURANCE

Full-time employees at Rochester Beacon Academy are eligible for health, dental, and life insurance. Insurance policies/plans are subject to change. Benefits are generally explained to employees at the beginning of each academic year and throughout the year should significant changes occur. Participating in this benefit is optional. Employees who have questions about their benefits should consult the Office Manager. This Handbook does not contain the complete terms and/or conditions of RBA's current insurance benefit plans. It is intended only to provide general explanations. If there is ever any conflict between the Staff Handbook and any documents issued by insurance carriers, the carrier's guideline regulations will be regarded as authoritative.

D. JURY DUTY

Any employee who is required to serve as a juror shall be granted a leave of absence with pay while serving in such capacity. An employee cannot receive more than the employee's normal take-home pay as a result of any employer pay supplemented to Jury Duty pay. Jury duty pay must be remitted to RBA. When employees are excused from jury duty during their regular working hours, they are expected to return to work if practicable. If a holiday occurs during jury duty, the employee shall be paid for the holiday.

Insurance benefits will remain in effect for the full term of jury duty leave. Employees must continue to make employee contributions for any insurance that requires payment on their part. Personal leave and sick leave shall continue to accrue during the period of leave. Benefits will continue to accrue as though the employee were actively at work.

E. NURSING MOTHERS

Minnesota's Nursing Mothers, Lactating Employees, and Pregnancy Accommodations law (Minn. Stat. §181.939) and Title IX of the Education Amendments gives pregnant and lactating employees certain legal rights and remedies. RBA will provide a reasonable amount of break time to accommodate an employee desiring to express breast milk for the employee's child, in accordance with and to the extent required by applicable law. The break time may run concurrently with rest and meal periods already provided to the employee.

To provide privacy, RBA will provide employees with the use of a room or location in close proximity to the employee's work area, other than a bathroom or a toilet stall, that is shielded from view, free from intrusion by coworkers and the public, and includes access to an electrical outlet. Employees with questions regarding this policy should consult with the Executive Director.

F. PAID TIME OFF (PTO)

Paid Time Off (PTO)/ Earned Safe & Sick Time (ESST): Except as modified in any individual employment agreement, all RBA full-time employees will accrue at the commencement of employment every month at a rate of one day per month of service up to the equivalent of ten (10) days (or 80 hours) per academic school year. The first 48 hours of PTO accrued shall be designated as Earned Sick and Safe Time (ESST) pursuant to Minnesota Statute and may be used as accrued for any of the purposes, and for any of the increments of time, identified in Minn. Stat. § 181.9447, using the definition of family set forth in Minn. Stat. § 181.9445. PTO accrued that is not designated as ESST may be taken for illness or other personal time away from work as full day(s) or half days.

For use of ESST and PTO, employees shall comply with the notice provisions of Minnesota Statute and Academy policy. Employees are entitled to ESST in accordance with Minnesota Statutes §§ 181.9445-181.9448.

PTO cannot be scheduled for the first or last two weeks of a given school year for reasons other than ESST. Any unused PTO/ESST days will be carried over into the following school year, not to exceed eighty (80) hours total.

Any unused PTO days (including unused ESST) will not be paid out to the employee upon resignation or termination of employment. PTO does not address mandated time off such as Jury/Witness Duty.

Retaliation against employees who request or use ESST is prohibited, and each employee has the right to file a complaint or bring a civil action if ESST is denied by the Academy or the employee is retaliated against for requesting or using ESST.

G. PARENTING LEAVE

Parenting Leave, as provided for in Minnesota law, including section 181.941, as amended, grants qualifying employees unpaid leave of up to twelve (12) weeks for: (1) a biological or adoptive parent in conjunction with the birth or adoption of a child; or (2) a female employee for prenatal care, or incapacity due to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related health condition; (3) foster children. Parental Leave is considered to be taken simultaneously with FMLA leave. If leave is taken due to the birth or adoption of a child, the leave must begin within twelve (12) months of the birth or adoption, unless the child remains in the hospital after the mother has been discharged, in which case the leave must begin within twelve (12) months after the child leaves the hospital.

H. TIME OFF TO VOTE

Employees who desire to vote in any election, as defined by Minnesota Statutes, section 204C.04, as amended, shall be granted paid leave in order to appear at the polling place, cast a ballot, and return to work on the day of that election or during the period allowed for voting in person before election day.

I. UNPAID LEAVE OF ABSENCE

At times, an employee may request a Leave of Absence from work without pay for professional or other reasons. A Leave of Absence may be approved for up to twelve (12) months or increments in between. Board approval is required, and the Board may approve this request, at its sole discretion. For Leave of Absence days taken without pay, deductions will be based on the average daily pay for the employee. During a Leave of Absence, the school will pay no benefits. Any employee may elect to continue coverage by group medical insurance while on personal leave at his/her own expense. No contribution will be made to the pension program during this period, nor will benefits be given for determining retirement benefits, vacation, sick leave, or salary. However, when a Leave of Absence is taken in conjunction with a planned short-term disability while the employee is on illness or injury leave, benefits will continue as per the employment agreement. The approval of Leave of Absence of more than thirty (30) days is not a guarantee that a position will be available to the employee when he/she returns from such a Leave of Absence. Upon return from such Leave of Absence, the employee will be placed in either the same or comparable position at the same salary. In the event that the same or comparable position is not available, other positions will be reviewed. If a position cannot be found, the employee will be placed on layoff status.

J. WORKER'S COMPENSATION

A work-related injury may be covered by the Worker's Compensation Program. No matter how insignificant an injury or disease may seem, it must be reported to the Executive Director or designee immediately so the appropriate documentation can be completed.

VI. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Licensed Staff Salary Information

Compensation: 2025-2027, salary increase reflects the surrounding community schools; salaries are based on 179 days of work.

BA STEPS

Step 179D

1	\$44,795
2	\$45,820
3	\$46,845
4	\$47,870
5	\$48,995
6	\$49,920
7	\$50,945
8	\$51,970
9	\$52,995
10	\$54,020
11	\$55,045
12	\$56,070
13	\$57,095
14	\$58,120
15	\$59,145

MA STEPS

Step 179D

1	\$53,039
2	\$54,064
3	\$55,089
4	\$56,114
5	\$57,139
6	\$58,164
7	\$59,189
8	\$60,214
9	\$61,239
10	\$62,264
11	\$63,289
12	\$64,314
13	\$65,339
14	\$66,364
15	\$67,389

APPENDIX B: Paraprofessional Compensation

Paraprofessional Compensation. While this Handbook is in effect, the paraprofessional will earn a starting hourly wage of \$21.50/hr for 7.25 hours of work per day for the period August 2025 – June 2026. 179 days of work.

Para Salary Schedule

0-1 years	\$21.50
2-3 years	\$22.25
4-5+ years	\$23.00

APPENDIX C: Policy References

All policies adopted by the RBA Board of Directors are incorporated into this policy by reference and all RBA staff members are responsible for understanding and complying with all applicable policies. For further information on items mentioned above, please visit our website at rochesterbeaconacademy.org for expanded policy details.

Policy #401: At-Will Employment
#404: Employment Background Checks
#406: Public and Private Personnel Data
#409: Code of Conduct for Employees
#412: Expenses and Reimbursement
#413: Harassment and Violence
#417: Drug Free Workplace
#420: Mandated Reporting
#428: Paid Time Off
#506: Student Discipline
#509: Admissions and Lottery
#514: Bullying Prohibition
#515: Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records
#517: Removal of a Student with IEP
#522: Title IX
#524: Internet, Technology, and Cell Phone Acceptable Use and Safety

APPENDIX D: Policy No. 428: Paid Time Off

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish processes and procedures regarding paid time off ("PTO") for employees of Rochester Beacon Academy ("RBA").

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

RBA provides eligible full-time employees with paid time off from work during the academic year. PTO is accrued at the commencement of employment every month at a rate of one day per month of service up to the equivalent ten (10) days (or 80 hours) per academic school year.

III. DESIGNATION OF PTO AS EARNED SICK AND SAFE TIME

The first 48 hours of PTO accrued shall be designated as Earned Sick and Safe Time ("ESST") pursuant to Minnesota Statute and may be used as accrued for any of the purposes, and for any of the increments of time, identified in Minn. Stat. § 181.9447, using the definition of family set forth in Minn. Stat. § 181.9445. PTO accrued that is not designated as ESST may be taken for illness or other personal time away from work as full day(s) or half days.

A. Earning PTO/ESST

PTO/ESST accrues on all hours worked including overtime hours for non-exempt employees. PTO/ESST shall not be earned by any employee while on non-pay status.

B. Managing PTO/ESST

Employees are responsible for managing their own PTO/ESST hours. RBA's executive team will record and track accrual and PTO/ESST balances. While employees may use all of their accrued PTO/ESST, it is recommended that they monitor their usage and balance to accommodate personal needs or illness.

IV. USING PTO/ESST

Employees may only utilize PTO/ESST as it is accrued. If an employee needs to be absent before accruing sufficient PTO/ESST to cover the absence, the time is not covered by PTO/ESST and will be unpaid.

A. Requests for PTO/ESST Use

Employees shall request PTO/ESST from their supervisor as soon as practicable if the need for use is unforeseeable. If the need for use is foreseeable, employees must provide their supervisor with a minimum of seven (7) days advance notice in accordance with RBA's request procedure outlined in the Google PTO Request Form. Employees are required to provide reasonable documentation for PTO/ESST absences exceeding three consecutive scheduled work days in accordance with Minnesota Statute.

B. Granting PTO

For non-ESST PTO, approval of requests will be based on operational needs and adequate staffing levels of at least 90% on site to ensure continuity of education and safety for both students and staff.

For non-ESST PTO, scheduled PTO will not be approved in conjunction with black-out dates, unless an exception has been made at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Black-out dates are as follows:

First two (2) weeks of school	Last two (2) weeks of school
Staff Development Days	MEA Break
Thanksgiving Break	Christmas – New Year’s Break
Spring Break	Farch Break

C. Use It or Lose It

Accumulated accrual PTO/ESST during current academic school year and / or Banked PTO/ESST will be forfeited by the staff upon resignation, termination, or discharge.

V. APPROVED UNPAID ABSENCES

Unpaid time off should be the exception and only used in extenuating circumstances where PTO/ESST has been exhausted.

RBA will only allow up to two (2) days in an academic year. The two (2) days may not be taken consecutively or in conjunction with black-out dates. An employee with PTO/ESST balance requesting the same day will be granted prior to the employee requesting the time away unpaid.

Employees who exhaust PTO/ESST before taking pre-scheduled and approved PTO/ESST will need to have the request reapproved by the Executive Director.

VI. WORKER'S COMPENSATION

Absence due to injury incurred in the course of the staff's employment shall not be charged against the employee's PTO/ESST accrual balance if workers' compensation insurance pays for the days absent.

VII. BEREAVEMENT

Employees will be granted up to three (3) days paid approved absence separate from ESST due to the death of immediate or spouse's family. The immediate family will include parents, siblings, children, grandparents, grandchildren, mother-in-law, father-in-law, and guardian.

Additional bereavement days are to be considered as a scheduled absence and employees can use accrual PTO or ESST balance (should it meet the qualifying statutory conditions) for such purposes.

VIII. PTO/ESST CARRYOVER YEAR TO YEAR

An employee may carry over up to a maximum of eighty (80) hours of their unused PTO/ESST from year to year. Year to year shall be the academic school year. The first partial year of employment shall constitute a year for the purposes of this policy. Documentation for ESST usages shall meet Minnesota statutory requirements outlined in Minn. Stat. § 181.9447, subd. 3. For non-ESST PTO use due to illness, an employee must submit a medical certificate from a qualified physician within fourteen (14) days, as evidence of illness greater than three (3) days to the Executive Director. At the close of the academic school year, accrued PTO/ESST hours rolling into the Banked PTO/ESST will be recorded and the employee will date and initial a form indicating the number of PTO/ESST hours carried over which they have available.

PTO/ESST will be forfeited upon resignation, termination, or discharge from RBA.

IX. UNSCHEDULED ABSENCES FROM WORK

An absence from work without prior approval is an unexcused absence absent extraordinary circumstances making prior notice impracticable.

The chart below outlines progressive corrective action that will be taken for unscheduled attendance occurrences where employees also fail to provide reasonable documentation in accordance with Minnesota Statute.

Number of Unscheduled Absences	Corrective Action
1	Informal Coaching
2	Notification
3	Written Warning
4	Termination

APPENDIX E: Signature Page

Employee Handbook Sign Off

I, _____, hereby acknowledge that I have received, understand, and agree to abide by the contents of the Rochester Beacon Academy Employee Handbook.

Signature

Date