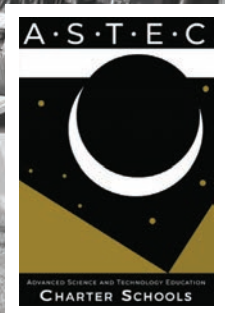


**2022  
2023**

# Employee Handbook

ASTEC CHARTER SCHOOLS





# Welcome!

## A MESSAGE FROM ASTEC'S CEO AND SUPERINTENDENT



*August 2022*

*On behalf of the Board of Directors of ASTEC Charter Schools, its administration and staff we welcome you and wish you every success this year. We believe each employee contributes directly to our scholars and to the growth and success of ASTEC. We hope you will take pride in being a member of our team.*

*We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding. Again, welcome!*

*Sincerely,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shannon Grimes".

*Shannon Grimes, M.Ed.  
Superintendent  
ASTEC Charter Schools*

*“We believe each employee contributes directly to our scholars and to the growth and success of ASTEC.”*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Freda Deskin".

*Freda Deskin, Ph.D.  
CEO/Founder  
ASTEC Charter Schools*



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
--------------------------	----------

<b>Description of the Organization.....</b>	<b>1</b>
---	----------

ASTECC Charter Schools .....	1
Facilities and Location.....	1
The History of ASTEC Schools .....	2
What is a Charter School?.....	3
Why Are Charter Schools So Popular? .....	3
How Are Charter Schools Funded? .....	4
How Do Charter Schools Manage If They Are Under Funded? .....	4
Facilities and Other Start-Up and Capital Costs .....	4
Operational Costs .....	4
History of Charter Schools .....	4
Charter School Benefits.....	5
ASTECC Schools' Philosophy .....	5
Governance .....	6
Board of Directors Meeting Schedule.....	7
Administrative Hierarchy.....	8
Customer Service .....	8

<b>Human Resources and Personnel.....</b>	<b>9</b>
---	----------

Employment Applications.....	9
Employment Reference Checks.....	10
Meeting With Human Resources .....	10
Employee Background Checks .....	10
Equal Opportunity Employer.....	11
HIPAA Health Information Privacy Policy .....	11
FERPA Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.....	12
Immigration Law Compliance .....	12
Employee Relations.....	12
Hospitality Dues .....	13
Teacher Certification .....	13
Conflicts of Interest.....	13
Outside Employment/Other Personal Activities.....	15
Vendor Agreements .....	16
“Essential Workers” .....	18
Contract Periods.....	18
Contracted Days.....	18
Work and Work Schedules .....	19
Timekeeping.....	19
Attendance and Punctuality.....	20
Scanning In and Out .....	21
Lunch and Lunch Schedules.....	22
Reassignments and Transfers.....	22
Professional Development .....	22
Access to Personnel Files .....	24
Personal Data Changes .....	24
Performance Reviews .....	24
Incentive/Bonus Pay .....	26
Extra Duty Pay.....	26
Faculty Duty Assignments.....	26
Employee Recognition and Appreciation .....	26

**End of Contract Year.....27**

Separation of Employment ..... 27  
Offboarding and Procedures..... 28  
Letters of Reference..... 29  
Required Reports to the State Board for Educator Certification ..... 29  
Deadlines ..... 29  
Pay Schedule ..... 29  
Salary Administration ..... 30  
Vesting..... 30  
Withholding of Salaries ..... 31  
Pay Deductions and Set-offs ..... 31  
Employee Benefits ..... 31  
School Meals..... 32  
2021-2022 Holidays..... 32  
Health Insurance..... 33  
Flexible Spending Account (Medical)..... 33  
Flexible Spending Account (Dependent Care) ..... 34  
Liability Insurance..... 34  
Workers' Compensation Insurance..... 34  
Unemployment Compensation Insurance ..... 35  
Business Travel Expenses..... 35  
Leaves and Absences..... 36  
Unanticipated and Anticipated Leave ..... 37  
ASTECSchools PTO/Contract Day Schedule..... 37  
Blackout Dates ..... 38  
Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)..... 38  
Bereavement Leave ..... 39  
Military Leave ..... 39  
Administrative Leave ..... 40  
Court Summons for Jury Duty or as a Witness..... 40  
Voting Leave ..... 40

**Complaints and Grievances ..... 41**

Personnel-Management Relations ..... 41  
General Grievance Procedures ..... 41  
Progressive Discipline ..... 42

**Employee Conduct and Welfare..... 43**

Business Ethics and Conduct..... 43  
Standards of Conduct ..... 44  
Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Educators\* ..... 44  
Employee Involvement ..... 46  
Workplace Etiquette..... 46  
Honoring Diversity ..... 47  
English Spoken in the Workplace ..... 47  
Visitors in the Workplace ..... 47  
Personal Relationships in the Workplace ..... 48  
Professional Appearance ..... 48  
Harassment ..... 50  
Sexual Harassment/Sexual Abuse ..... 50  
Employee-to-Employee Sexual Harassment ..... 51  
Complaint Procedure ..... 51  
Employee-to-Scholar or Scholar-to-Employee ..... 52  
Reporting Requirements..... 52  
Investigations ..... 52

Scholar-to-Scholar.....	53
When Sexual Harassment Escalates to Sexual Assault .....	53
Employee Privacy and Protection .....	54
Assault and Battery on School Employees .....	54
Workplace Monitoring .....	54
Cameras.....	55
Tobacco Use.....	55
Drug and Alcohol Use.....	55
Medical Marijuana .....	56
Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing.....	56
Employee Fraud.....	56
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect.....	57
Gifts and Favors .....	57
Private Tutoring.....	58
Employee Arrests and Convictions .....	58
Possession of Firearms and Weapons .....	58
Copyright Materials.....	58

**Financial Accounting and Procurement ..... 58**

Finances.....	58
Proper Accounting .....	59
Bonding.....	60
Purchasing Procedures.....	60
Scholar Activities Funds Management .....	61
The Use and Sale of Tickets for Events/Activities .....	62
Development .....	62
Media/Public Relations .....	63
Fundraising .....	63
The ASTEC Fund .....	64
Solicitation.....	64

**ASTEC Communications.....65**

General Communications.....	65
Correspondence Clearing House.....	65
Social Media, Newsletter and Web Postings via GroupMe.....	66
Digital Media* .....	66
Faculty-Sponsored Scholar Activities.....	67
Sponsorships.....	67
Sponsor “Plan of Work” Binders.....	67
Field Trips or Sponsored Activities .....	68
Activities Fundraising.....	68
Celebrations.....	69
Health and Wellness .....	69

**Technology ..... 70**

Acceptable Use Policy.....	70
Email Communications.....	70
Internet Usage .....	71
Cyber Security .....	72
Google Workspace .....	72
Software .....	73
Computers In The Classroom.....	73
Computer Vandalism .....	74
Social Media Policy.....	75

**Safety .....75**

Safety Certifications ..... 75  
Student Information ..... 76  
Scholar Activities in the Parking Lot ..... 76  
Live Animals in School ..... 76  
Goggles and Eye Safety ..... 76  
Emergency Closings ..... 77  
Asbestos Management and Inspection Plan ..... 77  
School Trauma Team ..... 77  
Student Admits and Hall Passes ..... 77  
Classroom Safety ..... 78  
Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP) ..... 78  
AIDS Prevention Plan ..... 78  
Diabetes ..... 78  
Meningitis ..... 79  
Vaccinations ..... 79  
Scholar Issues ..... 79  
Scholar Guidance ..... 80  
In-School Detention ..... 80  
Scholar Testing ..... 80  
Overall Safety ..... 80  
Introduction to the Department of Public Safety ..... 80  
The Mission of ASTEC Charter Schools Department of Public Safety ..... 81  
Facilities and School Property ..... 82  
Return of Property ..... 82  
Technology Requests ..... 82  
Maintenance Requests ..... 83  
Restitution for Damages or Loss ..... 83  
Walls, Floors and Sinks ..... 84  
Use of Telephones ..... 84  
Special Phone Considerations ..... 84  
Use of Equipment and Vehicles ..... 85  
Use of Buildings ..... 86  
Housekeeping ..... 86  
Building Temperatures ..... 87  
Space Heaters ..... 87  
Candy, Pop, and Gum in Buildings ..... 87  
Air Fresheners, Candles, and Candle Warmers ..... 88  
Lamps ..... 88  
Classroom Windows ..... 88

**General Policies ..... 88**

Employee Parking ..... 88  
Notary ..... 88  
Keeping it Green ..... 88  
Lesson Plans and Pacing Guides ..... 89  
Lesson Plan Packets ..... 89  
Grading Policy ..... 89  
Grades Pre-K - 5 Standards Based Grading ..... 90  
Middle and High School Hybrid Grading Model ..... 90  
Homework Policy ..... 91  
Homework Objectives ..... 91  
Student Discipline Model ..... 92  
ASTEC Discipline Policy ..... 92  
School Handbooks ..... 93



ASTECSchools Leadership ..... 97

PANDEMIC POLICY ..... 99

Drug, Alcohol, and Contraband Workplace Policy ..... 101

Drug, Alcohol and Contraband Policy Agreement.....105

EMPLOYEE DRUG AND ALCOHOL TEST CONSENT.....105

Social and Digital Media Policy..... 107

Academic Dishonesty Policy.....111

Student Technology & Network Acceptable Use Policy ..... 113

Anti-Bullying Plan ..... 117

Bullying/Harassment Reporting Form.....125

Information About Meningitis.....127

\*\*LOCK DOWN\*\* .....129

\*\*INTRUDER ALERT\*\* ..... 131

\*\*EVACUATION\*\* ..... 133

\*\*SHELTER\*\* ..... 135

\*\*SHELTER PLAN\*\* .....137

\*\*BOMB THREAT OR TERRORIST THREAT\*\* .....139

Transportation Policy and Questions.....143

Exceptional Phone Courtesy Protocols.....145

Transportation Policy and Questions.....147

ASTECSchools ..... 149

TITLE IX - NON-DISCRIMINATION / CIVIL RIGHTS..... 151

Religious Exemption Attestation for COVID-19 Vaccine .....153

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION REQUEST FORM.....155

REQUEST FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION.....157

VACCINATION EXEMPTION.....157



# Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful year. Not all ASTEC Schools' (ASTEC) policies and procedures are included. Those that are, have been summarized where possible. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be sent to the attention of the office of the CEO of ASTEC Schools.

This handbook is a guide to the policies of ASTEC Schools. Be advised that the Board of Directors for ASTEC Schools may elect to amend or update these policies and procedures at any time. Their amendments shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the updates and/or changes. For more information, employees may confer with their supervisor. This handbook may also be found in Google Docs.

### \*\*\*PANDEMIC IMPACT\*\*\*

The worldwide pandemic of the COVID-19 virus will alter some of the policies and/or procedures in this handbook. ASTEC Charter Schools will take its direction from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), The Oklahoma Health Authority, the state and federal government and, where appropriate, the ASTEC Governing Board of Directors regarding alterations to these policies. Please refer to the ASTEC Pandemic Policy and the ASTEC Stages of Return in the appendices of this handbook.

Only the Chief Executive Officer of ASTEC Schools, with the approval of the Board of Directors, has the authority to adopt or amend any revisions to the policies in this handbook. Supervisors are responsible for making decisions that are in compliance with the policies of the Board of Directors. Faculty, staff and administrators are responsible for complying with the Board of Directors' Employees' Policy Handbook and abiding by the policies set forth.

# Description of the Organization

## ASTEC Charter Schools

ASTEC Elementary School:	Grades PreK-5th
ASTEC Middle School:	Grades 6th-8th
ASTEC High School:	Grades 9th-12th

## Facilities and Location

ASTEC Charter Schools are located in two locations. The mailing address for all school sites is:

ASTEC Charter Schools, 2401 NW 23rd Street, Ste. 39A, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73107 Phone: (405) 947-6272, then press #1 for Elementary, #2 for Middle, #3 for High School or #4 for the Central Office. Fax: (405) 947-0035

- Website:** [www.astec-kt12.com](http://www.astec-kt12.com)
- Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/ASTECCharters>
- Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/ASTECCharter/>
- GroupMe:** Sign up for GroupMe account then use this URL: [https://groupme.com/join\\_group/52323065/cBioyhI7](https://groupme.com/join_group/52323065/cBioyhI7) to connect to ASTEC's group.
- Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/asteccharterschools>

*ASTEC Schools is a tuition-free, public school of choice serving the inner city youth of Oklahoma City. ASTEC is accredited by the Oklahoma State Department of Education and authorized by Oklahoma State University College of Education, Health and Aviation.*

ASTECC Elementary School is located two miles south of the main campus at 2600 General Pershing Boulevard.

ASTECC Middle School is located on the east end of Shepherd (mall) Center on NW 23rd Street.

ASTECC High School is located on the east end of the Shepherd Center, just west of the middle school. Access to the high school office entrance may be gained outside Entrance B on the south side of the mall. The high school office employee entrance is on the inside of the Shepherd Center Entrance B.

The high school student entrance is on the south side of the Center's parking lot and beneath the school sign.

ASTECC Central Administration is located inside the Center, just down the mall hallway on the west side of the High School, in Suite 39A.

Athletic activities are located in a gymnasium nearby. The regulation-sized soccer field and track is located next to ASTECC Elementary School at 2600 General Pershing Boulevard.

## **The History of ASTECC Schools**

The year 1986 proved to be the dawning of "The ASTECC Vision." With no capital and limited funds, Dr. Freda Deskin began the program currently known as the Advanced Science and Technology Education Charter ("ASTECC") Schools. Dr. Deskin began with a few summer camps while she was a faculty member at the University of Oklahoma and later as a dean at Oklahoma City University. The programs quickly grew and expanded through the summer and into year-round, comprehensive educational entities.

In 1999, the Oklahoma State Legislature created the Oklahoma Charter School Law, allowing Oklahoma to join many other states who have had charter schools since 1991.

*Since 2014, Oklahoma State University's College of Education, Health and Aviation has been ASTECC's authorizing sponsor. This partnership allows for multiple opportunities for scholars and the school in general.*

Dr. Deskin became aware of the lack of opportunities and choices of inner-city youth and their families. With personal funds from savings, retirement and the sale of her home, Dr. Deskin began the process of creating a charter school in Oklahoma City. On April 9, 2000, ASTECC Middle School became the first "start-up" charter school in Oklahoma.

As a public school teacher, Dr. Deskin had long been concerned with the increasing need to better prepare all youth for responsible citizenship and success in the workforce of tomorrow. She received several teaching awards, including "Teacher-of-the-Year" on many occasions and "Educator of the Year," through a nomination of her administrators. Dr. Deskin received the University of Oklahoma's College of Education's Career Achievement Award, the University of Oklahoma's Outstanding Alumni Award and is a member of the Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame. In 2012, she was one of seven nominated for the Brock International Prize in Education. Dr. Deskin was named one of the most influential educators in Oklahoma by The Journal Record in 2021.

In 1985, Dr. Deskin was selected as an Oklahoma finalist in NASA's "Teacher-in-Space" program. She and her colleagues were given the official title of "Space Ambassadors" and received training at various NASA centers, including the Johnson Space Center in Houston. Dr. Deskin has more than 2,500 hours of training in aerospace science and is a member of the Women in Aerospace National Hall of Fame.

After the Challenger accident, "Teacher-in-Space" merged with the National Challenger Center for Space Science Education, a foundation established by the family members of the Challenger crew. NASA and the Challenger Center continued to work closely, providing materials and on-going training for the Space Ambassadors. Dr. Deskin's expertise in curriculum and

instruction was an asset to the Challenger Center, as she served in the capacity of curriculum developer, advisor, consultant and National Faculty member for the entity.

Dr. Deskin has developed curriculum, curriculum guides and handbooks for NASA, Epcot Center, Microsoft, The Wright Group Publishing, the Experimental Aircraft Association and many other organizations. She has presented thousands of workshops for teachers, nonprofits and the private sector throughout the United States and abroad.

Dr. Deskin does not believe in taking shortcuts or accepting mediocrity. She and her staff continue the dream of Christa McAuliffe and the Challenger crew, using evidence-based learning experiences for all students, while encouraging them to “reach for the stars.” ASTEC applies technology within an integrated, liberal-arts curriculum.

Charter schools require an authorizing sponsor, though charters operate independently with their own boards of directors and operations. From 2000 to 2014, ASTEC Schools was authorized/sponsored by the Oklahoma City Public Schools. Since 2014, Oklahoma State University’s College of Education, Health and Aviation has been ASTEC’s authorizing sponsor. This partnership allows for multiple opportunities for scholars, for teachers and for the school in general.

## **What is a Charter School?**

Charter schools are tuition-free, innovative public schools of choice that are accountable for scholar results. They are designed to deliver programs tailored to educational excellence and to fit the needs of the communities in which they serve.

Charter schools are representative of the fastest and most successful educational reforms in the country. The first charter school opened its doors in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1991.

Based on the belief that America’s public schools should meet standards of excellence and be held accountable, parents are lining up to choose these innovative public schools that can meet the individual needs of their children.

Charter schools operate on three basic principles:

- ***Choice:*** Charter schools give families an opportunity to pick the school most suitable for their child’s educational well being. Teachers choose to create and work at schools where they directly shape the best working and learning environment for their scholars and themselves. Likewise, charter sponsors choose to authorize schools that are likely to best serve the needs of the scholars in a particular community.
- ***Accountability:*** Charter schools are judged on how well they meet the scholar achievement goals established by their charter contract. Charter schools must also show that they can perform according to rigorous fiscal and managerial standards. If a charter school cannot perform up to the established standards, it will be closed.
- ***Freedom:*** While charter schools must adhere to the same major state and federal laws and regulations as all other public schools, they are freed from some of the red tape that often diverts a school’s energy and resources away from educational excellence.

Some charter school programs focus on the basics — reading, writing and the traditional school subjects some children struggle with. Other schools have special arts or music programs. Some charters look just like other public schools. They also offer dropout prevention programs, adult education programs, serve Head Start and daycare needs, and work with children who want to go to college.

## **Why Are Charter Schools So Popular?**

- ***Educational quality:*** The primary reason for charter schools is to make sure every child has access to a quality education. With the freedom and choice to do so, charters set high standards and must meet them to remain a school. Traditional public schools remain no matter how they perform.
- ***Focus on the Scholars:*** Perhaps most important, a charter school is set up around the needs of children. The focus should always be on the children, and programs should be designed to help children succeed, no matter what it takes.
- ***Safer, stronger communities:*** Charter schools typically engage local businesses and other organizations to help provide resources and services to the school and its families. Many charter schools create a community hub, whether it is turning an inner-city ghetto into a bustling and safer neighborhood or bringing families in rural America together.

## How Are Charter Schools Funded?

Charter schools in Oklahoma are public schools. Most charters are created by groups of educators, parents and community leaders. Some have been converted from existing public schools. A small number of charter schools were once private schools. Like district public schools, charters are funded according to enrollment (also called average daily attendance, or ADA), and receive funding from the district and the state according to the number of scholars attending. However, in a number of states, including Oklahoma, they do not receive the full equivalent of their district counterparts.

Unlike traditional district schools, most charter schools do not receive funding to cover the costs of securing a facility. “Conversion” charters (schools that convert to a charter) begin with established capital, namely the school and its facilities. A few states provide capital funding to start-up schools, and some are able to take over available unused district space, but most must rely on other independent means. Recent federal legislation provides funding to help charters with start-up costs, but the task remains imposing.

## How Do Charter Schools Manage If They Are Under Funded?

“Necessity, the mother of invention,” is the inspiring innovation.

## Facilities and Other Start-Up and Capital Costs

Many charter schools improvise by converting spaces such as rented retail facilities, former churches, lofts, and warehouses into the classroom, cafeteria, assembly, and gym space, supplemented by the local YMCA, the public library, and park. Once they are more established, they are able to acquire loans and move to a more suitable or permanent facility. State legislation and loan agencies are beginning to tackle this problem by providing start-up funding and providing charter schools with the information needed to obtain favorable loans. The same is true of capital needs beyond bricks and mortar. School founders have managed on an ad hoc basis with the help of private funds or alternative credit routes, and especially the sweat equity of enthusiastic volunteers, parents, and local professionals.

## Operational Costs

Charter schools receive a portion of the state and district-operating funds generally based on scholar enrollment counts. The portion is determined by the state legislature, and, in some states, is negotiated in the charter contract. For example, a state’s charter legislation determines that a percentage or up to a percentage of operating funds follow the scholars. The actual acquisition of that funding, however, falls upon the charter school operators – sometimes no small task.

ASTECS supplements its budget through maintaining a number and variety of community partnerships and loyal contributors.

## History of Charter Schools

The charter school movement has roots in a number of other reform ideas, from alternative schools to site-based management, magnet schools, public school choice, privatization, and community-parental empowerment. The term “charter” may have originated in the 1970s when New England educator, Ray Budde, suggested that small groups of teachers be given contracts or “charters” by their local school boards to explore new approaches. Albert Shanker, former president of the AFT, then publicized the idea, suggesting local boards could charter an entire school with union and teacher approval. In the late 1980s, Philadelphia started a number of schools-within-schools and called them “charters.” Some of them were schools of choice. The idea was further refined in Minnesota where charter schools were developed according to three basic values: opportunity, choice, and responsibility for results. In 1991, Minnesota passed the first charter school law, with California following suit in 1992. By 1995, 19 states had signed laws allowing for the creation of charter schools, and by 2003 that number increased to 40 states, including Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. Charter schools are one of the fastest-growing innovations in education policy, enjoying broad bipartisan support from governors, state legislators,

*Oklahoma Charter Schools*

*312 Charter schools with  
more than 53,000 students  
attending as of 2021*

and past and present secretaries of education. In his 1997 State of the Union Address, former President Clinton called for the creation of 3,000 charter schools by the year 2002. In 2002, President Bush called for \$200 million to support charter schools. His proposed budget called for another \$100 million for a new Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities Programs. Since 1994, the U. S. Department of Education has provided grants to support states' charter school efforts, starting with \$6 million in the fiscal year 1995.

*Since the first charter school law was passed in Minnesota in 1991, nearly every state has approved charter schools as a choice for a free public education alternative.*

- *Total number of charter school states: 44 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico*
- *Total number of schools in operation: Nearly 7,500*
- *Total number of scholars enrolled: More than 3.3 million*
- *Total number of charter school teachers: at least 219,000*

\*National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2018

The U.S. Department of Education strongly supports the charter school movement.

## **Charter School Benefits**

According to the Oklahoma Charter Schools Act (Section 42.12) passed in 1999, the purpose of charter schools is to:

1. Improve scholar learning.
2. Increase learning opportunities for scholars.
3. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
4. Provide additional academic choices for parents and scholars.
5. Require the measurement of scholar learning and create different and innovative forms of measuring scholar learning.
6. Establish new forms of accountability for schools.
7. Create new professional opportunities for teachers and administrators including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.

## **ASTEC Schools' Philosophy**

*We believe . . .*

1. Future generations of young people will be the stewards of our community, nation, and world in increasingly uncertain and critical times.
2. The present and future well being of our society requires an educated, involved, and caring citizenry with good moral character.
3. The character and conduct of our youth reflect the character and conduct of society; therefore, we all have a responsibility to teach, model and promote the development of strong character and moral decision-making.
4. That Rigor, Relevance and Relationships are the three pillars of successful teaching.
5. Quality performance must be expected of all scholars, employees and community.
6. Technology is a basic element of education.
7. An educational environment must exist which supports respect for oneself and others.
8. Understanding and valuing human diversity enriches individuals and society.
9. Constant change creates the need for lifelong learning.
10. High achievement will evolve from high expectations.
11. Mastery Based Learning gives scholars, parents and other stakeholders the best information regarding a scholar's achievement.

## Mission Statement

*The Mission of the Advanced Science and Technology Education Charter (ASTECC) Schools is to be the leader in empowering and inspiring learners to their highest potential.*

## Vision Statement

*The Vision of ASTECC is to have learners interacting in a classroom that focuses on the Core Values of Content, Character, Competency and Community. Content and instruction is research-based and integrates math, science and technology into a liberal arts curriculum. Each teacher uses an experiential teaching model that crosses subject matter boundaries. Teachers and scholars explore the relevance of the material through classroom simulations.*

*The Character traits of Integrity, Compassion, Passion and Responsibility are essential elements for successful living. These traits are modeled by all employees and are recognized and rewarded when achieved by learners. The Competency skills of Teamwork, Communication and Critical/Creative Thinking are embedded in the experiential teaching model of ASTECC. The value of Community expresses itself when the scholars see their place and value in the unique communities of school, home, neighborhood, city, state, nation and world. The idea presented is that good citizenship in all these areas is essential for a safe world.*

## Governance

*\*Note: The information in this section was obtained directly from Fisher Howe at the National Center for Nonprofit Boards in Washington, D. C.*

The Board of Directors is responsible; the CEO assists.

- Chief Executive Officer - the Board of Directors selects, compensates, evaluates, delegates all management responsibilities, and if necessary, dismisses the CEO.
- Mission - the Board of Directors defines the organization's mission – its purposes, programs, priorities – and its vision – achieved through periodic strategic planning.
- Finances - the Board of Directors assures financial responsibility and accountability by:
  - Approving the BUDGET, and overseeing adherence
  - Contracting for and approving an annual independent AUDIT
  - Controlling INVESTMENTS of capital funds
- Program Oversight and Support - the Board of Directors oversees (not manages) and evaluates programs; supports the staff; and acts as an advocate in the community.
- Fundraising - the Board of Directors contributes personally, on an annual basis, as well as assists in raising money for the benefit of the school.
- Board of Directors' Performance - Directors ensure the fulfillment of the aforementioned responsibilities, and maintain their own effectiveness through a strong organization.



## Board of Directors Meeting Schedule

The ASTEC Board of Directors meets in the Central Office Conference Room on the 4th Monday of July, September, November, January, March and May at 5:45 p.m. The November meeting is the third Monday of the month. Board committees meet informally with designated staff in the months between board meetings. Additional meetings are scheduled as needed at the discretion of the Board Chair. Please note that dates and times are subject to change. Meetings are posted on our website and on the exterior doors of each school site, and are filed with the Oklahoma County Clerk. The exterior door to the Central Office is unlocked. However, interior access to the Board Room is locked for security purposes. If you wish to attend a meeting, simply ring the bell in the lobby and someone will take you to the conference room.

All meetings are open to the public. Oklahoma law permits the Board of Directors to go into a closed session when certain confidential topics are discussed. Closed sessions may occur for such things as discussing prospective gifts or donations, real property acquisition, legal issues and issues that may violate the privacy of an individual or group.

Guests wishing to speak on non-personnel matters must read the ASTEC “Rules of Engagement” document when they sign up in advance through the Central Office.

## Roles & Responsibilities

*\*Note: The information in this section was obtained directly from Fisher Howe at the National Center for Nonprofit Boards in Washington, D.C.*

ASTEC’s management philosophy is based on the same principles as all our programs. We strive toward Covey’s “Principle Centered Leadership.” Our decisions must always be “principle-centered.” We strive to set our compasses on “true North.” Our “true North” includes our mission, vision, goals, and objectives. We strive to model the behaviors we expect of our scholars and participants.

**Content:** We are all responsible to continue to learn and grow in our position, remaining current in our fields of expertise.

**Competency:** All employees should be leaders who focus on **teamwork, communication, critical thinking and creative thinking.**

**Character:** We should each strive to practice **integrity, compassion, passion and responsibility** in our interactions with one another.

**Community:** Our leadership team values service and leadership as we build a community of committed employees.

The three ASTEC Schools’ sites operate with a common Central Office and executive administrative staff. The employees from all sites are expected to work together as a team along with administration to make decisions that are not biased toward any one site. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that the vision of the school is reflected in its curriculum and instruction, and in its expectations of employees and scholars and to oversee the school finances.

### **The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:**

- Investments • Vision and Direction of the School • Procurement • Budgets • Community Partners • Special Projects
- Fundraising/Development • Professional Development • Marketing and Media • Non-voting member of the school’s foundation, The Fund • Oversight of Curriculum and Instruction

### **The Superintendent is responsible for:**

- Human Resources • Finance Office • Budgets • Headmasters • Facilities • Child Nutrition Services
- School Discipline and Safety • Asset Management • Community Relations • Instructional Technology

### **Elementary Headmaster is responsible for the elementary school:**

- All Elementary Faculty and Staff • Discipline Oversight • Curriculum and Instruction

### **Middle and High School Headmaster is responsible for:**

- Faculty • School Secretaries • Discipline Oversight • School Support Staff • Deans of Instruction

### **The Dean of Students is responsible for:**

- Student Discipline and Attendance • Athletics and Activities Director

### The Dean of Student Success is responsible for:

- Assistant Counselors • Testing Coordination • Student Opportunities • Special Education • Gifted Education
- Counselors

### The Deans of Instruction are responsible for:

- Instructional Strategy Implementation • Coaching of Teachers at their site

### The Facilities and Public Safety Director is responsible for:

- Maintenance • Safety • Construction • Janitorial • Transportation • Asset Management • Technology

### The HR Director is responsible for:

- Benefits management • Attendance Tracking • Contract Preparation • Payroll • Personnel Reporting • Hospitality
- On-boarding and Off-boarding

### The Communications Director is responsible for:

- Social Media • Branding Oversight • Collateral Materials • Website • Graphic Arts

### The IT Director is responsible for:

- Management of all IT related items • Computer Tracking • Inventory Damage Control • Help Desk
- Technology Vendor Liaison

*Employee Designations* (Some employees may be designated in more than one category)

- “**Executive Leadership**” team refers to the CEO, Superintendent, and Headmasters
- “**School Leadership**” team refers to the CEO, Superintendent, Headmaster, Deans, IT Director, and the Facilities and Public Safety Director.
- “**Central Office Staff**” refers to those who work in the Central Office and operations’ personnel. This includes the CEO, Superintendent, Facilities and Public Safety Director, Communications Director, Programs Officer, Central Office Secretary/Receptionist, Encumbrance/Activity Fund Clerk, and Human Resources Director.
- “**Faculty**” refers to Teachers, Guest Teacher Coordinator and Counselors.
- “**Professional Staff**” refers to the Human Resources Director, IT Director, the Communication Director, Programs Officer, and the Encumbrance/Activities Clerk.
- “**Support Staff**” refers to the Secretaries, Maintenance, Teaching Assistants, and Child Nutrition Coordinator.
- “**Assistants**” refer to the Teaching Assistants and the Title I Counselors’ Assistants.
- “**Contractors**” refer to individuals who work part-time, but are not officially ASTEC employees.

## **Administrative Hierarchy**

Unforeseen situations arise almost daily in a school. Scholars and their families, faculty and staff should have access to a school administrator at all times. In the absence of the Headmaster, either the Superintendent or his designee will be the person in charge. Further, because of their scope of responsibility and authority, school administrators are not to schedule PTO or non-contract days for the same periods of time.

The Superintendent should be apprised of any incident or potential incident at the earliest possible time. He will notify the CEO.

All school employees are to apprise the CEO or Superintendent of situations pertaining to the school, its scholars, employees or stakeholders to which they become aware.

## **Customer Service**

Scholars, parents, family members, patrons, and visitors, are among our organization’s most valuable assets. They are our

customers. Each contact a customer has with an ASTEC Schools' employee either strengthens or weakens their trust in us, and in our schools. Further, we all represent ASTEC Schools to every member of the public. Therefore, nothing is more important than being courteous, friendly, helpful, and prompt in the attention we give to customers. In fact, by offering top-notch customer service, we further our educational mission by teaching our scholars to both offer and expect respect and consideration as they interact with their own larger community and the world.

Our personal contact with the public, our telephone demeanor, and the impressions we make on customers are reflections not only of ourselves, but also of the overall professionalism of our organization. Positive customer relations enhance public perceptions of ASTEC Schools and create greater customer loyalty and increased satisfaction. This allows us to be more successful in accomplishing our mission and realizing our vision for our scholars.

It is critical that we practice a high degree of cultural and social sensitivities in all of our interactions. We must always err on the side of caution in our communications referencing race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or any other personal, familial or cultural characteristic. Even the most well intended remark could be taken as discrimination or marginalization and offend a member of our learning community.

***Dealing with customer concerns or complaints:*** It is difficult to anticipate the nature of a customer's concern. Therefore, customers who wish to lodge comments or complaints should be directed to the administrator who has the day-to-day responsibility for that particular area. This referral should be made with a positive, affirming attitude ("I know that Dean Smith will want to resolve this at his first opportunity. Let's call right now, just in case he's available").

## Human Resources and Personnel

### Employment Applications

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

Once an employee is hired, the following documents must be on file:

- Application and résumé
- Current or Non-Expired teaching certificate and transcript (if applicable)
- I-9 and related non-expired forms of identification
- Fingerprint submission and results
- Signed employee handbook acknowledgement
- W-4
- Direct deposit information including a voided check
- Proof of certificate and or course for "Care and Prevention of Athletics Injuries," or any other state required certificates (for those coaching a sport/physical activity)
- Insurance enrollment form or document showing insurance has been declined
- Outside employment/college/personal activities approval form
- Completion of files on BambooHR and uploaded photo
- Race/ethnicity form
- Non Disclosure Agreement
- Emergency contact information

*If you are taking a call related to an issue that is NOT a part of your responsibility, please DO NOT let the caller "vent." Keep repeating that you will give the caller's number to the appropriate party and will have them return the call. Be polite, but do not engage the caller in an area that does not pertain to you or your position.*

- Technology Acceptable Use form
- Enrollment in 401(K). \*Note: Employees will be enrolled at 5% unless paperwork stating otherwise is received before the date of submission of their first payroll
- Beneficiary form for life insurance
- Federal Loyalty Oath

By law, payroll must be withheld or delayed for employees whose files are incomplete.

Potential employees must reveal any relationship and/or close friendship with existing employees. Failure to do so may result in termination of both parties.

## Employment Reference Checks

To ensure individuals who join ASTEC Schools are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of ASTEC Schools to check the employment references from previous supervisors of all applicants.

*Only Human Resources may provide references for existing or former employees - as this individual is familiar with the Department of Labor regulations regarding references.*

As it relates to reference checks for other employers, Human Resources will only disclose dates of employment, position(s) held, and whether or not the former/current employee is eligible for rehire. Matters of work performance, attendance, etc. are not eligible to be disclosed. As it relates to verification of employment for financial matters (example- Loan requests or refinances) only proper release of information is required in order to disclose financial information as required by law.

## Meeting With Human Resources

Any employee needing to meet with HR for a matter that cannot be solved via an email, must place a request on BambooHR under the respective inquiry. If an employee has a question regarding a policy, expectation or something they need clarification on, they should review the handbook first before making a request on BambooHR. If approved, HR will schedule an in-person (or virtual) meeting with the employee and their supervisor. For matters related to an employee's direct supervisor, they may email HR directly to disclose a general synopsis of the issue.

**Human Resources will not hold an unscheduled meeting with an employee unless it is deemed an emergency and a supervisor is not readily available. Please do not drop by for matters that can be answered via an email or the process aforementioned.**

## Employee Background Checks

State law requires that the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) screen all new employees, substitute teachers, and volunteers who supervise scholars. These individuals are required to obtain and provide ASTEC with an official background check certificate. Further investigative background searches will be conducted at the request of ASTEC, by the OSBI and at the cost of the potential employee. You must receive a positive result to be hired. Should a negative result be received from either Bureau after the employee's first day of employment, the employee will be terminated. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide proof of positive clearance if the background check was prior to the first day of employment.

A substitute will be reimbursed for the background check's cost after they have substituted with ASTEC three times. ASTEC's policy regarding felonies is as follows:

- **Faculty:** ASTEC does not hire or employ felons, regardless of the type of felony or how long ago the felony was committed.

- **Support Staff:** ASTEC does not hire or employ felons, except when the charge occurred in the distant past and was not related to violence, sexual misconduct or drug use. Such a person may be hired or retained upon receipt of the CEO or Superintendent's written approval.

## **Equal Opportunity Employer**

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at ASTEC will be based on merit, qualifications and abilities. ASTEC does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary or, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under the Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I – financially assisted program or activity, or any other characteristic protected by law.

ASTEC will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities unless doing so would result in an undue hardship. This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination and access to benefits and training.

Any employee with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the workplace is encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor. Supervisors should immediately apprise the CEO or Superintendent of these questions/concerns. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Disability Accommodations**

It is ASTEC's policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training, or other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

ASTEC will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a temporary or long-term disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job.

All employees are required to comply with safety standards. Applicants who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals in the workplace, which threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation, will not be hired. Current employees who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals in the workplace will be placed on appropriate leave until an organizational decision has been made in regard to the employee's immediate employment situation.

All information obtained concerning the medical condition or history of an applicant or employee will be treated as confidential information, maintained in separate medical files, and disclosed only as permitted by law.

It is the policy of ASTEC to prohibit harassment of or discriminatory treatment of employees on the basis of a disability or because an employee has requested a reasonable accommodation. If an employee feels he or she has been subject to such treatment or has witnessed such treatment, the situation should be reported using the harassment complaint procedure included in this handbook. ASTEC's policy prohibits retaliation against an employee for exercising his or her rights under the ADA or applicable state fair employment laws. Any employee found to have engaged in retaliation against an employee for exercising his or her rights or for making a request for reasonable accommodation under this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## **HIPAA Health Information Privacy Policy**

ASTEC has a separate policy governing those individuals who access protected health information (PHI) and establishing security procedures to ensure compliance with applicable law. Any PHI will be secured against unauthorized access. These security measures will include locked file cabinets, separation of PHI from other records, password protection for computer records, and confidentiality notices.

This policy will be applied so as to be in compliance with the HIPAA privacy standard and any stricter state law. No PHI will be used in employment-related actions or in connection with any other employee benefit plan. ASTEC will restrict access to PHI so the employees do not access PHI unless it is part of their job duties with respect to benefits management; and, use the PHI only for plan administration purposes. Human Resources is designated as the privacy officer for compliance with the HIPAA privacy regulations.

## **FERPA Family Education Rights and Privacy Act**

ASTEC upholds the The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA or the Buckley Amendment). This is a federally mandated law that governs the access to educational information and records by public entities such as potential employers, publicly funded educational institutions, and foreign governments.

FERPA gives parents access to their child's education records, an opportunity to seek to have the records amended, and some control over the disclosure of information from the records. With several exceptions, schools must have a student's consent prior to the disclosure of education records after that student is 18 years old. The law applies only to educational agencies and institutions that receive funds under a program administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

ASTEC will not allow the release of information related to student records for public release without the consent of the affected parties. All minor's consent under the age of 18 will be at the behest of their respective parents or guardian. All students (current and former) 18 and older will be authorized to release information related to their own individual records.

Any outside organization seeking ASTEC student records will be turned away without the proper consent forms obtained on their own. ASTEC will not release any contact information of any current or former student for any reason related to student records unless obligated by law enforcement, court order, or parental release.

## **Immigration Law Compliance**

ASTEC is committed to following state and local laws and employs only United States citizens and International citizens who are authorized to work in the United States. ASTEC does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.

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

Employees with questions on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact the ASTEC Human Resources Office. Employees may raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

## **Employee Relations**

ASTEC believes the work conditions and the wages/benefits it offers to its employees are competitive with those offered by other employers in this area and in this industry. If employees have concerns about work conditions, they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their supervisors. If the concern involves compensation or benefits, the employee should meet with Human Resources.

Our experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with supervisors, the work environment and attitudes can be positive and communications can be clear. We believe that ASTEC amply demonstrates its commitment to employees by responding effectively to employee concerns.

In an effort to protect and maintain direct employer/employee communications, ASTEC will not recognize any organized spokesperson(s) representing employees (within applicable legal limits) and will make every effort to protect the rights of employees to speak on their own behalf.

However, if and when employees examine the option of representation by individuals outside ASTEC, we strongly encourage careful consideration of such related issues as regular deductions from paychecks for representation fees, The potential for outside interference with supervisory relationships, and the commitment to comply with directions from third parties.



*This practice ensures that employees are not being asked to contribute for these events throughout the year. Those who do not choose to pay into the fund should not partake in the benefits.*

## **Hospitality Dues**

Each employee is asked to contribute to the employees' Hospitality Fund by September 5th of each new school year or within one month of their start date if that date is after September 5th. The contribution is \$35 for salaried employees and \$15 for school secretaries, TAs, and counselors' assistants. A prorated amount may be paid for employees hired after the first contract day. Employees may pay via cash, check, or a payroll deduction. For any employees wanting to give more than the above-listed amount, they are certainly welcome to do so and are highly appreciated. Dues and donations are tax deductible.

While paying hospitality dues is optional, it is the mark of a good citizen not to expect others to pay for things that benefit everyone. Employees who give above the proposed amount are duly appreciated and welcomed.

During a time of bereavement or hospitalization of an employee or the immediate family member of an employee, a contribution will be made in the name of the bereaved from these funds and are donated to the ASTEC student scholarship program, the Jones Family Fund. These monies are also used for gifts for employee marriages, first child, etc., and for food for all employee meetings.

## **Teacher Certification**

Upon hire, ASTEC faculty must be "highly qualified," as previously defined by No Child Left Behind. Dates of the exams may be found on the Oklahoma State Department of Education website. Teachers who remain uncertified will not move up in their KPI rating, thus missing out on increases to their salary based on performance. Any teacher that remains uncertified for two school years will not be offered a contract the following year.

Uncertified teachers will not be assessed at a level above "Standard" on their annual KPI review.

*Faculty members must be certified, either traditionally or alternatively, by the State of Oklahoma by April 25th, if hired at the beginning of the school year in order to be moved up on the KPI scale. Teachers failing to become certified within 1 year of employment may not be eligible for rehire.*

## **Conflicts of Interest**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Contact your supervisor for more information or questions about conflicts of interest.

Transactions with outside firms must be conducted within a framework established and controlled by the executive level of ASTEC Schools. Business dealings with outside firms should not result in unusual gains for those firms. Unusual gain refers to bribes, product bonuses, special fringe benefits; unusual price breaks and other windfalls designed to ultimately benefit the employer, the employee or both. Promotional plans that could be interpreted as unusual gain require specific executive-level approval.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee, a close friend or for a relative as a result of being an ASTEC vendor.

For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

Please notify Human Resources of any possible conflict of interest before the hiring process has been completed. This will ensure transparency and due process for all applicants in a public manner.

No “presumption of guilt” is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts or leases, it is imperative they disclose to the administration of ASTEC as soon as possible the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may result not only in cases where an employee or relative has a significant ownership in a firm with which ASTEC does business, but also when an employee or relative receives any kickback, bribe, substantial gift or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving ASTEC

*Employees in a position to influence any aspect of another employee’s job must reveal that relationship in advance of the hiring of that employee and should take every effort not to present the appearance of partiality toward that employee.*

## **Non-Disclosure**

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

- Curriculum
- New materials research
- Programs
- Pending projects and proposals
- Compensation data
- Proprietary production processes
- Computer processes
- Research and development strategies
- Computer programs and codes
- Scientific prototypes
- Customer lists
- Technological data
- Customer preferences
- Technological prototypes
- Financial information
- Database information
- Marketing strategies
- Copyrighted materials

As a result of employment with ASTEC Schools, employees must acknowledge the possession of confidential information relating to the business practices of ASTEC and to other employees of ASTEC. The term “confidential information” shall mean any and all information (verbal and written) relating to ASTEC or of its activities including but not limited to, information relating to: trade secrets, employees, operations policies and procedures, employment policies, computer processes, research and development strategies, financial information, research projects, services used, pricing, student data and information, student lists and prospects, product sourcing and marketing.

Every employee will agree that while employed by ASTEC, and for a period of two (2) years commencing on the date of termination of your employment for any reason (the “restricted period”), you will not, directly or indirectly communicate, disclose or disseminate to any person (including other employees and students), firm or corporation any confidential information regarding ASTEC or its employees, suppliers, students or business practices, without the prior written consent of ASTEC.

*Employees must understand that any conversation with anyone internal or external to ASTEC regarding any confidential information listed above constitutes a breach of this agreement. Posting to digital media, letters, emails and any other form of communication that disparages ASTEC, any of its employees, its board members, scholars and/or their families are prohibited.*



“Small talk” or comments made to others regarding other employees (including, but not limited to their employment status, financial status, medical issues, personal difficulties, hearsay/gossip, contracts or involvement in ASTEC) shall also constitute a breach of this agreement. This includes posting to digital media anything disparaging ASTEC, its employees or its scholars as these are prohibited by Oklahoma Law. There are two exceptions: A breach of this agreement will not be committed if:

- The information provided to the other employee was necessary for that employee to perform his/her duties.
- The information was provided only to the Human Resources Director or to its CEO or Superintendent in an effort to ensure ASTEC is aware of a particular situation.

The existence of any claim or cause of action against ASTEC by an employee, whether predicated on the breach of this agreement or otherwise, shall not constitute a defense to the enforcement by ASTEC of the covenants contained herein.

If an employee commits a breach or threatens to commit a breach of any of the provisions of this agreement, ASTEC shall have the right and remedy, in addition to any others that may be available, to have the provisions of this agreement specifically enforced by any court. Employee agrees that a breach of any part of this agreement, gives ASTEC the right to charge the employee for fairly calculated damages.

If you remain an employee of ASTEC in any other capacity or on a consulting basis, then notwithstanding anything to the contrary set forth herein, the restricted period shall not commence until the last day you provide services to ASTEC.

By signing ASTEC’s Handbook Acknowledgement Form, employees are also signing a nondisclosure agreement as a condition of employment. Employees who improperly use or disclose trade secrets or confidential business information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Outside Employment/Other Personal Activities**

Employees may hold outside jobs (part-time) and are encouraged to continue their education by taking college coursework and/or being involved in various organizations as long as they meet the performance standards of their position with ASTEC and do not take time from their work schedule. Frequent absences, poor planning, missing deadlines and lack of energy to perform the job for which one is hired due to outside activities is not fair to ASTEC Schools, its employees or scholars.

All employees will be assessed by the same performance standards and will be subject to ASTEC’s scheduling demands, regardless of any requirements of existing or planned outside employment or other activities, including organizational affiliation meetings and events during the workday that do not directly support the mission of ASTEC and its scholars.

Employees who work an outside job on the weekends and are absent from ASTEC on Monday should expect a visit from their supervisor.

Any employment outside of ASTEC, whether it predates employment at ASTEC or not, must be reported to the supervisor and to Human Resources. This includes, but is not limited to home-based businesses, consulting, and part or full-time employment. Employees must notify their supervisor in writing of their desire to seek additional employment. The supervisor will consider the hours and demands of the request and make a recommendation to the Superintendent, who has final approval. Outside employment issues will be documented and handled on a case-by-case basis. No employee may receive monies from an outside entity for work performed during the employee’s assigned contract and hours at ASTEC while receiving pay from ASTEC for the same day(s). This would result in being paid by two parties for the same day’s work.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside ASTEC for materials produced or services rendered while performing their jobs. Failure to comply with this policy may result in termination of the employee.

*If an administrator determines an employee’s outside activities interfere with their performance or the ability to meet the job requirements of ASTEC, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment to remain employed with ASTEC.*

*ASTECC maintains a list of approved vendors. Please check with the Director of Facilities regarding vendors before completing Purchase Requests to ensure that only approved vendors are used.*

## **Vendor Agreements**

It is considered unethical business practice for a vendor to hire an employee of a client. It is a common practice to specify that vendors be prohibited from hiring an employee of a

## **Employment Categories**

It is the intent of ASTEC to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility.

According to the Department of Labor (DOL), an employee is either **NONEXEMPT** or **EXEMPT** from federal and state wage and hour laws. **NONEXEMPT** employees are hourly employees who are entitled to overtime wages under the specific provisions of federal and state laws. ALL overtime by nonexempt employees MUST be pre-approved by the supervisor through the CEO or Superintendent, depending on your head supervisor and documented in HR.

*As an EXEMPT employee, you are responsible for your duties whether you are on-site or not. You do not want to hold up the work of others who are relying on a task you have that impacts a task they have.*

**EXEMPT** employees receive a salary and are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. **EXEMPT** employees may be required to work longer hours, including evenings, weekends or holidays as needed. There are no specific hours for these employees.

*Keep in mind that public schools do not neatly fall into the typical DOL categories. For example, school employees are contracted for a certain number of days and do not accrue vacation as such.*

*Public school employees must work their designated hours during their assigned beginning and ending workday. Time missed from those contracted hours will result in a deduction after an employee exceeds his/her Paid Time Off (PTO). As a reminder, the minimum deduction for PTO is .25 of a day, or two hours.*

*According to the Fair Labor Standards Act:*

*“Rights of exempt employees - An exempt employee has virtually “no rights at all” under the FLSA overtime rules. About all an exempt employee is entitled to under the FLSA is to receive the full amount of the base salary in any work period during which she/he performs*

any work (less any permissible deductions). Nothing in the FLSA prohibits an employer from requiring exempt employees to “punch a clock,” or work a particular schedule, or “make up” time lost due to absences. Nor does the FLSA limit the amount of work an employer may require or expect from any employee, on any schedule. (“Mandatory overtime” is not restricted by the FLSA.)

Keep in mind that this discussion is limited to rights under the FLSA. Exempt employees may have rights under other laws or by way of employment policies or contracts.”

The rationale by the FLSA is that exempt employees are paid more and are mission critical. In addition to the above categories, and the position descriptions listed earlier, each employee will belong to one other employment category.

<b>ASTECSchools Employment Benefits Eligibility</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Work Schedule</b>	<b>*Benefits</b>
Certified/Highly Qualified  Employees who work 30 hours or more.	“Certified” and/or “Highly Qualified” means those employees who are certified with a number issued by the Oklahoma SDE and who work at least ¾ time (Examples: faculty, administrators, counselors, and supervisors.)	Work more than 30 hours- Salaried/Exempt	Benefit package subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program and employee contract.  *Up to 5% match in 401K retirement plan, Social Security and Worker’s Compensation insurance
Non-Certified Employees	Employees who have not been assigned teacher certification numbers by the Oklahoma SDE (Examples: secretaries, maintenance, some office personnel and other staff).	Less than 30 hours per week- Hourly/Non-exempt  More than 30 hours per week- Salaried/Exempt	Benefit package subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program and employee contract.  *Up to 5% match in 401K retirement plan, Social Security and Worker’s Compensation insurance
Temporary Worker and Student Workers	Employees who are hired as interim replacements, temporary supplemental workers or assistants to the completion of a specific project.	Length of project, limited duration	Social Security and workers’ compensation insurance.  Not eligible for any ASTEC benefits or incentives.
Contract Employees	Vendors or consultants who perform services for specific needs or projects and provide ASTEC with an invoice.	Sets own schedule and/or contracts for a specific need of the organization.	Contractual employees are responsible for their own taxes and proof of Workman’s Compensation Insurance.  Not eligible for any ASTEC benefits or incentives.

\*Employees who do not select a match percentage prior to the submission of payroll will automatically be enrolled at 5%.

## “Essential Workers”

During a pandemic, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control may issue a “Shelter in Place” order for all employees or a “Work-from-Home” order for all but “essential workers.” School administrators and support staff are considered essential workers since they are necessary to run the business of the school, administer enrollment, attendance, grades and communication to students and families.

## Contract Periods

ASTECC employees are hired for one contract year. ASTECC clients have a variety of needs that are best met through varied contracts and work schedules. Employees who begin working after the beginning of the contract period will receive a prorated contract through the end of their contract year.

POSITION	CONTRACT PERIOD
Teachers & Teaching Assistants (182-187 Day Employees)	August 1 - July 31
Counselor & Counselor Assistants (200-210 Day Employees)	July 1 - June 30
All other employees (225+ Day Employees)	June 1 - May 31

Preparation of contracts are dependent upon and affect many other processes including annual budget, submission of timely employee evaluations by supervisors, payroll data submission to HR, employee benefit choices, etc. Once all items are submitted, the process for the preparation of contracts can begin.

## Contracted Days

Individual employees are contracted for a specific number of days to be worked. The remaining days are considered non-Individual employees are contracted for a specific number of days to be worked. The remaining days are considered non-contract days. Non-contract days must be pre-planned. Faculty non-contract days are dictated by the school year calendar.

Employees are to ensure a smooth transition of information at times when emergencies, programs and travel take them away from the workplace on non-contract days. All information that may be needed by other employees who are providing coverage for the absent employee or who may need information or documents only possessed by the unavailable employee should be shared with the supervisor and/or necessary persons. An emergency phone number where the employee can be reached must be left with their supervisor. The employee must schedule a meeting with his/her supervisor the day before leaving to review the transition plan and other vital information.

In the case of an emergency, the employee is to communicate with the supervisor before leaving. If the supervisor is not available, the employee is to speak with the person above that supervisor. Critical and date-sensitive decisions are made during the summer months that require the presence of all or most administrators and staff.

Therefore, it is imperative that employees schedule their time off during the first two weeks of July. The days during the week of July 4th are non-contract days for all employees, except Facilities, Maintenance (summer maintenance) and HR (payroll) as determined.

The months of May and August, and the last week of June are “Blackout” dates for full-time employees scheduled to work in the summer. The remaining weeks throughout the summer months are mandatory work days for administrative staff.

*NOTE: Non-contract days MUST be taken in 8-hour (1 day) increments and may not be exchanged for PTO days and vice versa.*

*No more than two sequential weeks may be taken at a time by non-faculty (11&12 month employees). This includes any combination of being out for conferences, PTO, and other leave.*

## Work and Work Schedules

Work schedules for employees vary greatly throughout our organization. Supervisors will advise employees of their individual work schedules.

Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in hours.

*All full-time, EXEMPT, ASTEC employees are contracted for a specific number of days annually within a ten, eleven or twelve-month period. Employees work the specific, agreed-upon days unless advance written approval is given by the supervisor and CEO or Superintendent to alter a schedule. The written documentation will be kept in the HR office.*

Each employee will be given a list of “blackout dates” relative to their specific position’s responsibilities. Employees may not “trade” other scheduled days on these designated blackout dates unless extreme circumstances exist, and the CEO or Superintendent grants approval. If not, the employee risks Leave Without Pay (LWOP). Again, employees are paid by the day for a specific number of days worked per their contract.

Employees who bring a doctor’s note stating the appointment and/or illness on the blackout day was for an emergency that could not be scheduled at any other time, will not have pay deducted, if they have PTO days remaining.

*As a courtesy, it is a good idea to send a reminder email 5-7 days in advance to all supervisors, as well as the guest teacher coordinator in the event you are needing classes covered. Please do not forget to have your duties covered if you hold them.*

Classroom teachers have planning periods for instructional preparation and conferences. The schedule of planning periods provides at least 450 minutes within each two-week period in blocks not less than 45 minutes. Teachers are required to supervise scholars before and after school and during lunch as scheduled.

Hourly staff work eight hours each day. All requests for the alteration of an employee’s set work schedule on a long-term basis must be pre-approved, in writing, by their supervisor, CEO and Superintendent. The request will be submitted to the Human Resources Director to be placed in the employee’s personnel file.

Any agreement with an employee by their supervisor that alters the policy or policies of this handbook are not valid unless the exception is in writing and signed by the supervisor and the superintendent.

## Timekeeping

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every employee. Federal and state laws require ASTEC to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

Faculty and staff will personally clock in and out, each time they enter and exit campus, using the facial recognition program. This information is electronically forwarded to Human Resources for payroll reporting.

Failure to use the system when arriving or leaving work will place an employee at risk of not receiving the correct salary. It is imperative you contact the Facilities Director immediately should you have an issue with clocking in or out.

*While ASTEC Central Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, all employees are expected to meet the needs of clients, customers and patrons. On occasion that means working beyond the normal hours of operations and/or weekends and holidays. Elementary School office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Middle School and High School office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.*

Exempt employees: Must be available as needed. The law allows no overtime pay and no comp time for faculty and school administrators.

Non-Exempt employees: Any work beyond the contracted number of hours per week must be approved in writing by your supervisor and approved through HR. Any weekend work done to make up time not worked during the week must also be approved in writing by your supervisor. Hours worked over 40 hours in a workweek is considered overtime. However, your supervisor and the CEO or the Superintendent must give pre-approval. Any unauthorized overtime work will be subjected to disciplinary action.

Employees should be prepared and ready to receive scholars/clients/patrons, and have their morning routine completed (purses and coats put away, coffee, visiting with other employees, etc.), BEFORE the start of business or before the start of the school day.

*Elementary faculty members are to report to work by 7:30 a.m. and may leave when their duty for the day is complete. Middle and High School faculty members are to report to work by 8:00 a.m. and may leave when their duty for the day is complete. The Central Office Business Hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Administrators and staff have a 30-minute assigned lunch break.*

Routinely arriving late and/or leaving early will result in disciplinary action including, and up to termination. An employee who arrives late or leaves early is to obtain approval from his/her supervisor, and complete and submit the request in BambooHr within 24 hours.

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

**\*\*Please see the ASTEC Pandemic Policy in the Appendices of this document regarding quarantining, testing,\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*documentation and return to work.\*\*\*\*\***

To maintain a safe and productive work environment, ASTEC expects employees to be reliable and punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and ASTEC Schools, and may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, the employee is to personally notify their SUPERVISOR and the appropriate office as soon as possible in advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence.

An email or text is not an appropriate initial method of reporting an absence. The employee is to call the supervisor EACH day to let the supervisor know if he/she will return to work the following day.



*Employees are to PERSONALLY call ONLY the immediate supervisor as soon as it is evident that he/she will not be able to report to work on time, or will be absent for the entire day, due to an emergency or illness. Additionally, please send a follow-up email after your phone call to your immediate supervisor.*

*PLEASE DO NOT TEXT TO REPORT YOUR ABSENCE*

Employees must submit the proper paperwork when returning from an unanticipated absence or tardy. ASTEC uses BambooHR online for reporting absences. Please log into your personal BambooHR account to post your absence. The procedure for approval of anticipated leave will be covered in detail at the time of hire and/or at the annual August in-service meetings. All employees are expected to understand and use this reporting system.

*Employees who are tardy or forget to clock in/out, will lose 0.25 days of PTO for every three occurrences beginning on the first day of employment. If no PTO is available, LWOP will be utilized.*

The vast majority of ASTEC employees arrive at work at least 15 or more minutes before their start time. While this is not necessary, it shows the dedication and preparation of many of our employees.

*Please leave plenty of time to arrive and put away purses, bags and other items. If you like to visit with other employees when you arrive and grab coffee, please allow time to do that before your start time.*

It is the responsibility of the employee and the supervisor to be familiar with policies concerning absences and tardies and to complete and/or approve requests based on those policies.

## **Scanning In and Out**

When leaving the school, office or an assigned area, it is helpful and courteous to notify the site secretary and others in the work area that you will be out of the building.

*Any employee who leaves the campus for any reason, needs to clock out for liability and accountability purposes. Please remember to clock back in when you are back on site of the school property.*

If an employee encounters an error with the time clock, it is the responsibility of employees to immediately make a tech request on BambooHR to have the issue resolved.

In addition, your supervisor is to be notified when you are leaving and given an estimate of the time you will return. The supervisor will pass this information onto the Elementary, Middle School, High School, and Central Office receptionist. This courtesy will save co-workers unnecessary time.

*If you have issues with the scanner, please enter a tech request on BambooHR under your respective site. Please take a photo including you and the scanner with the time clearly shown as proof at the time of your failed check in or checkout.*

Supervisors receive a monthly report of employee's time and attendance for review. You will be asked to sign your time clock report, to justify any discrepancies and state the actions you will take to remedy any attendance issue. These reports will be the primary attendance source.

When an employee has accrued 3 tardies, a quarter day's absence will be assigned to that employee.

## **Lunch and Lunch Schedules**

All employees are given a 30-minute lunch. Time designated for lunch may not be used in exchange for arriving late or leaving early.

Employees may purchase a nutritious lunch and/or salad in the cafeteria for \$5. Each employee is issued a lunch card. They may preload the card for any amount by paying their site secretary. The card may be reloaded when empty. ASTEC food services are outsourced. Cash is not accepted on a daily basis or by the cafeteria. End-of-the-year balances are not refunded, but may be carried over to the next school year.

PLEASE NOTE: ASTEC does not make money on meals served. Most schools lose money on their child nutrition programs.

## **Reassignments and Transfers**

All personnel are subject to assignment and reassignment by senior management. When reassignments are due to enrollment shifts or program changes, the Superintendent has final placement authority. Extracurricular or supplemental duty assignments may be assigned at any time. Employees who have concerns about a reassignment are encouraged to discuss the issue with their supervisor.

Faculty members who have been in their current position for at least two years and who possess the required qualifications for a position may request a lateral transfer to another teaching assignment. A transfer request form must be completed and signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. Employees requesting a transfer to another assignment before the school year begins must submit their request by April 1st of each school year. All transfer requests will be coordinated with the Headmaster for approval, and must be approved by the receiving supervisor. Supervisors will discuss the proposed change and receive final approval from the Superintendent.

*Subcontracting job duties or responsibilities is not allowed unless approved, in writing, by the employee's supervisor and the Superintendent.*

## **Professional Development**

Professional development activities are organized to meet the needs of employees and the organization. Staff development for instructional personnel is predominantly campus-based, related to achieving performance objectives.



*Pre-service professional development is for the purpose of preparing employees for the new school year. Any employee who either resigns, or is terminated during this training will either receive their daily rate, or \$150/day, whichever is less.*

Each Monday is early dismissal of scholars to allow employees regular opportunities for staff development. Under the direction of the School and Teacher Leaders, staff development hours will be tracked and documentation will be submitted to Human Resources. Final professional development tracking will be placed in the employee's file.

Professional development for non-instructional personnel is designed to meet specific licensing requirements (e.g., bus drivers) and continued employee skill development. Individuals holding renewable State Board of Education certificates are responsible for obtaining the required training hours and maintaining appropriate documentation to report annually. Employees are to participate fully in professional development sessions and to be the kind of participant they would want if they were presenting. Texting, checking emails, writing notes, wearing earbuds, etc., is considered rude and is unacceptable.

Employees whose children are ASTEC scholars will need to make appropriate childcare arrangements for their children on Mondays.

Elementary scholars are dismissed at 1:00 p.m. and Professional Development begins promptly at 2:30 p.m. and concludes at 4:30 p.m.

Middle and high school scholars are dismissed at 1:30 p.m. and Professional Development begins promptly at 2:30 p.m. and concludes at 4:30 p.m.

*Professional development is critical to ASTEC scholars' success; therefore, this training is mandatory. There will be no approved personal leave on staff development days, as these days are considered "blackout days." Those who are required to attend are expected to arrive promptly and are asked not to leave early unless their supervisor and the Superintendent gives prior written approval. Employees should not plan personal business, meetings or travel on these important days. This includes leaving training(s) earlier to conduct personal business.*

Only in an emergency, will an employee be called out of the weekly professional development meeting.

To attend professional development off-site during school hours, employees should submit a Professional Development Request Form at least two weeks in advance to their supervisor for approval.

*Employees are encouraged to hold memberships and participate in local, state, and subject-area professional organizations that will improve their professional knowledge and skills.*

ASTEC encourages employees to participate in professional organizations. Involvement should begin at the local and state level. Employees who have taken advantage of local and state opportunities may request leave to attend conferences and events

out of state. Budgetary limitations may prohibit ASTEC Schools from covering expenses associated with these conferences. However, employees who pay their own expenses may be granted special leave.

Employees wishing to attend conferences as a participant or a presenter - which will require missing work - should talk to their supervisor and must complete the appropriate BambooHR request form at least 30 days in advance of the event. The decision will be based upon a number of factors including the benefit to ASTEC Schools, the convenience of the timing of the event, the number of previous requests made during the year by the employee and the available budget. The decision of the CEO and Superintendent is final.

## **Personnel Records**

Most organization's records, including some personnel records, are public information and must be released upon request to appropriate authorities with appropriate notice.

## **Access to Personnel Files**

ASTEC maintains a personnel file on each employee. The personnel file includes information such as the employee's job application, resume, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, and other employment records.

Personnel files are the property of ASTEC, and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, only supervisors and management personnel of ASTEC who have a legitimate reason to review information are allowed to do so.

Employees who wish to review their own file should contact Human Resources. With reasonable advance notice, employees may review their personnel files in ASTEC's offices and in the presence of an individual appointed by ASTEC to maintain the files. Please keep Human Resources informed of all contact and tax information changes.

## **Personal Data Changes**

It is the responsibility of each employee to enter personal data and to update personal data in BambooHR promptly. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, names and number of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, educational accomplishments and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. Any information that cannot be entered in BambooHR, should immediately be reported to the HR Director.

## **Performance Reviews**

All employees will have an annual performance review conducted by his/her supervisor. Employees may be asked to prepare a self-assessment. Consideration for pay raises is based on the performance review conducted by the supervisor and available monies. This is an annual review, and the results may vary from year-to-year. However, should an employee score be lower on the performance review than the previous year, the higher compensation will be valid for one year.

Faculty "clinical observations" are bell-to-bell formative tools that assess only instructional skills. While a part of the employee's summative evaluation, they are not to be misunderstood to be an annual performance evaluation.

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Performance evaluations are conducted within the initial 90-day period in any new position. This period, known as the introductory period, allows the supervisor and the employee to discuss the job responsibilities, standards, and performance requirements of the new position. Additional formal performance evaluations are conducted annually to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths and discuss positive, purposeful approaches to meeting goals.

*Copies of performance reviews conducted by the supervisor are to be submitted to the CEO or Superintendent no later than May 1st.*

*There are four levels of faculty compensation. They are:*

*New Hire / Developing Level 1*

*Faculty members begin at this level at ASTEC. Employees who remain at this level for two years will not have their employment extended. All non-certified teachers will remain at a level 1 until a certification is acquired.*

*Standard Level 2*

*Faculty who reach Key Performance Indicators (KPI) of between 60 and 74% and hold an OK Teaching Certification.*

*Mastery Level 3*

*Faculty who reach Key Performance Indicators of between 75 and 92% and hold an OK Teaching Certification.*

*Impact Level 4*

*Faculty who reach Key Performance Indicators at 93% or above and hold an OK Teaching Certification. Teachers who reach this level are considered almost perfect in their teaching craft and pedagogy and in all other areas of responsibility.*

Additionally, each level is based on an annual evaluation or KPI. It is quite possible for teachers to move upward or downward on the scale from year-to-year. Once an employee has reached a certain level, it does not mean he/she will automatically remain at that level.

Uncertified faculty will not receive a score higher than the “standard” level.

All staff members at ASTEC are growing and developing. If a teacher’s score on a KPI is below standard, he/she will have a formalized improvement plan. The teacher will develop the plan with the supervisor and appraiser. The supervisor will monitor the plan and provide timely feedback to the teacher. The supervisor, or designee, may formalize a plan for improvement with any teacher at any time.

\*See Appendix for complete Compensation Schedule.

Throughout the year, as customary in many schools, teachers will be observed and appraised in their teaching methods. These appraisals can be in the form of a walk-through, clinical observation, and even video monitoring of a classroom. With this in mind, teachers will from time to time receive written and/or verbal correspondence as to the results of their appraisals. Teachers may disagree with the results and ask for a second appraisal by:

- A teacher may submit a written response or rebuttal after receiving the written observation summary or any other written documentation.
- A teacher may request a second appraisal by another appraiser within 10 business days of receiving a written observation summary, a written summative annual appraisal report, or any other written documentation associated with the appraisal.
- A second appraisal will be scheduled by date and time. The second appraiser shall appraise the teacher in all domains. The second appraiser shall observe the teacher in bell-to-bell classroom instruction. The second appraisal shall be a part of the teacher’s employment records.

## **Incentive/Bonus Pay**

Incentive Pay adjustments are awarded by ASTEC in an effort to recognize superior employee performance. The decision to award such an adjustment depends on several factors. Any available monies are awarded based upon the employee's performance and recommendations by school supervisors. Only employees who score "Mastery" or "Impact" are eligible for Incentive Pay. These monies are issued in the fall term of the following year to those still employed with ASTEC at that time.

## **Extra Duty Pay**

Some employees choose to work in ASTEC programs or take on extra duties that regularly require a significant amount of time for additional pay. Such employees are paid by a pre-arranged contract and can only be paid when they have fulfilled all their responsibilities. Examples include: Saturday tutorials, Saturday detention, coaching duties, traveling teachers, teacher leaders and more.

*Employees who have a year long commitment of extra duty will be paid after verification of the work being completed in full.*

If it is determined by the School Leadership that all contract responsibilities have not been fulfilled, the employee will receive a percentage of the extra duty pay corresponding to the amount of responsibilities fulfilled after consultation.

Short-term extra duty will be paid when the program coordinator or supervisor of the program has submitted the necessary paperwork and time sheets to HR.

*Pay will be included in their regular check at the end of the month, if the paperwork has been submitted on or before the 25th of each month to HR. It is highly recommended to check with your supervisor that they have turned in the necessary paperwork to be issued pay.*

## **Faculty Duty Assignments**

Faculty will be assigned outside, inside, lunch, mall and hallway duties and will follow an established schedule. It is critical teachers show up on time, move about the area, monitor, and remain through their entire assigned duty. Failure to do so, places scholars at risk and creates a libelous situation for the teacher and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

ALL teachers on outside duty are required to wear a pinny/vest for safety purposes. Outside duty teachers are responsible for setting up, removing the safety cones, and returning them to the middle school office DAILY. Please report to the middle school office after duty to return your pinny/vest. Do NOT take them home with you.

Teachers are not to congregate during duty. Use of cellphones on duty is a liability for the teacher and the school. The only exception is in case of an emergency.

On occasion, teachers may be asked to teach the class of another teacher who is out. If the teacher actually teaches from a lesson plan and monitors the students, they will be paid \$35 per class period of substitute teaching. It is our desire to use our full-time Guest Teacher first. However, there are times when late notice prevents administrators from getting an outside substitute.

## **Employee Recognition and Appreciation**

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the organization. Employees are recognized at Board meetings, in the newsletter, through special events, on digital

media, through recognition and appreciation activities, as well as special appreciation days for teachers, school counselors, school secretaries and paraprofessional personnel.

In addition, a “Teacher-of-the-Year” is named each year for the elementary, middle and high school. Nominations are made by secret ballot and tallied. The top three nominees are asked to submit biographies, which are then distributed and voted on by the faculty, staff and administration. This process will be overseen by the Teacher Leaders. Ballots will be counted by the HR Director.

## End of Contract Year

### Separation of Employment

Teachers and administrators who break their contract without completing a full year create great harm to our student demographic. Classroom stability is critically important for our students. Professional educators do not leave teaching or administrative positions before the end of the school year unless there is a serious and valid reason for doing so.

ASTECC attempts to hire only professionals who understand the commitment they are making when they accept a position and sign a contract.

Separation of employment for valid reasons is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for separation are routine. The following examples are some of the most common circumstances under which employment separation occurs:

- Resignation - voluntary employment termination initiated by an employee.
- Discharge - involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization.
- Layoff - involuntary employment termination initiated by the organization for non-disciplinary reasons.
- Retirement - voluntary employment termination initiated by the employee meeting age, length of service, and any other criteria for retirement from the organization.

Employee benefits will be affected by employment termination in the following manner: all accrued, vested benefits that are due and payable at termination will be paid. Some benefits may be continued at the employee’s expense if the employee so chooses. The employee will be notified of the benefits that may be continued and the terms, conditions and other limitations of such continuance.

*ASTECC will not release an employee from a signed contract to enter into a new contract at another school.*

This ensures that ASTECC has time to advertise, interview and hire a replacement and adequate time for transitioning duties and information to the new employee.

*As professionalism dictates, the employee who resigns should FIRST NOTIFY HIS/HER SUPERVISOR IN PERSON and should then do so in WRITING to HR.*

*It is highly inappropriate to discuss the details of personnel issues with scholars and parents.*

PTO (Paid Time Off) may not be used in the final 20 working days of employment. Time off during this time will result in a deduction of pay. Any illnesses during this time will require a doctor's note stating the necessity of the emergency absence.

*Employees giving less than 20 working days' notice will be designated as "Not Eligible for Rehire."*

Employment with ASTEC is based on mutual consent. Both the employee and ASTEC have the legal right to terminate employment "at will," with or without cause, at any time. The exception to this is the certified educator who must abide by the state law to ensure scholars have the best-qualified teachers.

*Faculty will be notified in writing by May 5th (or the first business day before) of ASTEC's intent to rehire. Faculty not planning to return for the new school year should not sign a contract, but rather submit in writing to their supervisor of his/her resignation via certified mail by May 12th.*

*Failure to do so binds the employee to the contract. By Oklahoma State Law, educators who fail to do this are subject to losing their state teaching certificate. Certified employees resigning after August 1st will not be released from their contracts for the upcoming school year.*

It goes without saying that it is "common courtesy" for an employee to FIRST meet with his/her supervisor in person to apprise him/her of a decision to leave ASTEC before submitting a formal resignation.

*If a teacher leaves during a school year, ASTEC has the option of reporting this abandonment of a teaching position to the Oklahoma State Department of Education where teachers may face loss of certification. This includes those with and without the 20-day notification as mentioned above.*

## **Offboarding and Procedures**

With a 48-hour notice, Human Resources will schedule an offboarding meeting for employees leaving ASTEC. Information on the continuation of benefits, COBRA, retirement, release of information, and procedures for requesting references will be provided at this time. Separating employees are asked to provide ASTEC with a forwarding address and phone number and complete any necessary paperwork.

All ASTEC keys, books, property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment. ASTEC may withhold the cost of any unreturned or damaged items from the final paycheck. Final paychecks will not be released until the supervisor, Human Resources Director and CEO or Superintendent sign the Employment Exit form, indicating the checklist is complete.

*Employees are responsible for keeping their exit appointment. Do not just show up and expect to receive service. PLEASE do not go to the person who controls the asset inventory and ask for them to conduct your checkout. We ask that you respect our process and employees.*

Each exit meeting will include a check-in and inspection of all technology checked out or assigned to the employee, as well as an inventory audit of the location assigned to the employee. This audit will be compared to the beginning inventory audit, and the employee will be responsible for any difference. Please note: Employees are not only responsible for the assets in their location; they are responsible for anything under their supervision, including computers, textbooks, furniture, equipment, non-consumables, etc.

## **Letters of Reference**

ASTECC gives only the position held, the dates of employment and whether or not the employee is eligible for rehire.

*Only the HR Director may give an employee reference on behalf of ASTEC. No one else is authorized as there are legal implications in doing so. Do not ask your supervisor for a reference.*

## **Required Reports to the State Board for Educator Certification**

The dismissal or resignation of a certified employee will be reported to the Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) if there is reasonable evidence the employee's conduct involves the following:

- Any form of sexual or physical abuse of a minor or any other illegal conduct with a minor
- The possession, transfer, sale, or distribution of a controlled substance
- The illegal transfer, appropriation, or expenditure of school property or funds
- Any attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle the individual to a professional position or to receive additional compensation associated with a position
- Committing a crime on school property or at a school-sponsored event
- Violating a contract agreement

## **Deadlines**

Through necessity, there are many internal, local, state and federal deadlines imposed on employees at ASTEC. These deadlines must be taken seriously and every effort be made to meet them. Failure to meet deadlines places ASTEC at risk of not receiving accreditation and our share of funding. Many tasks are interdependent with other tasks and requirements. Failure to meet internal deadlines affects all employees and scholars through a domino effect. For example, when spring scholar enrollment deadlines are missed, schedules cannot be completed. When schedules are not completed on time, teacher assignments and resources cannot be calculated and assigned. When these assignments are not completed when designated, the annual budget is delayed, contracts are delayed and personnel and payroll are delayed. This creates unnecessary stress for all who are responsible for these areas.

## **Pay Schedule**

Employees are paid on the 5th of each month after the first month of their contract starting date for a period of 12 months, unless stated in their contract. In the event the 5th falls on a Saturday, the payroll will be the 4th of that month. In the event the 5th falls on a Sunday, the payroll will be processed on the 3rd.



Most employee's request that their paycheck be directly deposited to their bank. There are no additional charges for those wanting direct deposit.

*Employees may not receive an advance in pay. We cannot issue any funds for goods or services not yet provided, as stated by federal statute.*

ASTECC disburses payroll only in 12 equal installments for all one-year contracts.

Final paychecks will not be issued until the "End-of-the-Year Checklist" is completed and the employee has been personally cleared by the Superintendent and the HR Director. Final paychecks for employees leaving ASTECC before the end of the school year will not be directly deposited. A paper check will be issued on the next regularly scheduled warrant/pay date after a final checklist is complete and cleared by a designated employee.

**All costs for damages and missing items will be deducted from the final paycheck.**

## **Salary Administration**

The salary administration program at ASTECC was created to achieve consistent pay practices, comply with federal and state laws, mirror our commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity, and offer competitive salaries within our labor market. Because recruiting and retaining talented employees is critical to our success, ASTECC is committed to paying its employees equitable wages that reflect the requirements and responsibilities of their positions and are comparable to the pay received by similarly situated employees in other organizations in the area.

Compensation for every position is determined by several factors, including job analysis and evaluation, the essential duties and responsibilities of the job, and salary survey data on pay practices of other employers. ASTECC periodically reviews its salary administration program and restructures it as necessary. Merit-based pay adjustments may be awarded for superior employee performance documented by the performance evaluation process, and are available as state funding is available.

Employees should bring their pay and benefit-related questions or concerns to the attention of the Human Resources Director who is responsible for providing correct information to payroll.

All other questions or concerns should be directed to your supervisor

## **Vesting**

Vesting refers to when and what percentage of the employee and/or employer's contribution into the employee's 401K-retirement account can be withdrawn. Employees are entitled to all the money they invest in their retirement plan. However, they may only be eligible to receive a portion of the monies invested by ASTECC. Vesting begins on the first day of employment. Employees who leave the employment of ASTECC will be vested as follows:

- 100% of employee contributions immediately
- 100% of employer contributions after three full years of employment
- 50% of employer contributions after two full years of employment
- 25% of employer contributions after one full year of employment

For more detailed information, please contact the HR Director.

Hardship relates to when an employee requests either a partial or full withdrawal of the funds they put into their account while still employed at ASTECC. Employee contributions cannot be withdrawn during the hardship period. Due to federal regulations, there are several things that need to occur before a hardship withdrawal can occur. Deferrals may not be executed for a period six months after a hardship withdrawal. Please see the Human Resources Director directly for questions regarding this.

## **Withholding of Salaries**

Unfortunately, there are circumstances that may arise that legally prevent ASTEC from paying an employee. ASTEC cooperates fully with the authorities on these matters. These situations may include, but are not limited to:

- Tax lien: Failure of an employee to pay taxes.
- Teacher certification: Faculty who do not have a valid certification on file with ASTEC HR.
- Not completing a care and prevention of athletic injuries, cardiac arrest, concussion awareness and heat illness prevention training prior to coaching. “In accordance with SB 293 every coach associated with an athletic activity must complete the sudden cardiac arrest training course offered by a provider approved by the Oklahoma State Department of Health prior to coaching.”
- Garnishment- legal action taken to withhold employees of a set amount.

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

The law requires that ASTEC make certain deductions from every employee’s compensation. Among these are applicable federal, state and local income taxes. ASTEC must also deduct Social Security taxes on each employee’s earnings, up to a specified limit that is called the Social Security “wage base.” ASTEC matches the amount of Social Security taxes paid by each employee and pays into Workers Compensation Insurance for each full-time employee. Employers now pay more into Social Security than employees. We pay workers’ comp on full- and part-time employees.

ASTEC offers programs and benefits beyond those required by law. They include: retirement, health and other insurance such as short and long-term disability, cancer, Flex 125 plans (see paragraph below), death benefits, etc. Eligible employees may authorize deductions from their paychecks to cover the costs of participation in these programs.

ASTEC offers an optional \*125 Plan through Educational Benefits Insurance (EBi). Employees may choose an amount up to \$2,750 (non-taxed) per year to be set aside to pay for medical deductibles and/or prescription drugs, and up to \$10,500 (per ARP legislation passed in March of 2020) per year may be set aside (non-taxed) for dependent child care.

ASTEC encourages all employees to take advantage of the opportunity to invest in their futures through Empower Retirement. Employees are eligible to participate on their first day of employment, by completing the necessary paperwork provided from Human Resources.

ASTEC will match up to 5% of the employee’s monthly salary invested in the plan. The plan default (the amount matched if no other amount is specified) is 5%. In other words, employees who do not turn in paperwork designating a contribution will be enrolled automatically at 5% rate (pre-tax) in the default investment plan.

If you have questions concerning your benefits, please make an appointment with the Human Resources Director.

## **Employee Benefits**

Eligible employees at ASTEC are provided a wide range of benefits. A number of the programs (such as Social Security, workers’ compensation, state disability and unemployment insurance) cover all employees in the manner prescribed by law.

Benefits eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification. The Human Resources Director can identify the programs for which you are eligible. Details of many of these programs can be found elsewhere in the employee handbook. Employees who resign are not eligible for unemployment benefits.

The following benefit programs are available to all eligible personnel contracted to work a minimum of 30 hours per week:

- Health insurance for employee
- Optional dental, cancer, term, short and long-term disability and flexible spending programs for child care and health
- \$1,000,000 liability insurance
- Professional development (in house)
- Jury duty and military leave (with official documentation)

- Court summons as a witness (with official documentation)
- Bereavement leave (on a case-by-case basis)
- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Retirement matching (up to 5%)
- Non-contract days
- Limited paternity and maternity paid leave (see benefits package in appendix)
- Fringe benefit for short and long term disability (see benefits package in appendix)

The following benefits are available to all employees regardless of the number or hours worked per week:

- Workers Compensation Insurance
- State Unemployment Tax
- Matching Payroll Taxes (FICA/Medicare)

The following benefits are available at the employee's expense:

- Dental insurance
- Vision care insurance
- Life insurance
- Short and long-term disability
- Additional health insurance coverage for dependents
- Additional retirement benefits
- Cancer and accident insurance

## School Meals

Employees may request a meal card. You may pay your site secretary and “load” your card for use in the cafeteria. Breakfast is \$3 and lunch is \$5. ASTEC makes no money on teacher or student meals. School typically take a loss on the school's Child Nutrition Service (CNS) program.

## 2021-2022 Holidays

ASTEC Schools will be closed in observance of the holidays and various school breaks, as noted below. Some employees work on these days, though the offices are closed. Employees scheduled to work these days will have this noted on his/her individual contract calendar.

*Legal Holidays and School Breaks - ASTEC offices are closed: (31 days total)*

*July 4th - 12th (Independence Day)*

*September 5th (Labor Day)*

*October 13th-14th (Fall Break)*

*November 23rd - 25th (Thanksgiving Break)*

*December 19th - Dec 30th (Christmas/Winter Break) Jan 2nd: staff report*

*January 16th (MLK Jr. Day)*

*March 13th - 17th (Spring Break)*

*April 7th (Easter Break)*

*May 29th (Memorial Day)*

*The last day of school is scheduled for May 24th. However, if school is canceled for any reason, days will be added for the number of days missed. Employees are paid for the number of days worked per their contract. It is highly recommended for teachers to avoid making vacation plans the week of Memorial Day.*

*It is the duty of assigned supervisors to ensure coverage of offices and phones for all days that offices are open. Non-faculty may select a day(s) during a school holiday as a contract day if they have a specific project directed and approved by their supervisor.*

Support and other staff who miss days due to school closings must make up those days lost in the scheduled calendar or use their PTO.

## **Health Insurance**

ASTECSchools' health insurance plan provides employees and their dependents access to medical, dental, and vision insurance benefits. All personnel contracted to work a minimum of 30 hours per week are eligible to participate in the health insurance plan, subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between ASTEC Schools and the insurance carrier.

ASTECSchools pays 100% of the health insurance premium (HealthChoice High option) for personnel contracted to work a minimum of 30 hours per week. If an employee elects to waive the insurance coverage or selects coverage costing less than the HealthChoice High option, additional taxable income will be paid to the employee, based on the state formula. Employees may add family members at an additional cost. Employees may also choose coverage that is more costly than the HealthChoice High option, but will need to pay for the difference in cost.

Other optional insurance plans include: term-life insurance; cancer insurance; short and long-term disability insurance; accident-only insurance; and, accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D).

A change in employment classification that would result in loss of eligibility to participate in the health insurance plan may qualify an employee for benefits continuation under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA). The Human Resources Director will review Benefits Continuation (COBRA) at your off-boarding session should you leave ASTEC employment. COBRA allows for 18-months of continued insurance, at the cost level switched to the separated employee.

Details of the health insurance plans are described at the time of hire, and information on the costs of coverage is provided in advance of enrollment. Employees may contact the Human Resources Director for more information about health insurance benefits.

Medical benefits are available upon enrollment on the first day of the month following month of hire and are subject for open enrollment each calendar year. Cut off for benefit enrollment is the 20th of the month. The insurance year for deductible purposes is January 1 through December 31st.

## **Flexible Spending Account (Medical)**

Employees may choose to participate in a Flexible Spending Plan with Employee Benefits Insurance (EBI). The plan allows an employee to determine a total annual amount they will spend on medical deductibles, co-pays, over-the-counter drugs,, etc.

This amount is non-taxable and the employee may have it deducted in equal amounts from their paycheck. The maximum amount for calendar year 2022 is \$2,850/year. This is one of the best ways to lower your tax-liability and all employees should take advantage of this.

*If an employee goes over the annual (medical) Flexible Spending account they have selected, the overage will be deducted from the employee's end-of-contract term pay.*

ASTECS does not participate in a Health Savings Plan (HSP) as employers are not able to offer both an HSP and FSA plan at the same time.

### **Flexible Spending Account (Dependent Care)**

In addition to a medical FSA, employees are also eligible to enroll in the dependent care FSA. In calendar year 2022, the maximum amount that is contributable is \$5,000 per household (emphasis on household). This plan lowers your tax liability by allowing you to reimburse costs you pay for eligible dependents for childcare, babysitting, after-school care and more. While similar to a medical FSA in savings, this program works through reimbursements while medical FSA's work by front-loading the yearly allowance.

*If an employee goes over the annual (dependent care) Flexible Spending account they have selected, the overage will be deducted from the employee's end-of-contract term pay.*

For more information or details on the benefits of a dependent-care flexible spending account, contact Human Resources.

The Flexible Spending Plan runs from July 1st of each year through June 30th of the following year. Employees may carry over \$500 between plan years (July 1 - June 30).

### **Liability Insurance**

In an effort to protect its employees and Board of Directors, ASTEC Schools provides \$1,000,000 in liability insurance coverage for each employee and member of the Board of Directors. The insurance covers the employee or the Board member's attorney fees in the event they are sued during the performance of their duty to ASTEC.

*Keep in mind that liability insurance does not cover an employee who is found to be negligent, breaking the law or violating school policies.*

### **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

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

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

Neither ASTEC Schools nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of workers' compensation benefits for injuries that occur during an employee's voluntary participation (rather than monitoring or chaperoning) in any recreational, social or athletic activity sponsored by ASTEC Schools on or off school property. Employees do so at their own risk. Unless specifically designated by ASTEC Administration, faculty and staff are not to participate in the activities of All Sports Day.

## **Unemployment Compensation Insurance**

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees who resign or who are terminated for "cause" (not living up to their contract) are not eligible for unemployment compensation.

*All employees are within their rights to file for unemployment. Generally, employees who resign/quit without due cause are not eligible for unemployment. In addition, a specific amount of earnings are required in order to be eligible in a given quarter per the OESC.*

## **Business Travel Expenses**

ASTEC Schools will reimburse employees for reasonable and approved business travel expenses incurred while on assignments away from the normal work location based on state guidelines. The CEO or Superintendent must approve all business travel in advance.

Once approved, the employee will provide the Central Office the travel dates, dates of training and official documentation. A Purchase Request for travel, fees for luggage and taxis, lodging, per diem and registration costs will be prepared on your behalf. The Central Office designee will make travel arrangements and calculate the federal per diem for your destination. If meals are provided, those meals will be deducted from your per diem.

Please note that mileage costs for travel using a privately owned vehicle cannot exceed the cost of an airline flight to the destination nor be extended for travel time beyond the time of the flight. If an employee selects to drive their personal vehicle to an out-of-state event rather than fly to the event, the additional days of travel will be taken from their PTO. Mileage for driving a personal vehicle will be reimbursed at the current federal mileage reimbursement rate.

*Upon your return, you will need to provide receipts to the Central Office designee for taxis, parking and lodging, session agendas (with sessions attended marked) within 30 days of the charges. Receipts for meals do not need to be submitted. Please initial your receipts before submitting.*

*Should employees attend a conference or other type of professional development paid for by ASTEC and then leave the organization (within a year of the training/conference), the employee's daily salary rate for the days of work missed to attend the conference will be deducted from the employee's final pay.*

Employees who are involved in an accident while traveling on business must promptly report the incident to their immediate supervisor. Vehicles owned, leased or rented by ASTEC Schools cannot be used for personal use without prior approval.

Cash advances to cover reasonably anticipated expenses might be made to employees after travel has been approved. Employees should submit a written request to their supervisor when travel advances are needed.

With prior approval, a family member or friend may accompany employees on business travel when the presence of a companion will not interfere with successful completion of business objectives. Generally, employees are also permitted to combine personal travel with business travel, as long as time away from work is approved and PTO/Non-Contract days are available. Additional expenses arising from such non-business travel are the responsibility of the employee.

Employees should contact the Central Office designee for guidance and assistance on procedures related to travel arrangements, travel advances, expense reports, reimbursement for specific expenses, or any other business travel issues.

## Leaves and Absences

ASTEC offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. Employees who have personal needs that require long leaves of absence (more than 5 days) should notify their supervisor. Determination will be made if further counseling is needed with HR. HR will counsel employees about leave options, continuation of benefits, and communicating with the organization. Employees who take an unpaid leave of absence may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense.

ASTEC employees receive Paid Time Off (PTO) as outlined on the following page after 30 days of employment. No distinction is made between sick leave and personal days

Should an employee use more PTO than he or she has accrued, the cost of non-accrued PTO will be deducted as Leave Without Pay (LWOP). A repayment plan should be discussed with the Human Resources who is responsible for payroll.

PTO should be viewed as similar to “insurance,” in that it is there if an employee becomes ill on occasion or if he/she becomes more critically ill and requires a period of time to recover. PTO should not be viewed as days “owed” to an employee. Further, it is not expected that faculty will exhaust allotted PTO unless he/she is exceptionally ill for a long period of time.

All employees perform valuable tasks that contribute to the success of ASTEC Schools and our scholars. When teachers are absent, scholars suffer, no matter how good the substitute or the teacher’s lesson plans. It is the expectation that faculty will take care of personal business and non-emergency medical appointments during the summer months and during breaks during the school year.

PTO may be carried forward according to the table on the following page. However, exceptions to the long-term illness of an employee with an exceptional attendance record may be made.

Employees who opt to receive a payout for days not taken in PTO at the end of the year, should not ask for special consideration for absences the following year.

*PTO must be taken in 2-hour increments or 0.25 days. No Exceptions.*

*All new employees are eligible for PTO after 30 days of employment.*

*Any employee who returns to work during a time period not authorized by a medical doctor’s note, will be asked to leave until the allotted time expires. Supervisors must monitor to ensure this policy is being followed.*



## Unanticipated and Anticipated Leave

There are two types of leave: anticipated and unanticipated.

**Unanticipated Leave:** Leave that is taken for personal or family illness, emergency, or a death in the family is considered unanticipated leave. This type of leave allows very little or no advance planning and will be granted to employees in the same manner as typical PTO. Employees must follow policy regarding reporting this absence as soon as possible and complete the appropriate paperwork upon return.

**Anticipated Leave:** Leave that is taken at an employee's discretion and that can be scheduled in advance is considered anticipated leave. An employee wishing to take anticipated PTO is to notify their supervisor as soon as they are aware of the need for an absence and submit an on-line written request. Written requests require a minimum of (5) days in advance. Your supervisor will review and HR will confirm or deny the leave. The effect of the employee's absence on the educational program or department operations, as well as the availability of substitutes, will be considered by the supervisor prior to granting approval.

If an employee is absent for three or more consecutive days due to illness or injury, a physician's statement must be provided, verifying the disability and its beginning and expected ending dates. In some instances, such verification may be requested for other PTO absences and may be required as a condition to receiving PTO benefits. Absences on "blackout" days require a doctor's note stating that particular time is the ONLY time you could have an appointment. Before returning to work from a PTO absence of five calendar days or more, an employee must provide a physician's verification that he or she may safely return to work.

Unused leave benefits will not be paid to employees while they are employed or upon termination of employment. Leave days do not carry forward to the next employment year except as outlined on the table on the next page.

However, to avoid any payroll deductions, employees with a history of exceptional attendance may be given additional days for a catastrophic illness or injury that causes him/her to exceed the number of days available. Only the CEO or Superintendent may award these exceptions. See ASTEC's PTO schedule on the next page.

## ASTEC Schools PTO/Contract Day Schedule

\*PTO can be taken in 2-hour increments only. Non-contracted days must be taken in full days.

Position Name	Contracted Days per Year	Paid Time Off	
		0-3 Years	4+ Years
New Faculty & Teaching Assistants	187	3 per semester	4 per semester (Teaching Assistants)
Returning Faculty	182	3 per semester	4 per semester
Counselors & Counselor's Assistant	210	3 per semester	4 per semester
School Administrators IT Coordinator	225	3 per semester +2 summer	4 per semester +2 summer
Central Office Professional Staff Secretaries Maintenance Tech	230	3 per semester +2 summer	4 per semester +2 summer
Superintendent Chief Executive Officer	365	3 per semester +2 summer	4 per semester +2 summer

## Blackout Dates

The nature of educational organizations is such that clients are best served when employees are present. This is especially true during critical times.

ASTECC encourages employees to be good stewards of their PTO balances, so they can take time off for their physical and mental health without loss of pay.

*Employees will not be released on a time off without appropriate documentation for a medical or mental health emergency. Employees must provide a doctor's note stating the medical emergency was for the employee or an immediate family member, if an absence occurs on these days. Absences without a note on these days will result in a loss of prorated salary for that day.*

For administrators, professional and support staff, the last two weeks of May, through June 1st, most of August, and other days are marked as blackout days on individual calendars. The first two and the last week of June and the last two weeks of July are critical times for full-time employees scheduled to work in the summer. While they are not specifically blackout days, absences will only be approved for emergencies.

Blackout days for faculty include the first two weeks and last two weeks of school, the day before and after a holiday (including holidays that fall on a weekend) or a scheduled school break, field trips, progress report days, and Professional Learning Community (PLC) days (Monday's). State testing days are blackout days for those scheduled to administer a test or provide class coverage. A schedule will be provided.

"All Employee" Professional Development days are blackout days for all employees. Employees should refer to their individual contract calendar for exact blackout days for their position.

Appointments are not to be made on the morning of a blackout day. Employees will not be granted leave to attend to non-emergency situations or recurring appointments on these days.

While May is a blackout period for absences, there are some exceptions that will be made on a case-by-case basis. If your child has a graduation, or other special event, employees who have at least one day of PTO per the days requested will be excused if the request is made at least 2-weeks in advance.

*The Human Resources Director will provide a calendar with the blackout dates for your specific position to be reviewed with you and signed by your supervisor. This will be uploaded to BambooHR for your personal reference.*

## Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

To help employees balance the demands of the workplace with personal and family needs, Congress enacted the Family and Medical Leave Act or FMLA. Under the FMLA, if a business has 50 or more employees, it may be required to give an employee up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for certain family and medical reasons.

Contact Human Resources if you have questions regarding what family and medical reasons qualify.

*By law, full-time employees who have worked during the past 12 months and have worked at least 1,250 hours at ASTEC are eligible for family leave. 30-day notices are required for FMLA requests if at all possible.*

## **Bereavement Leave**

Paid bereavement leave will be granted according to the following schedule:

- Employees are allowed up to four consecutive days off from regularly scheduled duty with regular pay in the event of the death of the employee's spouse, domestic partner, child, stepchild, parent, stepparent, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother, sister, stepbrother, or stepsister.
- Employees are allowed one day off from regular scheduled duty with regular pay in the event of death of the employee's brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, grandparent, grandchild or spouse's grandparent.
- Employees are allowed up to four hours of bereavement leave to attend the funeral of a fellow regular employee or retiree of the company, provided such absence from duty will not interfere with normal operations of the company.
- Substantiation of the reason for bereavement leave will be required. You will need to complete a form requesting leave. This form can be acquired through the Administration or Faculty Index in Google Workspace.

*With appropriate documentation, bereavement will be approved for immediate family and close relatives.*

"Immediate family" shall be interpreted to be: father, mother, sister, brother, spouse, and children of the employee. Also included as immediate family are mother-, father-, brother-, sister-, son-, and daughter-in-law, as well as grandchildren and/or grandparents. Biological, adopted, foster, legal wards, step or in loco parentis relationships are considered immediate family relationships under this policy. "Close relative outside the immediate family" shall be interpreted to be: aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, or cousin of the employee. Current marital status will be defined in accordance with Oklahoma State law.

You must contact Human Resources to know if your leave will be paid and for how long prior to taking the bereavement leave. If arrangements are not made through Human Resources then you are not guaranteed to have paid time off.

## **Military Leave**

A military leave of absence will be granted to employees who are absent from work because of service in the U.S. uniformed services, in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Advance notice of military service is required unless military necessity prevents such notice, or it is otherwise impossible or unreasonable. Please submit your official order for duty form you receive directly to HR for processing.

Employees will continue to receive full pay while on leave for two-week training assignments and shorter absences. The portion of any military leaves of absence in excess of two weeks will be unpaid. However, employees may use any available paid time off for the absence.

Continuation of health insurance benefits is available, as required by USERRA, based on the length of the leave and subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of the applicable plans for which the employee is otherwise eligible.

Benefit accruals such as PTO will be suspended during the leave and will resume upon the employee's return to active employment

Employees on military leave for up to 30 days are required to return to work for the first regularly scheduled shift after the end of service, allowing reasonable travel time. Employees on longer military leave must apply for reinstatement, in accordance with USERRA and all applicable state laws.

Employees returning from military leave will be placed in the position they would have attained had they remained continuously employed or a comparable one depending on the length of military service in accordance with USERRA. They will be treated as though they were continuously employed for purposes of determining benefits based on length of service.

## **Administrative Leave**

Occasionally, and under rare circumstances, an employee may be placed on administrative leave. Depending on the situation, the leave may be paid or unpaid. Any available leave must be exhausted before administrative leave is paid.

Should an employee be placed on administrative leave, he/she may not return to the school and/or mall property until a time agreed-upon with the employee's supervisor.

## **Court Summons for Jury Duty or as a Witness**

ASTECSchools encourage employees to fulfill their civic responsibilities when required. Employees in an eligible classification may request up to one week of paid jury duty or witness leave over any two-year period.

Court summons pay will be calculated on the employee's base pay rate times the number of hours the employee would otherwise have worked on the day of absence. Only regular full-time employees and regular part-time employees qualify. If employees are required to serve beyond the period of paid leave, they may use any available paid time off (for example, leave benefits), or they may request an unpaid leave of absence. Employees may not be paid both by the school and for jury duty for the same day. Jury duty pay for days paid by ASTEC will be deducted from the employee's pay.

Employees must show a copy of their summons to their supervisor as soon as possible so that the supervisor may make arrangements to accommodate their absence. Of course, employees are expected to report for work whenever the court schedule permits.

Either ASTEC Schools or the employee may request that the employee be excused from jury duty if, ASTEC administration believes the employee's absence would create serious operational difficulties.

ASTECSchools will continue to provide health insurance benefits for the full term of the jury duty or witness absence.

## **Voting Leave**

According to Oklahoma law §26-7-101, employees are to be allowed time to vote.

Every corporation, firm, association or individual hereinafter referred to as "employer" who, on election day, has a registered voter employed or in his service, shall grant the employee two (2) hours of time during the period when the election is open in which to vote, and if such employee be in the county or at such distance from the voting place that more than two (2) hours are required in which to attend such elections, then the employee shall be allowed a sufficient time in which to cast a ballot. No such employee shall be entitled to such time to vote unless the employee notifies orally or in writing an employer's representative of the employee's intention to be absent, on the day preceding the Election Day. Upon proof of voting, such employees shall not be subject to any loss of compensation or other penalty for such absence. Such employer shall select the hours which such employees are to be allowed in which to attend such elections, and shall notify each of the employees which hours they are to have in which to vote. This section shall not apply to an employee whose workday begins three (3) hours or more subsequent to the time of opening of the polls, or ends three (3) hours or more prior to the time of closing the polls. The employer may change the work hours to allow such three (3) hours before the beginning of work or after the work hours.

ASTECSchools work hours do not require time off during the work day to vote since polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

# Complaints and Grievances

## Personnel-Management Relations

In an effort to hear and resolve employee complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, ASTEC Schools has adopted an orderly process all employees are required to follow when bringing forward formal complaints and grievances. Employees are encouraged to discuss problems or complaints with their supervisors or an appropriate administrator at any time.

All employees are expected to act in a professional manner with the attitude of an “employer,” rather than “employee.” Employees are valued for taking ownership of their individual duties. Employees are to bring concerns and issues directly to their immediate supervisor. Concerns with pay and benefits should be directed to HR.

ASTEC asks that each employee take ownership and be proactive in decision making, realizing that the ASTEC Schools’ administration is working toward a “win-win” relationship with all employees in all situations.

Employees are never to subject scholars, parents or other employees to their frustrations or to internal adult issues. Scholars are in our schools to learn and not to be exposed to disgruntled adults, disagreements with coworkers, gossip or other unprofessional and destructive behaviors.

Each member of the Board is well aware that grievances are handled through the grievance process. If contacted, Board members will direct you to the approved Employee Policies and Procedures Handbook.

The formal grievance process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard, up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. This does not include being heard by the members of the Board. Contact with Board members is redirected to the CEO.

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees an orderly process for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints. The administration intends that, whenever feasible, complaints be resolved at the lowest possible administrative level.

## General Grievance Procedures

Employees who have personally met with their supervisor regarding an issue but still believe their grievance has not been addressed should submit their complaint in writing to the Human Resources Director. The complaint will be investigated thoroughly and then discussed in an informal conference with HR and the direct supervisor of the person making the grievance.

All complaints arising out of an event or related series of events must be addressed in one complaint. An employee is precluded from bringing separate or serial complaints concerning events about which the employee has previously complained.

In resolving complaints, time is of the essence. All time limits shall be strictly followed, unless extended by mutual consent. All references are to work days. The appropriate administrator at each level shall respond to the employee within five workdays of a complaint conference. Written complaints shall receive written responses. The employee has five workdays after receiving a response to appeal to the next level. The complaint shall be considered concluded if the employee does not appeal within that time limit.

Employees shall be entitled to administrative review conferences, as outlined in Level One and Level Two sections.

***Level One*** - The employee should contact his/her supervisor within three days of when he/she first knew or should have known of the event or series of events causing the complaint. After discussing the issue with the supervisor without satisfaction the issue continues to the first level.

*ASTEC’s  
Governing/  
Advisory  
Boards of  
Directors do  
not address  
grievances.*

In the event the grievance is directed towards an employee's supervisor, the complaint should be brought to the attention of HR.

**Level Two** - An employee who has a complaint shall be discussed with the immediate supervisor. If the grievance is with the direct supervisor, please bring it to the attention of the HR Director. If the supervisor is not able to resolve the issue to the employee's satisfaction, the issue moves to a Level Two.

The employee will submit the complaint in writing to the Human Resources Director within three days of meeting with his/her supervisor. The Human Resources Director will schedule a meeting with the employee and appropriate parties within five days of receipt of the written complaint. A Formal Complaint form can be found on either the Administrative or Faculty Index in Google Workspace.

If the outcome of the conference at Level Two is not to the employee's satisfaction, the employee can request to place the matter before the CEO and/or Superintendent within five workdays via email after the ruling of the complaint at Level Two. The Human Resources Director shall inform the employee of the date, time, and place of the meeting. The CEO and/or Superintendent may set reasonable time limits on complaint presentations. The ASTEC standard "Rules of Engagement" will be followed.

The Human Resources Director shall provide the CEO and/or Superintendent copies of the employee's original grievance, all responses, and any written documentation previously submitted by the employee and the administration. The CEO and/or Superintendent shall not be required to consider documentation not previously submitted or issues not previously presented. The parties presenting information to the CEO and/or Superintendent in a complaint/grievance are required to provide all written information/materials to the CEO and/or Superintendent no later than three days prior to the date of the hearing. The CEO and/or Superintendent shall hear the complaint, but is not required to respond or take any action on the matter. Lack of official action by the CEO and/or Superintendent upholds the administrative decision at Level Two.

The Level Two proceedings will be documented, recorded, and placed in the employee's HR file.

It is our goal to create a "win-win" situation wherever possible. However, not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction. Only through understanding and discussion of mutual problems can employees and management develop confidence in one another. Sometimes it is necessary to "agree to disagree" and move forward, in the best interests of all involved. This confidence is important to the operation of an efficient and harmonious work environment and helps to ensure everyone's job security.

## **Progressive Discipline**

The purpose of this policy is to state ASTEC's position on administering equitable and consistent discipline for unsatisfactory conduct in the workplace. The best disciplinary measure is the one that does not have to be enforced and comes from good leadership and fair supervision at all employment levels.

ASTEC's own best interest lies in ensuring fair treatment of all employees and in making certain that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform and impartial. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

Although employment with ASTEC is based on mutual consent, both the employee and ASTEC have the right to terminate employment at will with or without cause or advance notice, ASTEC may use progressive discipline at its discretion.

Disciplinary action may call for any of four steps - verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay, or termination of employment - depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences. There may be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed.

Progressive discipline means that, with respect to most disciplinary problems, these steps will normally be followed: a first offense may call for a verbal warning; a next offense may be followed by a written warning; another offense may lead to administrative leave, with or without pay, and finally, up to and including termination of employment. If more than six months have passed since the last disciplinary action, the process may start over (if another infraction occurs).



ASTECC recognizes that there are certain types of employee problems serious enough to justify either a suspension, or, in extreme situations, termination of employment without progression through the usual progressive discipline steps.

While it is impossible to list every type of behavior that may be deemed a serious offense, many are listed in this document. However, the problems listed are not all necessarily serious offenses, but may be examples of unsatisfactory conduct that will trigger progressive discipline.

By using progressive discipline, ASTEC hopes that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and ASTEC Schools.

Examples of possible misconduct might include, but are not limited to:

- Theft - inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Falsification of timekeeping records
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or other property located at ASTEC
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice or using proper procedures
- Unauthorized absence from workstation during the workday
- Unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, copiers or other employer-owned equipment
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" and/or confidential information as outlined
- Violation of personnel policies
- Verbal or physical assault
- Speaking to parents or students about work issues or concerns
- Any other unsatisfactory performance or conduct

## Employee Conduct and Welfare

### Business Ethics and Conduct

The successful business operation and reputation of ASTEC Schools is built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

The continued success of ASTEC Schools is dependent upon our customers' trust, and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees have a duty to ASTEC Schools and its customers to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

ASTECC Schools will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, and expects its directors, officers and employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest or unethical conduct.

*At no time should an employee take his/her issue to a member of the ASTEC Schools' Governing/Advisory Boards of Directors, to other employees, to scholars, to parents or to patrons. Go to your direct supervisor for any concerns.*



In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide employees with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. Please consult with your supervisor when in doubt.

Personnel matters are to be handled at the administration level. Compliance with this policy of business ethics and conduct is the responsibility of every ASTEC Schools' employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

## **Standards of Conduct**

*All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interests of the organization and to be courteous to scholars, one another, and the public. In addition to other standards of conduct referred to in the handbook, employees are expected to observe the following standards of conduct:*

- *Recognize and respect the rights and property of scholars and coworkers and maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to scholars and coworkers*
- *Report to work according to the assigned schedule*
- *Notify their immediate supervisor in advance or as early as possible in the event 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 school procedures and policies*
- *Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately*
- *Use ASTEC time, funds, and property for authorized business and activities only*

Any employee who either verbally or physically assaults another employee or student will immediately be placed on administrative leave without pay and face termination or criminal charges.

All employees are expected to follow the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Educators, which is reprinted below.

### **Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Educators\***

\*The term "educator" in this section refers to all employees within an educational setting. These are:

**Paraprofessional and Professional Responsibility:** The educator should strive to create an atmosphere that will nurture and fulfill the potential of each scholar. The educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward scholars, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community. In conscientiously conducting his or her affairs, the educator shall exemplify the highest standards of professional commitment.

<b>Principle I: Professional Ethical Conduct</b>	The educator shall maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, demonstrating personal integrity, and exemplifying honesty.
<b>Standard 1</b>	The educator shall not intentionally misrepresent official policies of the school district or educational institution and shall clearly distinguish those views from personal attitudes and opinions.
<b>Standard 2</b>	The educator shall honestly account for all funds committed to his or her charge and shall conduct financial business with integrity.
<b>Standard 3</b>	The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.
<b>Standard 4</b>	The educator shall accept no gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment.
<b>Standard 5</b>	The educator shall not offer any favor, service, or thing of value to obtain special advantage.
<b>Standard 6</b>	The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.
<b>Principle II: Professional Practices and Performance</b>	The educator, after qualifying in a manner established by law or regulation, shall assume responsibility for professional administrative or teaching practices and professional performance and shall demonstrate competence.
<b>Standard 1</b>	The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or be assigned a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications and shall adhere to the terms of a contract or appointment.
<b>Standard 2</b>	The educator shall not deliberately or recklessly impair his or her mental or physical health or ignore social prudence, thereby affecting his or her ability to perform the duties of his or her professional assignment.
<b>Standard 3</b>	The educator shall organize instruction that seeks to accomplish objectives related to learning.
<b>Standard 4</b>	The educator shall continue professional growth.
<b>Standard 5</b>	The educator shall comply with written local school board policies, state regulations, and applicable state and other federal laws.
<b>Principle III: Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues</b>	The educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.
<b>Standard 1</b>	The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
<b>Standard 2</b>	The educator shall not willfully make false statements about a colleague or the school system.
<b>Standard 3</b>	The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding dismissal, evaluation, and employment processes.
<b>Standard 4</b>	The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities.
<b>Standard 5</b>	The educator shall not discriminate against, coerce, or harass a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, or family status.
<b>Standard 6</b>	The educator shall not intentionally deny or impede a colleague in the exercise or enjoyment of any professional right or privilege.
<b>Standard 7</b>	The educator shall not use coercive control or promise special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.
<b>Standard 8</b>	The educator shall have the academic freedom to teach as a professional privilege, and no educator shall interfere with such privilege except as required by state and/or federal laws.

<b>Principle IV: Ethical Conduct toward Scholars</b>	The educator, in accepting a position of public trust, should measure success by the progress of each Scholar toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen.
<b>Standard 1</b>	The educator shall deal considerately and justly with each scholar and shall seek to resolve problems including discipline according to law and school board policy.
<b>Standard 2</b>	The educator shall not intentionally expose the scholar to disparagement.
<b>Standard 3</b>	The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning scholars unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.
<b>Standard 4</b>	The educator shall make reasonable efforts to protect the scholar from conditions detrimental to learning, physical health, mental health, or safety.
<b>Standard 5</b>	The educator shall not deliberately distort facts.
<b>Standard 6</b>	The educator shall not unfairly exclude a scholar from participation in a program, deny benefits to a scholar, or grant an advantage to a scholar on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, national origin, religion, or family status.
<b>Standard 7</b>	The educator shall not unreasonably restrain the Scholar from independent action in the pursuit of learning or deny the Scholar access to varying points of view.
<b>Principle V: Ethical Conduct toward Parents and Community</b>	The educator, in fulfilling citizenship responsibilities in the community, should cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.
<b>Standard 1</b>	The educator shall make a reasonable effort to communicate with parents' information that lawfully should be revealed in the interest of the scholar.
<b>Standard 2</b>	The educator shall endeavor to understand community cultures and relate the home environment of scholars to the school.
<b>Standard 3</b>	The educator shall manifest a positive role in school-public relations.

*Chart available through the Oklahoma School Law Book*

## Employee Involvement

In the spirit of teamwork and cooperation, ASTEC employees at all levels are expected to be involved in school and organizational activities and events. Employees will be asked to serve on committees or to provide leadership for school or other events. Beyond the practical needs for support, this unity helps create positive public relations and does not place an unbalanced burden on a few. Coming early to help set up for events and remaining afterward for cleanup is always appreciated.

## Workplace Etiquette

ASTEC Schools strives to maintain a positive work environment, where employees treat each other with respect and courtesy. Sometimes issues arise when employees are unaware of their behavior in the workplace that may be disruptive or annoying to others. Many of these day-to-day issues can be addressed by politely communicating with a co-worker to bring the perceived problem to his or her attention. In most cases, common sense will dictate an appropriate resolution.

ASTEC Schools encourages all employees to keep an open mind and graciously accept constructive feedback or a request to change behavior that may be affecting another employee's ability to concentrate and be productive.

The following workplace etiquette guidelines are not necessarily intended to be hard and fast work rules with disciplinary consequences. They are simply suggestions for appropriate workplace behavior to help everyone be more conscientious and considerate of co-workers and the work environment. Employees should contact Human Resources if they have comments, concerns or suggestions regarding these workplace etiquette guidelines.

- Replace paper in the copy machine trays when they are empty
- Retrieve print jobs in a timely manner, and be sure to collect all your pages
- Notify school site secretary when shredder is full
- Keep the area around the copy machine orderly and picked up
- Be careful not to take or discard others' print jobs or faxes when collecting your own
- Avoid public accusations or criticisms of other employees. Address such issues privately with those involved or your supervisor
- Try to minimize unscheduled interruptions of other employees while they are working
- Communicate by email or phone whenever possible, instead of walking unexpectedly into someone's office or workspace
- AVOID "copying" employees in email that do not pertain to them. Use discretion
- Be conscious of how your voice travels, and try to lower the volume of your voice when talking on the phone or to others in open areas
- Keep socializing to a minimum and try to conduct conversations in areas where the noise will not be distracting to others
- Try not to block walkways while carrying on conversations
- Refrain from using inappropriate language (swearing) that others may overhear
- Avoid discussions of your personal life/issues in public conversations that can be easily overheard
- Monitor the volume when listening to music, voice mail, or a speakerphone that others can hear
- Clean up after yourself and do not leave behind waste or discarded items

## **Honoring Diversity**

ASTEC actively supports diversity, inclusion and equality. Employees should remember that the ASTEC community consists of people who hold a variety of personal, cultural, religious and philosophical viewpoints. No matter your race, color, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or religion, everyone has a place at ASTEC. Discrimination and words or actions displaying any of these differences will not be tolerated.

No employee should willfully call another employee by a pronoun that is not of their preference.

Any employee may request to serve on the ASTEC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council.

Individuals need to exercise good judgment if they decide to celebrate holidays. If they choose to celebrate holidays they must do so in a way that does not make it appear that ASTEC is endorsing or fostering a particular religion.

As a public institution, ASTEC respects the "separation of church and state" as a constitutional principle and practice, and we hold as one of our core values a commitment to "vigilantly protect free expression of thought."

Religious symbols are not appropriate in a public institution. Staff is encouraged to be respectful of diversity of beliefs and refrain from displaying, within public areas in the workplace, any religious symbols that may be seen as implying institutional support for a particular religious viewpoint. Employees should also exercise good judgment and sensitivity concerning the appropriateness of seasonal, religious symbols and emails in the workplace. It is inappropriate to direct email messages to employees that have an expression of a particular belief.

Our concern about the appearance of ASTEC's support for a particular religious viewpoint must be balanced against our respect for the rights of individuals to express religious views in their personal dress and in their personal workspaces that are not located in public areas and do not suggest institutional support.

## **English Spoken in the Workplace**

While ASTEC places a high value on honoring diversity, speaking languages other than English in the workplace is not acceptable. All ASTEC employees are English speakers. To speak another language in front of those whose language we speak is considered inappropriate and rude. Obviously, translating for non-English speaking guests is different and appreciated.

## **Visitors in the Workplace**

For security reasons ALL visitors are to enter the facility through the Central Office. This includes former scholars, employees,

and vendors etc. Authorized visitors will receive an ID badge and be escorted to their destination. Employees who observe an unauthorized individual on the district premises should immediately direct him or her to the Central Office or contact the administrator in charge.

In general, the workplace is not an appropriate place for employees' children, as this is a distraction to the parent and to other employees. Children may not be brought into the workplace as a general rule. If approved for a specific purpose and time frame, employees should provide close supervision of their children. Under no circumstances should children be left unattended or allowed to wander the building or disturb other employees. This will result in a permanent loss of this consideration. Employees are not to use the workplace in the place of a babysitter.

## **Personal Relationships in the Workplace**

Employee's are to set professional boundaries between administrators and staff and between the staff and students at all times, both in and outside the workplace.

Relatives of current employees may not occupy a position under the direct and sole supervision of another relative. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried over into day-to-day working relationships.

For purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage. A dating relationship is defined as a relationship that may be reasonably expected to lead to the formation of a consensual "romantic" or sexual relationship. This policy applies to all employees without regard to the gender or sexual orientation of the individuals involved.

Employees in a close personal relationship should refrain from public workplace displays of affection or excessive personal conversation. In addition, employees in a position to make decisions that benefit friends who are employed at ASTEC are to take great care to avoid actions that may be misconstrued as favoritism toward that employee.

Supervisors and those in leadership positions should avoid "hanging out" with subordinates outside of the workplace if it can be avoided. This includes going out to lunch, dinner, and other non-work related activities. It is strongly encouraged for employees to keep romantic relationships outside of the workplace where appropriate.

## **Professional Appearance**

*Those in our communities once called teaching a profession. Unfortunately, educators have begun to be seen as a "trade." If we want to be viewed (and compensated) as "professionals" and not "tradesmen/women," we will have to demonstrate that we are like those in the professions and that includes our attire and appearance.*

Dress, grooming and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and send a message to parents, scholars and the community that we are serious about education and that we are "professionals." They also set an example for our scholars, who must follow a dress requirement. One can be sure that the degree of professionalism established in the classroom will have a positive influence on scholars and on learning.

When scholars come to school and see employees in professional attire, it sets a standard for what's going to happen in school that day or in that school year. Indeed, serious dress underscores that learning is a serious business. What better place to send that message than from the front of the classroom or through the school doors?

During business hours or when representing ASTEC Schools, including extra curricular activities, employees are expected to

present a clean, neat, tasteful and professional appearance. Employees should dress and groom according to the requirements of the position and accepted social standards for professionals. This is particularly true if their job involves dealing with customers or visitors in person. All body art must be covered during business hours and school events.

Listed on the next page is a general overview of acceptable professional business wear as well as a listing of some of the more common items that are not appropriate for the office. Please note the acceptable attire is NOT business casual. Obviously, neither group is intended to be all-inclusive. Rather, these items should help set the general parameters for proper business wear and allow for intelligent judgments about items that are not specifically addressed.

Your supervisor is responsible for establishing a reasonable dress code appropriate to the job you perform. If your supervisor feels your personal appearance is inappropriate, you may be asked to leave the workplace until you are properly dressed or groomed. Under such circumstances, you will not be compensated for the time away from work. Consult your supervisor or the Human Resources Director if you have questions as to what constitutes appropriate appearance. When necessary, reasonable accommodations may be made to a person with a disability. Documentation will be required.

There are no “free” dress days. On occasion, ASTEC may allow less formal clothing to be worn, in order to allow employees to work more comfortably on days when they are asked to attend outdoor events or on days when classrooms are being cleaned to open or close the school year.

## General Guidelines for Appearance

Acceptable	Not Acceptable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clothing should be ironed and/or wrinkle-free.</li> <li>• Men: dress shirts, dress slacks, business suits, pants (with loops should have a belt or suspenders), pants should also not be “skinny” or too tailored through the leg, jeans-type or non-faded golf shirts. Ties/bowties are not required but are appreciated, especially for certain events. Polo shirts are acceptable if worn with slacks and are tucked in.</li> <li>• Women: suits, pant suits, dress slacks (not jeans type), business dress, appropriate blouses, skirts of appropriate length (no more than 3” above the top of the knee).</li> <li>• Dress shoes, loafers or boots (no thigh-high boots), shined or polished and in good repair.</li> <li>• Hair that is clean and well groomed, including facial hair: beards and mustaches must be trimmed. Hairstyles are expected to be in good taste, and a natural hair color.</li> <li>• Moderate, yet tasteful makeup. Please be consistent.</li> <li>• Natural colors of lipstick and nail polish.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denim, in any form. This includes pants, jackets, etc..</li> <li>• Casual clothing of any type.</li> <li>• Tank tops, spaghetti straps, tube or halter-tops, neither mini skirts or shorts may not be worn under any circumstances.</li> <li>• Lowriders or pants/slacks that drag the ground</li> <li>• Tennis or athletic shoes in the office or classroom, unless approved as an accommodation for a documented medical reason. (Non-PE Teachers)</li> <li>• Golf shirts on women</li> <li>• Faded (including jeans) or un-ironed clothing</li> <li>• Sweat suits, casual corduroy jeans, colored denim, colored pants/skinny jeans, flannel shirts, t-shirts, oversized/baggy shirts.</li> <li>• Visible cleavage, undergarments or clothing imitating slips or other undergarments. A rule of thumb for business is not to wear a blouse/top to work that is more than 4” below mid-collar bone.</li> <li>• Coaching shorts, Spandex or other form fitting pants, including tights or <b>leggings worn as pants.</b></li> <li>• Unconventionally colored hair (brightly colored or unnatural) and extreme hairstyles, such as spiked hair, half shaved/half long, or shaved heads on women, wet hair, etc.</li> <li>• Torso body piercing with visible jewelry or jewelry that can be seen through or under clothing must not be worn during business hours.</li> <li>• Multiple ear piercings (more than one ring in each ear) are not professionally appropriate and must not be worn during business hours.</li> <li>• Facial jewelry, such as eyebrow rings, nose rings, lip rings and tongue studs, is not professionally appropriate and must not be worn during business hours.</li> <li>• Unnatural colored lipsticks and nail polish. <b>Stiletto nails are not acceptable.</b></li> <li>• Body art, including tattoos, must be covered during business hours and school events. This includes tattoos in non-conspicuous areas such as feet, calves, neck, etc.</li> </ul>



There are common sense allowances. Gym teachers, for example, can wear shorts during a gym class. Employees, whose work regularly requires physical climbing, etc., are exempt within reason.

## Harassment

*Harassment of a co-worker, scholar, visitor or patron motivated by race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws is a form of discrimination and is prohibited.*

A substantiated charge of harassment against a scholar or employee shall result in disciplinary action. The term harassment includes repeated unwelcome and offensive slurs, jokes, or other oral, written, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, national origin, disability, or age that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment. As of 2009, harassment also includes online harassment and postings about ASTEC or any of its employees, scholars or patrons, whether or not the harassment occurred during the workday or in the workplace. This type of harassment will be reported to the authorities immediately.

Employees who believe they have been harassed are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to their supervisor. If the "immediate" supervisor is the subject of a complaint, the employee shall report the complaint directly to the next chain of command supervisor. The supervisor shall notify the Superintendent. An employee who suspects or knows that a scholar is being harassed by a school employee or by another scholar shall inform his or her immediate supervisor.

Any allegation of harassment of scholars or employees shall be investigated and addressed. An employee may appeal the decision of the supervisor regarding the investigation into the allegations in accordance with the employee complaint and grievance policy and procedures (see Complaints and Grievances section). To the greatest extent possible, complaints shall be treated as confidential. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation. ASTEC will not retaliate against an employee who in good faith reports perceived harassment.

## Sexual Harassment/Sexual Abuse

What is sexual harassment? Harassment is defined as "engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome." **Sexual harassment may involve remarks, gestures, or actions of a sexual nature that make a person feel unsafe or uncomfortable.** It creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment. Sexual harassment is part of the continuum of violence. **Sexual harassment is illegal and will not be tolerated within the ASTEC, Inc., organization.**

Degrading jokes, insistent requests for dates, catcalls, remarks that cause embarrassment rather than pleasure, pictures scratched on bathroom doors, rating, intimidating remarks or gestures - all of these can be harassing.

Sexual harassment may include (but is not limited to):

- Unwanted, unwelcome physical contact like touching, grabbing or patting
- Rude jokes or suggestive nicknames like "chick," "sexy," "stud," or "babe"
- Cat calls or embarrassing whistles
- Insulting remarks about sexual orientation
- Sexually insulting remarks about race, gender, ability or class
- Bragging about sexual prowess for others to hear
- Intimidating hallway behavior; names written on walls or desks, e.g. "For a good time, call..."
- Stalking/cyberstalking



Sexual harassment is not:

- A hug between friends
- Mutual flirtation
- Sincere and personal compliments
- A hand, foot, etc.. accidentally bumping into another person
- Smiling or glancing at another employee

*All employees should document the perceived harassment when it occurs. Please speak with your immediate supervisor if an incident occurs. If the issue is with a supervisor, immediately bring it to the attention of HR.*

## **Employee-to-Employee Sexual Harassment**

Employees shall not engage in conduct constituting sexual harassment of other employees. Employees who believe they have been sexually harassed by other employees are encouraged to come forward with complaints. ASTEC officials or their agents shall investigate promptly all allegations of sexual harassment of employees by other employees, and officials shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary action against employees found to have engaged in conduct constituting sexual harassment of employees.

*Any employee who is accused of sexual harassment has the right to be made aware of the accusation presented and provide their own testimony and proof. All evidence submitted will be filed in the respective HR folder.*

## **Complaint Procedure**

For the purpose of the following complaint process, “days” mean workdays. An employee who believes he or she has been, or is being, subjected to any form of sexual harassment shall bring the matter to the attention of the immediate supervisor and Title IX Coordinator or Human Resources if the immediate supervisor or Title IX Coordinator is the subject of the complaint. No procedure or step in this policy shall have the effect of requiring the employee alleging harassment to present the matter to a person who is the subject of the complaint. If an employee feels comfortable addressing a harassment issue with a coworker, he/she may do so. The confidentiality of all parties must be protected whenever possible.

### **Level One**

The employee shall request a conference with the immediate supervisor by submitting the complaint in writing or by requesting a conference. If the complaint is made orally, the supervisor receiving the complaint shall reduce it to writing.

The supervisor shall hold the conference with the employee and the HR Director as soon as possible, but in any event within seven days after receipt of the complaint. The supervisor shall ordinarily have seven days following the conference within which to investigate and respond. If necessary, the employee subject to the complaint can be placed on unpaid administrative leave, pending the findings of the investigation. The employee shall be informed if extenuating circumstances delay the investigation.

### **Level Two**

If the outcome of the conference at Level One is not to the employee’s satisfaction, the employee may request a conference with the CEO and/or Superintendent or his/her designee to discuss the complaint. The request should be in writing and shall be filed within seven days following receipt of a written response or, if no written response is received, within seven days of the response deadline.

The CEO and/or Superintendent or designee shall hold the conference as soon as possible, but in any event within seven days after receipt of the written request. The CEO and/or Superintendent or designee shall have seven days following the conference within which to respond.

The supervisor shall provide the CEO and/or Superintendent with copies of the employee's original complaint, all responses, and any written documentation previously submitted by the employee and the administration.

The Level Two proceeding before the CEO and/or Superintendent shall be (audio) recorded.

Employees and supervisors should take this process seriously. There will be no retaliation on an employee who initiates a complaint.

## **Employee-to-Scholar or Scholar-to-Employee**

Sexual harassment of scholars by employees or visa versa, is prohibited by law. Sexual harassment of scholars 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 school employees and scholars are strictly prohibited. Other prohibited conduct includes the following:

- Engaging in sexually oriented conversations for the purpose of personal sexual gratification
- Telephoning scholars 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 scholars to get them to engage in sexual behavior in exchange for grades or other school-related benefits

Sexual abuse of a scholar by an employee violates the scholar'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 scholar or another employee is being sexually harassed or abused by another employee are obligated to report their concerns to the respective Headmaster. All allegations of sexual harassment or sexual abuse of a scholar will be reported to the authorities and to scholars' parents and promptly investigated. Conduct that may be characterized as known or suspected child abuse also will be reported to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. Employees with questions or concerns relating to the alleged sexual harassment of a scholar should contact their supervisor who, in turn, will notify the Headmaster. The confidentiality of all parties must be protected whenever possible.

## **Reporting Requirements**

An employee who suspects or knows that a scholar or employee is being sexually harassed or sexually abused by a school employee or by another scholar shall inform his or her immediate supervisor. The supervisor should immediately notify the CEO and Superintendent. ASTEC shall notify parents of any incident of sexual harassment or sexual abuse by an employee.

*Any employee who receives information about sexual harassment or sexual abuse of a scholar that may reasonably be characterized as known or suspected child abuse or neglect shall make the reports to appropriate authorities, as required by law.*

## **Investigations**

Any allegations of sexual harassment or sexual abuse of a scholar shall be investigated, addressed and documented.

In considering and investigating allegations that an employee has sexually harassed or sexually abused a scholar, the investigation shall proceed from the presumption that the employee's conduct was unwelcome.

## **Scholar-to-Scholar**

It is necessary for employees to understand that once they know about harassment or inappropriate gender-related comments or conduct, they may be liable if they do not act. They must take appropriate and informed action.

Every school's code of behavior must include a definition of sexual harassment and must clearly identify procedures and specific consequences for dealing with such behavior.

All staff that witness or have knowledge of scholar-to-scholar sexual harassment must:

- Intervene if appropriate.
- Immediately report it to the administration.

Administrators have the responsibility of protecting the victim from further sexual harassment and retaliation. Appropriate action must be taken, which may include contacting the proper authorities by the ASTEC Public Safety Director. Action must also be taken to protect the accused from false allegations. The confidentiality of all parties must be protected wherever possible.

Any incidents that violate the Criminal Code must be reported to the ASTEC Public Safety Director.

### **Level One**

Immediately upon having been made aware of an incident of sexual harassment, an administrator must investigate by:

- Interviewing witnesses, the reporting staff member, the complainant and the accused (document in written form);
- Advising the victim of counseling, and informing the victim of his/her rights and stating that the incident will be resolved;
- In the case of a scholar under the age of 18, contacting the parents of both the victim and the accused;
- Contacting the Public Safety Director.

### **Level Two**

Administrators are to use Level Two when:

- The complainant is not satisfied with the Level One resolution;
- An individual's behavior demonstrates ongoing sexual harassment; and/or
- The incident is of such severity that the complainant believes the victim is in danger of further sexual harassment or retaliation.

Immediately upon having been made aware of an incident of sexual harassment, as described immediately above, the Headmaster or supervisor must investigate by:

- Safely isolating the victim and summoning the police if necessary;
- Interviewing witnesses, the reporting staff member; the complainant and the accused;
- Checking Level One reports for previous incidents involving the accused;
- In the case of scholars under the age of 18, contacting the parents of both the victim and the accused;
- Assisting the complainant in drafting a written complaint;
- Contacting the Public Safety Director if necessary; and
- Providing consequences for the offender.

## **When Sexual Harassment Escalates to Sexual Assault**

It is important to note that sexual harassment is part of the continuum of violence, and some harassing actions can, and do, escalate to sexual assault. The Criminal Code covers the latter, and the police must be involved.

Human Resources can assist administrators with differentiating between sexual harassment and sexual assault, and in taking appropriate action.

## Employee Privacy and Protection

It is sometimes necessary for parents and/or scholars to have the cell phone number of an employee. Caution should be exercised to ensure phone conversations are kept brief and address academic and/or school business only. Longer conversations should be scheduled for face-to-face meetings. Parents may call the office to arrange appointments with faculty and administrators. If the employee anticipates hostility, he/she is asked to have a third-party (preferably an administrator) at the meeting. Employees should refrain from sending text messages or engaging in “chats” or emails of a personal nature with scholars. No matter the age of the scholar, communication must be conducted in full view of a witness and, where appropriate, with the parent/guardian in attendance.

Remember: Everything you write and all phone records will be checked should authorities make an allegation against you. To avoid the appearance of impropriety and to protect the personal life of the employee, it is in the best interest of the employee to avoid social networking with scholars who have not yet graduated from ASTEC.

## Assault and Battery on School Employees

1. Any ASTEC school employee, as defined by subsection A of Section 650.7 of Title 21 of the Oklahoma Statutes, upon whom an assault, battery, assault and battery, or aggravated battery or aggravated assault and battery is committed while in the performance of any duties as a school employee shall notify the CEO and/or Superintendent immediately of the assault, battery, assault and battery, aggravated battery or aggravated assault and battery.
2. ASTEC's CEO and/or Superintendent shall notify the State Department of Education of all incidents described in subsection A of this section for the previous year on July 1st of each year. The report shall include a description of the battery or assault and battery, and the final disposition of each incident.
3. The State Department of Education shall submit a report to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Governor on December 1st of each year.
4. For purposes of this section, Section 641 of Title 21 of the Oklahoma Statutes shall define “assault”, Section 642 of Title 21 of the Oklahoma Statutes shall define “battery”, and Section 646 of Title 21 of the Oklahoma Statutes shall define “aggravated assault and battery”.
5. No ASTEC employee shall be subject to any civil liability for any statement, report, or action taken in reporting or assisting in reporting a battery or assault and battery which is committed upon the school employee while in the performance of any duties unless such report or assistance was made in bad faith or with malicious purpose (70-5-146).

*Employees or former employees are not to see students outside the school setting. They are not to have relationships that include calling, emailing, texting, etc. with ASTEC students. This will be perceived a “grooming” minors and will be reported to the DHS and the Oklahoma State Department of Education.*

## Workplace Monitoring

Workplace monitoring may be conducted by ASTEC Schools to ensure quality control, employee safety, security and customer satisfaction. Employees may have their telephone conversations monitored or recorded.

Telephone monitoring is used to identify and correct performance problems through targeted training. Employees can request access to information gathered through workplace monitoring that may impact employment decisions. Access will be granted unless there is a legitimate business reason to protect confidentiality or an ongoing investigation.

Emails coming through your ASTEC email account containing content relating to ASTEC should not be deleted. Excluded are certain advertisements, bulk unsolicited emails and spam. ASTEC email is the property of ASTEC and the State of Oklahoma. Use prudence in the content of your emails.

Because ASTEC is sensitive to the legitimate privacy rights of employees, every effort will be made to guarantee that workplace monitoring is done in an ethical and respectful manner.

## **Cameras**

All employees, guests, scholars and visitors should be aware that for security purposes, our primary monitoring system uses video surveillance in the halls, common areas and facility access points. Both audio and video may be utilized in the classrooms and other designated areas, for security purposes and/or as a professional development tool. Through these monitoring capabilities, appropriate senior management personnel may make clinical observations. Please note: Faculty may receive coaching, guidance and/or support from the Headmaster, Deans, Teacher Leaders, the Superintendent or the CEO, based on clinical observations obtained by video monitoring. Turning off cameras without approval shall result in termination of employment.

## **Tobacco Use**

Use of tobacco products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, chewing tobacco, “vaping” with e-cigarettes (regardless of whether or not they contain tobacco), is prohibited on all ASTEC property and at on or off campus school-related or school-sanctioned activities such as field trips, buses, etc. This includes all buildings, playground areas, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. Drivers of district-owned vehicles are prohibited from smoking while inside the vehicle.

*ASTEC Schools and Shepherd (Mall) Center property shall be entirely smoke free without exception. This includes common work areas, auditoriums, classrooms, conference and meeting rooms, private offices, hallways, cafeterias, employee lounges, stairs, restrooms, employer-owned or leased vehicles and all other enclosed facilities.*

*To protect and enhance indoor air quality and contribute to the health and well being of all employees and visitors, the entire mall property is smoke and “vape free,” including parking lots and cars.*

Definitions: Smoking refers to the use of traditional tobacco products. Vaping refers to the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems or electronic smoking devices. These are commonly called e-cigarettes, e-pipes, e-hookahs and e-cigars.

Background: To date, e-cigarettes and similar devices are not regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and are not approved as cessation aids. The FDA has, however, concluded that e-cigarettes pose health risks and contain detectable levels of carcinogens and toxic chemicals. At this time, e-cigarettes are not considered a safe alternative to smoking, and no scientific evidence has shown they help smokers quit.

## **Drug and Alcohol Use**

It is ASTEC’s desire to provide a safe, healthy and drug-free workplace. To promote this goal, employees are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a satisfactory manner.

While on ASTEC premises and while conducting business-related activities off ASTEC premises, no employee may use, possess, distribute, sell or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an employee’s ability to perform the essential functions of the job effectively and in a safe manner, not endangering the employee or other individuals in the workplace.

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment and/

or required participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation or treatment program. Such violations may also have legal consequences.

Employees with questions or concerns about substance dependence or abuse are encouraged to discuss these matters with their supervisor to receive referrals to appropriate resources in the community.

Employees with questions on this policy or issues related to drug or alcohol use by another employee in the workplace should raise their concerns with their supervisor or the Superintendent without fear of reprisal. Anonymity of the reporter will be maintained to the greatest degree possible, but may be broken, if such is unavoidable in the pursuit of an appropriate resolution.

## **Medical Marijuana**

Employees who have a medical marijuana license will not be punished for having the license, but they will not be allowed to use, possess or be under the influence of marijuana while performing their assigned duties while on school property or conducting school business. This includes keeping related items in the car parked on the property.

## **Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing**

Non-investigative searches in the workplace, including accessing an employee's desk, file cabinets, or work area to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no legitimate expectation of privacy in those places.

The District reserves the right to conduct searches of any and all work areas (including common areas and school vehicles) when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigative search may include drug and alcohol testing. Employees have the right to refuse drug or alcohol testing if they choose to immediately terminate their employment with ASTEC.

Positive "hits" from a drug dog on an employee's belongings or the presence of e-cigarette items will result in automatic and mandatory drug testing. Positive tests without a valid explanation from a physician will result in termination. Employees may be given time off without pay until a drug test can be administered and the employee provides proof of testing.

## **Employee Fraud**

According to The Institute for Financial Crime Prevention, "The largest single component of white-collar crime is internal theft by employees." The risk of fraud or employee theft occurring is contingent upon three factors: **personal pressures, the opportunity to commit crimes, and the personal integrity level of employees.** Personal pressures and integrity levels are not within the scope of an employer's authority. However, maintaining a strong system of internal control and a positive control environment can directly influence the degree of internal crime risk.

A positive control environment has been established at ASTEC Schools. Maintaining this positive control environment reduces the risk of fraud. The term "control environment" refers to the state of mind maintained by employees when performing job-related tasks. The control environment has a significant impact on the effectiveness of instituting internal controls.

An adequate system of internal control comprises the following attributes:

- Proper transaction authorization and accuracy and completeness of transactions
- Adequate documentation
- Adequate separation of duties
- Formal policies and procedures
- Systemization of tasks
- Supervision of department members and validation of data being processed
- Physical safeguards over ASTEC assets



The ASTEC Board of Directors supports the Oklahoma City District Attorney's office in the ethical prosecution of criminal offenses committed in Oklahoma County. ASTEC maintains a "zero tolerance" policy, and will prosecute to the fullest extent of the law any employee found guilty of fraud, embezzlement or theft.

In accordance with ASTEC policy, if you believe a possible fraud has occurred, you should report it immediately to the ASTEC Public Safety Director. ASTEC will try to protect the anonymity of individuals who provide information concerning possible ASTEC fraud. Your supervisor and the CEO or Superintendent will meet with you to review the evidence. If, based on the review, it is concluded that there is reasonable evidence of abuse; an immediate audit will be scheduled. The suspected abuses will be investigated, and an examination of supporting documentation will be performed. If a fraud is identified as a result of the investigation, the auditor will determine the extent of the loss to ASTEC Schools.

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect**

*All ASTEC employees are required by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to a 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 Services can be made to the Child Abuse/Neglect Hotline at 1-800-522-3511. State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person to make this report.*

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. In addition, ASTEC is prohibited from retaliating against an employee who, in good faith, reports child abuse or neglect or who participates in an investigation regarding an allegation of child abuse or neglect.

An employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in prosecution for the commission of a Class B misdemeanor. In addition, a certified employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in disciplinary procedures for a violation of the Educator's Code of Ethics.

Employees who suspect a scholar has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the Headmaster and their supervisor. This includes scholars with disabilities who are no longer minors. Employees are not required to report their concern to the Headmaster before making a report to the appropriate agencies, but are encouraged to do so when the delay in reporting will not result in risk of additional harm to the scholar (as in the case of scholars who are on campus and safe in class when the decision to report is made).

In addition, employees must cooperate with child abuse and neglect investigators. Reporting a concern to the Headmaster 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 scholar at school or requiring the presence of a parent or school administrator against the desires of the duly authorized investigator is prohibited.

## **Gifts and Favors**

Employees may not accept gifts or favors that could influence, or be construed to influence, the employee's discharge of assigned duties. The acceptance of a gift, favor, or service by an administrator, a staff member or faculty that might reasonably tend to influence a decision regarding an asset, program or service may result in prosecution of a class "B" misdemeanor offense.

Gifts by employees are not to be given to students. This will be perceived as "grooming."



## Private Tutoring

Teachers are not allowed to privately tutor an ASTEC scholar enrolled in their classes for pay, except during the summer months. The Headmaster must approve all private tutoring arrangements (including those arranged for summer months). Please speak with the Headmaster first for any questions related to this matter.

Any tutoring done with non-ASTEC students is at the discretion of the employee and should be documented on the HR form titled 'Approval of Outside Employment'.

## Employee Arrests and Convictions

An employee who is arrested for any felony or any offense involving moral turpitude must immediately report the arrest to Human Resources who shall notify the appropriate ASTEC personnel within 48 hours of the arrest. An employee who is convicted of or receives deferred adjudication for such an offense must also report that event to the Superintendent and/or Headmaster or immediate supervisor. Moral turpitude includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Dishonesty
- Fraud
- Deceit
- Theft
- Misrepresentation
- Deliberate violence
- Base, vile, or depraved acts intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the perpetrator or others
- Drug-or alcohol-related offenses
- Acts constituting abuse under Oklahoma law

## Possession of Firearms and Weapons

Board policy prohibits persons, including those with a concealed handgun license, from carrying weapons onto school property. The Board has opted not to designate any employee to carry a weapon on school property or at school events, with the exception of the Public Safety Director. Employees, visitors, and scholars are prohibited from bringing weapons of any kind onto school premises or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy, **to include switchblades or spring-type knives**, should report it to their supervisors immediately. Supervisors will report the incident immediately to the CEO and/or Superintendent and the ASTEC Public Safety Director. Violators are subject to arrest and prosecution.

## Copyright Materials

Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of copyright laws relating to the unauthorized use, reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data and programs, etc.). Videos are to be used in the classroom for educational purposes only.

Duplication or backups of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

Any use of copyrighted music must be attributed to the composer of that music. Before using any copyrighted material, written permission must first be obtained by the legal copyright holder and submitted to the Central Office.

## Financial Accounting and Procurement

### Finances

Charter school laws vary from state to state. To date, the State of Oklahoma does not provide for facilities funding in its charter school law. Facility funding must come from the per-pupil allocation. This means charter schools, particularly "start-

up” charter schools must rely more heavily on fundraising, grant writing, corporate partnerships and donations. As a start-up charter, ASTEC Schools must also rely on these sources. Other ASTEC programs also contribute financially to ASTEC Schools.

ASTEC has a number of checks and balances regarding the accounting of its finances. The ASTEC Board of Directors approves an annual budget upon the recommendation of the ASTEC CEO and the Finance Committee, led by the Board Finance Committee Chair. The committee meets monthly to review the finances and cash flow. The committee consists of the Board Chair, the CEO and Superintendent, the Encumbrance Clerk and the chair of the Finance Committee.

A monthly P&L statement, balance sheet, PO's and monies spent to date along with other financial details are presented bi-monthly to the governing board for review and feedback.

ASTEC employees are required to use a specific set of procedures and policies for handling and processing all expenses. The Oklahoma Cost Accounting System (OCAS) is used to code all expenditures that have gone through the formal request process. All non-consumable items are inventoried and labeled before they are put into use.

The school encumbrance clerk (accounts payable) and the school treasurer (accounts receivable) must complete a minimum of 12 hours of training every three years on charter school finance laws, accounting, ethics and duties.

All “activity fees” and monies raised by school groups, clubs, and organizations are deposited in separate sub-accounts in an Activity Fund bank account. These funds are carried over to their sub accounts from one year to the next. Activity fees follow the class (example: Class of 2023) from year-to-year.

Oklahoma school law prohibits a school employee from keeping more than \$100 per day without having it deposited in the schools’ bank account(s).

ALL collected monies are to be deposited daily with the Central Office. Monies are **NEVER** to be left in an employee’s desk drawers, etc., overnight. Please plan adequate time (taking into consideration school breaks) for the processing of any deposits. The Athletics and Activities Director will collect all of the money to be deposited and will take the funds to the Central Office for processing. **MONIES MUST BE TURNED INTO THE Athletics and Activities Director PRIOR TO 4:00 p.m.**

An annual audit is performed by a state-approved auditing firm and reported to the Oklahoma State Department of Education and to the ASTEC Board of Directors. The Superintendent and Chief Executive Officer are the only employees with legal authorization to commit ASTEC or any of its divisions to contracts and expenditures.

## **Proper Accounting**

The report of the *National Commission on Fraudulent Financial Reporting* defines fraudulent financial reporting as “intentional or reckless conduct, whether act or omission, that results in materially misleading financial statements. Unintentional errors are not considered to be fraudulent acts.” Senior management, middle management or lower-level employees may participate in these acts. While the Commission’s report applies to publicly held companies, the principles of the report’s findings apply to all entities. ASTEC believes each employee should assume responsibility for safeguarding and preserving the assets and resources of ASTEC.

All revenues generated by ASTEC and all expenditures for goods and services must be recorded and accounted for within the financial accounting system of the institution.

No false or artificial entries are to be made in the accounting records of ASTEC for any reason. Moreover, no payment on behalf of ASTEC is to be approved or made with the understanding that any part of such a payment is to be used for any purpose other than that described by the documents supporting the payment.

The use of ASTEC funds or assets for any personal, unlawful or improper purpose is prohibited. No unrecorded or undisclosed bank accounts are to be established by any department or individual to fund or assist in funding any authorized ASTEC activity.

The use of any ASTEC equipment, supplies or facilities for a revenue generating activity that benefits an individual employee is strictly prohibited without the express written approval of the Chief Executive Officer.

No person in a supervisory or management position is to use the authority of that position to assign an employee to perform non-employment related tasks. It is also important to remember that no payment on behalf of ASTEC should be approved without adequate supporting documentation.

Vendors are not paid until after the services or goods are provided and an invoice is received. The only exception is when a vendor must purchase materials for a service for ASTEC. In that case, half is paid up front and the other half when the service/job is accepted as complete.

Finally, all transactions should be recorded so as to permit preparation of financial statements in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

## Bonding

Bonding is like an insurance policy to protect ASTEC funds in the case of loss of funds or fraud by an employee. The CEO, Superintendent, HR Director, Encumbrance Clerk, Athletics and Activities Director, Program Officer, and others who receive and/or transport large sums of money must be bonded through the State of Oklahoma.

## Purchasing Procedures

The ASTEC Central Office is responsible for working with supervisors to find the best prices and value for our money. ASTEC leadership is familiar with the strengths of vendors and the services provided. Please do not spend time researching vendors unless directed to do so.

ASTEC has a specific standard regarding the expenditure of funds. Only purchases for items that fall under an approved annual budget line item, using approved vendors, will be considered for purchase

Following are the steps for purchasing:

1. Non-administrative employees who wish to order items utilizing the General Fund account should first discuss the purchase with their supervisor.
2. If the purchase is deemed necessary and the budget allows, the employee will be asked to complete and submit a "Purchase Request" form with documentation to their supervisor. The employee will not sign the PO.
3. The supervisor will discuss the purchase with the designated administrator as necessary.
4. Only supervisors are to make the initial official request. The signed Purchase Request (PR) will be submitted to the Central Office. All fields on the PR must be completed and line items are to be totaled and entered as an estimated amount.
5. The form will be date-stamped immediately upon receipt by the Central Office receptionist. DO NOT PUT A PO IN A MAILBOX.
6. Encumbrance (accounts payable) will send an email when the purchase request has been approved and processed. **Only then may a purchase be made.**

*All expenditures must be approved by the CEO or Superintendent BEFORE obligating ASTEC Schools to any fiduciary responsibility. Anyone who violates this policy must complete an unauthorized purchase request and personally pay for the item(s) purchased illegally.*

The CEO or her designee are the only authorized agents to incur debt on behalf of ASTEC Schools. Commitments made verbally or under the signature of any other employee will not be honored or paid by ASTEC. Likewise, only the CEO or her designee has the authority to subject ASTEC to special or "rush" delivery fees.

ASTEC is a non-profit organization and is not subject to taxes. A tax-exempt letter may be obtained from the Business Office for making approved purchases. An employee making purchases will be responsible for any taxes charged to item(s) if it is his/her error. All items purchased by ASTEC or ASTEC Schools are the property of ASTEC and/or ASTEC Schools.

The actual cost of purchased items may not exceed 10% above their approved estimated cost. All receipts must have a purchase order number and a signature when they are returned to the Encumbrance Clerk.

Any purchases made must be billed to ASTEC Accounts Payable. Employee reimbursements must be approved in advance. Only requests for reimbursements made within 60 days of purchase and/or before May 1st, will be honored.

ASTEC prefers invoices be emailed to [accountspayable@astec-k12.com](mailto:accountspayable@astec-k12.com). When placing an order, please make the contact: Attention Accounts Payable and not your own name.

Credit card statements cannot be paid until purchase requests and the Business Office receives the receipts. All receipts must be signed by the purchaser. Failure to turn in receipts in a timely manner will result in the employee assuming the responsibility for late charges and interest payments. Receipts for credit card purchases MUST be turned into the Central Office immediately - if a receipt is lost it will be the employee's responsibility to obtain a new original receipt. If an original receipt cannot be obtained, the cost of the credit card charge will become the responsibility of the employee who made the purchase.

## Scholar Activities Funds Management

Activity Funds are public funds raised through a school that may be partially financed or supplemented with public funds. Activity funds shall not include any funds raised and/or expended by any ASTEC organization unless the funds were deposited to an existing activity fund. Regardless of whether the funds were raised using school facilities or not, all scholarly activity monies must be deposited into the corresponding activity sub-account.

A budget and Plan of Work for each sponsored group or club must be submitted before September 30th, to be considered for the school year. The Plan of Work should include all fundraising activities for the year. Fundraising activities are submitted to the ASTEC Board of Directors at the October board meeting.

If you will be collecting or expending funds for any group (Yearbook, Class Sponsor, etc.), please refer to the procedure sheet before you begin. You must have a receipt book for any purchase that is \$5 or more; if the purchase is less than \$5 a Non-Receipt form should be utilized. Please communicate with the Athletic and Activities Director prior to any fundraising activities. An amount of at least \$150 will be held over for the following year for each club/activity. This will ensure start-up monies are available at the beginning of each school year. Please take this into consideration when budgeting.

Activity funds may be expended for the following:

- Necessary travel and expenses incurred by scholars and their chaperones in attending school-related programs, conventions or seminars
- Any commodity, equipment, travel expenses, contractual or purchased service or membership fees
- Food for athletic or club banquets
- School supplies beneficial to the official or extra-curricular district programs
- Items which may subsequently become the personal property of individuals, e.g., yearbooks, athletic apparel and trophies

ALL money is to be deposited daily with the Central Office receptionist by the Activities Director only. The funds must match the Receipt Verification Form amount and the yellow receipts from a receipt book. Any discrepancy will be the responsibility of the club/activity sponsor to correct. Money is never to be left in employee classrooms or school offices overnight. Please plan adequate time for the processing of your deposit with the Central Office staff. **MONEY WILL BE ACCEPTED 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

For after hour events, monies will be reconciled with a school administrator who will secure the funds in a locked area until the following morning. They will bring the funds to the Central Office for processing.

*All clubs and groups that use the name "ASTEC" are an extension of ASTEC-funded programs and must use the Activity Account. For legal liability reasons, separate bank accounts may not be set up for such purposes.*

In establishing these policies, the Board of Directors sets the procedure of “after-the-purchase” approval of expenditures from school activity funds. In the event discrepancies occur, the Board of Directors will take appropriate action.

The school must ensure that funds raised for a specific approved purpose be used ONLY for that purpose. For example: scholars may not solicit funds for the hospital bills of a child in need and then give the money to the parent. The parent must submit the actual bills to ASTEC. ASTEC will pay the bill and send a copy of the payment to the parent.

Each year, ASTEC conducts a school-wide fundraiser in both the fall and the spring. The proceeds from this fundraiser are used for overall enhancements to the school for the benefit of its scholars. All scholars are asked to participate in the school-wide fundraisers. The Athletics and Activities Director will be responsible for coordinating these fundraisers. The fall fundraiser is timed to have items delivered just before winter break.

**Please Note: Funds deposited in the Activity Fund carry over to the following year in the same sub account.**

## **The Use and Sale of Tickets for Events/Activities**

Sets of tickets will be checked out through the Central Office for any event that requires admission. A “Ticket Sellers Report” showing the event name, the amount of tickets checked out, selling price, etc. will accompany each set of tickets.

At the request of our independent auditors, as tickets are sold, one half is to go to the purchaser and the second half is to be kept by ASTEC. The tickets are to be kept in a baggie and returned to the Central Office. The amount of money deposited should match exactly the amount of tickets sold multiplied by the ticket cost.

Monies from an event are to be turned into the Athletics and Activities Director. A Receipt Verification form and Ticket Sellers Report form must be completed for each event. The Athletics and Activities Director will then take the monies to the Central Office for processing.

Any discrepancy must be resolved before monies will be deposited and verified and is the responsibility of the event/activity sponsor.

## **Development**

Development has many aspects. Basically, “development” refers to the process of developing supporters and donors for a particular mission. Relationships with potential supporters take time, often years, to develop. These relationships are built with frequent contact to let supporters see the difference they are making in furthering ASTEC’s mission. It is vital that we acknowledge their monetary contributions, their in-kind donations and their volunteer efforts.

*Everything a potential supporter sees and hears about an organization causes them to form either favorable or unfavorable opinions. ASTEC enjoys a very positive reputation in the community and in the state. By working together, we can ensure our reputation remains positive and we garner support for our mission. EVERY employee of ASTEC plays a role in the development process and should always be supporting our mission while out in the community.*

Ultimately, our supporters’ gifts allow ASTEC to do many things for both our scholars and employees that would not otherwise be possible.

Major funds for ASTEC Schools come from our foundation, The ASTEC Fund. Community partners are introduced to ASTEC through our frequent school tours. The tours allow us to showcase our school and our scholars. The Central Office will inform you when guest tours will take place so you can prepare your students.

## Media/Public Relations

The CEO or her designee are the only official spokespersons for ASTEC. Staff members should not agree to be interviewed by or to give quotes to the press without approval by the CEO.

*If an employee becomes aware of an event or situation that might bring negative publicity to ASTEC he/she should contact the CEO and/or the Superintendent immediately. One of them will contact the Board of Directors and/or our public relations advisors to determine an appropriate response.*

ASTEC prides itself on having a very positive image. Much energy, effort, commitment and resources have been expended to ensure positive public relations. The image of our organization comes primarily from our employees. Positive remarks made by employees can spread rapidly through a community. Negative remarks travel swiftly and always get back to colleagues and the administration. This creates poor public relations and low employee morale.

## Fundraising

There are many levels and types of fundraising. Due to lack of funding for various school activities, organizations and clubs in American schools have long had to raise monies to support their activities. It is no different at ASTEC. In addition, fundraising provides ASTEC with many of the necessities needed for our classrooms and allows for employee extra effort (bonus) pay.

Charter schools in Oklahoma do not receive facilities funding. ASTEC Schools and its foundation, The ASTEC Fund, regularly solicit funds from sources beyond public monies.

Successful fundraising is not a transactional process, but a relationship built with potential donors who come to feel they are a part of the school. This is accomplished through regular updates to the community, as well as the consistent implementation of a “thank you” protocol.

Through personal and professional networks and those relationships developed through the various positions at ASTEC, employees have the opportunity to build positive public relations that in the long run could have the benefit of influencing a donor or a potential donor. In addition to the courtesy you show these individuals, there are other important actions you can take. These include providing feedback in the form of letters, notes, and demonstrating how their donations are benefiting our mission.

An important component of fundraising is the acknowledgement of a donor’s time, money, services or in-kind gifts. ASTEC employees are expected to send a personal “thank you” for all donations of goods, services, time or monies contributed to benefit ASTEC scholars. In addition, scholars are to be directed to write personal “thank you’s” with guidance and oversight from a teacher/advisor to ensure proper grammar, message and handwriting.

Depending on the type of gift and its donor, proper protocol dictates letters and/or special notes be sent from the CEO. All gifts are logged, ASTEC’s donations/gifts database, for tracking purposes. ASTEC employees are asked to inform the Communications Director of dealings with potential donors, partners or supporters who make a contribution to ASTEC.

Please go to the Donations and Fundraising link on either the Faculty or Administrative Index. From there, select the Donations and In-kind Gifts Document that has been created specifically for this purpose. Each employee is expected to provide as much information as possible on the form so that timely “thank you’s” can be sent from School Leadership and for Development to ensure our supporters are acknowledged.

Remind donors that all contributions to ASTEC Schools or its Foundation are tax deductible since we are an official nonprofit organization. A “thank you” letter with tax information will be sent to them from the Central Office staff.



*NO EFFORTS TO SOLICIT DONATIONS ARE TO BE MADE WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE CEO. NAMES OF TARGETED COMPANIES AND INDIVIDUALS WILL BE DISCUSSED WITH ASTEC LEADERSHIP PRIOR TO ANY REQUESTS BEING APPROVED.*

## **The ASTEC Fund**

*Dr. Freda Deskin, Lou C. Kerr and William G. Paul founded The ASTEC Fund, Inc. (The Fund) in 2013 as a 501(c) 3 nonprofit foundation for the express purpose of benefiting ASTEC Schools. The Fund has a separate governing board, bylaws, bank accounts, etc. The ASTEC Schools' CEO and Board Chair serve as non-voting members of The Fund board. The Fund's main purpose is to purchase the land and in conjunction with ASTEC leadership raise the necessary funds for a new school facility.*

There are several ways to support our school Foundation. The Fund hosts an annual dinner event called the Door-Opener Awards Gala. Each year, previous honorees and The Fund Board choose community individuals who have opened doors of opportunity for others.

ASTEC employees are asked to participate in this event in some way. Volunteers are needed before the event to collect auction items and solicit sponsors. The evening of the event, employees can volunteer to help in several capacities. Employees are encouraged to promote the event through their individual networks, knowing that the more successful the event is, the stronger the school will be.

The CEO will provide you with materials needed, and guidance regarding the proper process for obtaining sponsors or auction items. As appropriate, you can reach out to businesses and follow-up with ASTEC until an answer is obtained. If you are dealing with a previous donor, you may call and remind them of what they donated in the past to assist in finalizing a deal. All donations must be accompanied by the Auction Donor form to ensure proper credit is given to the donor, and tax requirements are met. These forms are available from the Program Officer.

## **Solicitation**

In an effort to ensure a productive and harmonious work environment, persons not employed by ASTEC may not solicit or distribute any type of literature in the workplace at any time for any purpose.

ASTEC recognizes that employees may have interests in events and organizations outside the workplace. However, employees may not solicit or distribute literature concerning these activities during working time (working time does not include lunch periods, work breaks or any other periods in which employees are not on duty).

Examples of impermissible forms of solicitation include:

- The collection of money, goods, or gifts for political groups
- The circulation of petitions
- The distribution of literature not approved by ASTEC
- Information regarding labor unions

If you are unsure of this policy, please direct inquiries to the HR Director for approval.



# ASTECC Communications

## General Communications

ASTECC is committed to communicating with employees, patrons, participants and the community through a number of avenues including newsletters, brochures, fliers, calendars, news releases, social media and web postings, emails, telephone, etc.

The following are some specific publications and venues:

- **The Comets' Tale** - a bi-monthly newsletter sent via email and posted to digital media to families, board members, and members of the community.
- **The Star News** - a monthly elementary school newsletter sent via email and posted to digital media to families, board members, and members of the community.
- **Board Reports from the CEO**, along with a **Financial Report** – emailed to members of the ASTECC Board of Directors, and then presented at Board of Directors meetings
- **Daily announcements** - broadcast via the intercom each morning and afternoon for middle, high and elementary schools. In addition to the daily announcements, the format includes the state and national flag salutes, the National Anthem, kudos as merited and daily birthday wishes
- **ASTECC Master and At-A-Glance Calendars** - available for staff and community via the website and in hard copy
- Periodic **press releases**
- **Website** - [www.astecc-k12.com](http://www.astecc-k12.com)
- **Facebook** - [www.Facebook.com/ASTECCcharter](http://www.Facebook.com/ASTECCcharter)
- **Twitter** - @ASTECCcharters #ASTECC <https://twitter.com/astecccharters>
- **Instagram** - @astecccharterschools
- **Pinterest** - @astecccharterschoolsokc
- **Email** - All employees' email addresses are posted in newsletters and on the website
- **SchoolMessenger** - Automated phone system that automatically alerts the school community to important information and events.

In addition, ASTECC has created two Google Doc indices: The ASTECC Administration Index and the ASTECC Faculty Index. These documents are organized by topic and are linked to tables with helpful associated links. For example, one link in the document is titled "Digital Media." That link will take you to a document with a table of digital media documents and resources, such as Facebook, Twitter, the ASTECC website and the digital media policy. Please bookmark the appropriate document.

Keep in mind there are multiple links in the indices and not everyone has been given access to all or even the same documents. If you cannot access a document, please request access. If it is determined that you should be allowed to view the document, access will be granted.

Making copies of existing Google Docs without permission of the author is plagiarism. It also creates multiples of documents that each gets edited without permission of the author and makes it difficult to determine the original approved document.

## Correspondence Clearing House

ASTECC has standard information and formats for all communication documents. This ensures continuity of the ASTECC brand. Therefore, all items communicated to patrons, news media, outside agencies, scholars, employees, etc., of any kind, including Internet postings must be approved through your immediate supervisor. The supervisor will forward to the Communications Director for final approval.

*DO NOT MAKE A COPY OF ANY GOOGLE DOCUMENT WITHOUT PERMISSION FROM THE AUTHOR.*

*Any and all Internet postings of employees' work, scholars' work and/or class work, including, but not limited to drawings, artwork, photographs or videos MUST be approved in writing by your supervisor and/or the Headmaster.*

*In fairness to our scholars and the organization, any announcement(s) to parents, scholars and colleagues should come first from the CEO, Superintendent or supervisor and at a time determined by the School Leadership.*

## **Social Media, Newsletter and Web Postings via GroupMe**

Communication is important in any community, and the ASTEC Charter Schools' community is no different. A bi-weekly middle school/high school newsletter and a monthly elementary school newsletter is sent via email, and postings are made regularly on the website and ASTEC's various social media platforms. It is the responsibility of faculty and staff to submit timely information pertinent to parents, scholars and/or staff regarding events and notices to be placed in the newsletter, on social media or on the website. To do this all faculty and staff should place photos, videos and detailed descriptions of what is occurring, the grade and the class that is represented in the media via a group chat message platform called GroupMe.

To join, first sign up for a GroupMe account or if you already have an account use that to go to this link: [https://groupme.com/join\\_group/52323065/cBioyhI7](https://groupme.com/join_group/52323065/cBioyhI7) or scan the QR code to the right. Following these steps will automatically add you to the group chat. **\*Please note: BEFORE YOU SCAN THIS YOU MUST HAVE A GROUPME ACCOUNT WITH YOUR LOGIN AND PASSWORD SET.**



## **Digital Media\***

The use of (personal) social networking from workplace computers at any time is disallowed by this policy. Unless otherwise expressly assigned, there will also be no social networking activity from personal devices during work hours.

You are an ambassador of ASTEC and are encouraged to use social networking accurately and carefully. Your web interactions can result in the public forming opinions about our school, its employees, scholars and board. Context and content must always be appropriate as it relates to the values of our organization and are exemplified in our own personal use of social networking. Under no circumstances should offensive comments be made about scholars or colleagues (including administration). Do not comment on or forward unsupported information, e.g., rumors. Negative comments about people could also amount to cyber-bullying and could be deemed a disciplinary offense.

Please remember that the ASTEC school community includes employees, parents and scholars that reflect a diverse set of customs, values and points of view. Be respectful of the opinions of others in your posts or comments. You are ultimately responsible for the content that you post.

*ASTEC employees are discouraged from listing scholars as "friends" on social networking sites and should refrain from sending any communications that are personal in nature and unrelated to the business of the school.*

\*See Digital Media Policy in Appendix for more information.

## Faculty-Sponsored Scholar Activities

ASTECC has a full-time Athletics and Activities Director who is responsible for coordinating school activities with the club/team sponsors. He/She is responsible for the food pantry, working with teachers on field trips, the school carnival, sponsor Plan of Work (POW) binders, school-wide fundraisers, preparing purchase requests, collecting monies for deposit, parent events and more.

The Athletics and Activities Director does not replace the teacher or sponsor. In many cases, he/she is the primary employee responsible, but serves as a resource and liaison. The Athletics and Activities Director reports to the Headmaster. The Athletics and Activities Director works collaboratively with the Deans and the Headmaster, as these activities encompass both scholars and teachers.

## Sponsorships

ASTECC teachers are assigned to sponsor various activities for scholars. These activities are both academic and extracurricular in nature. Teachers may select a club to sponsor or be assigned one by the Headmaster. A list is available in the **Faculty Index Google Doc**.

Sponsors shall be responsible for initiating and scheduling all scholar activities in accordance with the ASTECC Schools' guidelines. Guidelines are available from the Athletics and Activities Director. The sponsor shall oversee all activities of the class/club. Sponsors are to be present at all activities from the beginning to the end, including all cleanups. The sponsor shall complete all paperwork, including field trip requests, activity requests, permission slips, purchase orders, money, tickets, and receipt verifications.

## Sponsor "Plan of Work" Binders

Club/Class sponsors are required to oversee the completion of an event binder by their scholars. This binder is to be completed by the scholars with the assistance of the sponsor. It should have an attractive spine and cover, including artwork. Pictures are encouraged and should be included with the binder.

The purpose of these binders is not only to empower students, but also to memorialize their accomplishments and provide a documented road map for future club scholars. They reflect on the scholars' successes and make recommendations on ways to improve the events in an attempt to help build a strong foundation for moving forward.

These binders will be submitted to the Athletics and Activities Director each quarter and will be given a score for each section. The score sheets will be submitted to the Headmaster and the Superintendent each semester. After review, the Headmaster will give feedback to each sponsor.

The club binder shall include the following:

- **Sponsor Guidelines** - Policies and procedures for clubs and organizations.
- **About Us** - Includes sponsor's name, summary, club information and officers/members.
- **Plan of Work** - Sponsors will insert their outline of activities/events and discuss with the Athletics and Activities Director the details/steps of what is expected and timelines for submissions.
- **Public Relations/Marketing/Advertising** - Allows sponsors access to provide information regarding publicity of their events (i.e. newsletter, School REACH, etc.) and an exact time frame.
- **Activities/Events** - Consists of a simple outline of all activities/events the club or organization will participate in throughout the year; they will prepare their Plan of Work from this document.
- **Budget Sheet/Profit and Loss** - Sponsors will develop a detailed budget on their Plan of Work then fill out the budget sheet accordingly.
- **Scholar Reflection** - Scholars must complete an "event debrief" after each activity and give both positive and negative feedback.
- **Recommendation/Summary** - This will help future club scholars eliminate activity "mistakes" and provide them insight as to how things could have been done differently. Mistakes are good - we learn from them!

Other forms to include:

- **Generic Field Trip Letter** - Provides a sample field trip letter. Sponsors shall follow this template and customize their own field trip letters.
- **Meeting Notes** - An optional form that allows the sponsor to provide documentation of planned meetings with details of discussions and helps with organization.
- **Non-Receipt Form** - Made available when collecting monies less than \$5.
- **Checklists** - Provides step-by-step information for planning activities/events/fundraisers/field trips.

## Field Trips or Sponsored Activities

Field trips should have relevance to the classroom and must be requested by September 30th, unless an exceptional circumstance/opportunity presents itself, at which time the request must be submitted a minimum of three weeks in advance and will be considered by the administration. Complete the online Field Trip and Event Request Form on BambooHR. Upon approval, the Athletics and Activities Director will add the trip/event activity to the ASTEC online calendar.

Chaperones (one per 10 scholars), transportation and drivers should be secured as soon as possible.

There are two types of field trips: annual pre-planned field trips (i.e. annual eighth grade trip) and general field trips. **There will be no general field trips taken during state testing or after the first week of April. There will be no exceptions to this rule.**

Be advised that personally sponsoring ASTEC scholars or parents on trips that are NOT sanctioned by the school may result in termination. This is a dangerous practice and is frequently the topic of national news. You are placing yourself and ASTEC at great risk if you engage in such behavior. Further, should you take an ASTEC scholar/parent on an unsanctioned trip, you are not covered under the schools' insurance.

## Activities Fundraising

Club/class/sports sponsors regularly conduct fundraisers to support their various activities. In order to make these events run smoothly, the adult sponsor is expected to review their plan with the Headmaster and the Athletics and Activities Director. Once reviewed, he/she will present the idea to the School Leadership team for final approval. The timeline for completion, logistics needs, target audience, and expected expenses will all be discussed in this meeting.

The goal will be to ensure that items of worth are being offered at the events, that pricing is appropriate to the intended audience, and that ASTEC puts forward a positive and well-planned fundraiser for our school community. Special consideration should be given to the school's community, ensuring that the products and services are of value to them so they "shop ASTEC first."

Please consult with the Superintendent to set ticket prices (see specific information concerning tickets in the Finance section of this handbook). She/He will, for example, direct you to charge \$5, instead of \$4 for a ticket. If a person has \$4, they will most likely give you a \$5 dollar bill and you will not have to provide change. This requires you to take extra time before an event to write a purchase request and then go to the bank for change.

ASTEC employees, including staff and administrators, are often great supporters of fundraising activities. Make sure your scholars come to them with orders, etc. The Central Office employees are often forgotten and yet are usually some of the best supporters! Send multiple emails to all employees and have students set multiple times to go to them for the actual orders. Keep in mind, many employees do not have the flexibility to leave their offices. This will greatly improve your scholars' success.

Make it convenient for every potential customer to purchase items or tickets. If potential buyers are to follow a particular

*If transportation is required for an activity please follow the procedure outlined in the transportation section of the Appendix.*

procedure to obtain an item, like a piece of art, make sure they have all they need to easily purchase the item, like plenty of pens and order forms stationed close by.

Don't make your customers have to search for a way to give you money!

A virtual postcard is an effective tool for promoting your event or fundraiser, especially if they can be viewed in an email without opening an attachment. The ASTEC Communications Director creates all published documents. The CEO or Superintendent reviews and approves all virtual postcards before they are sent.

Once approved, please send an email to employees asking them to forward it to their friends and family. The CEO will send virtual postcards to ASTEC's various boards and VIP list. Ask the Athletics and Activities Director to send out a SchoolMessenger announcement about your event or fundraiser, with date, time, cost, description of event, etc.

Another marketing strategy to keep in mind is timing. Are there other school or community events occurring at the same time which will limit your potential buyers? Conversely, is there an event you could partner with to maximize exposure? What school activities are scheduled during your sales week? Are people looking for gifts at that time of year? You will also want to take into account the time of day and length of your event.

Ask the Athletics and Activities Director to place your event on the ASTEC School Calendar. Post events as early as possible. Also make sure you check the school calendar prior to scheduling an activity.

These are all standard marketing procedures. By following these and by giving the process plenty of lead-time, you can greatly increase your sales and the success of your event or fundraiser.

Finally, ASTEC's efforts to provide a healthy environment extends to our fundraising efforts. To support scholar health and school nutrition-education efforts, those involved with school fundraisers will plan activities that meet the nutrition and portion standards outlined in the ASTEC Wellness Policy. ASTEC encourages fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

## **Celebrations**

While we enjoy celebrations, we encourage employees to consider the diversity and various religions represented at ASTEC and to be sensitive to differences among our employees and scholars.

Elementary and middle school students have store-bought cookies and light-colored drinks before Winter Break and on Valentine's Day. They also participate in the Fall CARNIVAL. High school students do not have parties as their other school activities already take them out of time class more. This includes pizza parties, unless it is pre-approved in advance. At no level are birthday or other holiday gifts, balloons, flowers, etc. allowed in the school. If delivered, they will be kept in the office and disbursed at the end of the day as the student is leaving. Elementary students are allowed to bring pencils, or store bought cookies or cupcakes to share with classmates during the last minutes of the school day.

## **Health and Wellness**

ASTEC has a wellness committee made up of faculty, staff and administrators who meet during the year to review the ASTEC Wellness Policy.

As one of Dr. Mehmet Oz's HealthCorps schools, ASTEC has made an agreement that employees will not serve or bring in donuts, rolls, cakes, pies, sugary soft drinks, etc. into the school. We have agreed to healthy choices and to be positive role models to our scholars.

**Please do not bring unhealthy, sugary items for other staff members or students. This also includes ordering pizza to consume in front of scholars.**

ASTEC is also one of the state's Certified Healthy Schools and as such has agreed to provide healthy choices and to refrain

from unhealthy foods for employees or scholars. This includes scholar or employee lunches brought from home. Students may not bring soft drinks and other junk food in their lunches.

## Technology

### Acceptable Use Policy

A Technology Acceptable Use policy is on a separate Signed Document required beyond signing this handbook.

A Computer for Home Use policy is on a separately signed document required beyond the signing of this handbook.

For security purposes, specific employees are to use only desktop computers. This includes Secretaries, HR, Finance, and other positions using computers that contain, store, and/or access confidential content. These computers are to remain stationary and are not to be removed or taken from the premises under any circumstances. These positions will not be issued laptops. Likewise, these employees are not to use personal or ASTEC laptops, netbooks, smartphones, pads or other “like” devices at their workstations.

Other than designated administrative staff, laptops that belong to ASTEC are not to be removed from the premises without approval.

Executive Leadership must preview internal and external publications before publishing. Items for consideration will be reviewed during the weekly leadership meeting.

*Executive Leadership must preview internal and external publications before publishing. Items for consideration will be reviewed during the weekly leadership meeting.*

### Email Communications

Computers, the email system and all related files, programs and software made available to employees are ASTEC property; intended primarily for ASTEC business use. Employees may not access any files or retrieve any stored communication without authorization. To ensure compliance with this policy, computer and email usage may be monitored.

The IT Director will assign each ASTEC employee an appropriate email account/s. For practical purposes, all email addresses will be the employee’s position or derivative of the employee’s position, followed by @astec-kr2.com. The ASTEC email server is managed off-site. This is to ensure the email system is protected no matter what happens to our local network. This also allows employees to access their email off-site with any device that is capable of Internet access.

Each employee will have an email “alias” to their position email address. Alias emails will forward to the position email address. For example, Breeana Jewell is the HR Director at ASTEC. Her position email is hrdirector@astec-kr2.com. Her alias email is BJewell@astec-kr2.com. Anything sent to either address will be received by her.

Employees may access their ASTEC email account by going to Gmail.com and signing in with their username and password. If you have problems, contact a member of the technology team for instructions.

Since email accounts are provided as a normal communication tool, individual staff email addresses must be shared with interested parents and community members who request them in order to communicate with them in this manner.

Requests for the personal information of scholars or staff members will not be honored via email. It is critical for a personal contact to be made with any individual requesting personal information. This relates particularly to any requests for scholar grades, discipline, attendance, or related information. In addition, security information such as username or password will not be sent via email for any reason.

**Email is a vital communication tool at ASTEC. Therefore, it is expected that emails will be checked at least twice a day. Staff members are expected to respond to all email communications within 24 hours.**



Please use the “groups” function of our email system appropriately. Do not send messages to the entire staff when only a small group of people actually needs to receive the information.

Email is also an effective and efficient method for documenting communication. Use discretion and common sense when sending or responding to emails. To ensure a positive public image, it is wise to use “spell-check” when corresponding through ASTEC email. Employees are not allowed to delete ANY ASTEC- emails from their ASTEC email account. This does not include spam.

ASTEC strives to maintain a workplace that is free of harassment and sensitive to the diversity of its employees. Therefore, ASTEC prohibits the use of computers and the email system in ways that are disruptive, offensive to others or harmful to morale.

For example, the display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, and cartoons are not allowed. Other such misuse includes, but is not limited to, ethnic slurs, racial comments, off-color jokes, or anything that may be construed as harassment or showing disrespect for others.

Email may not be used to solicit others for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations or other non-business matters.

Files created for ASTEC (program files, scholar records, financial records, databases, etc.) are the property of ASTEC and should not be duplicated or taken from the premises for any other use without prior written permission from the CEO or Superintendent. Violations will result in legal action.

All security-related aspects of information processing could be subject to statutory or contractual security requirements. ASTEC is aware of our responsibilities as dictated by legislation and other legal commitments particularly as they apply to the information systems and practices required by federal and state governments. This pertains to the retention of ASTEC emails. School-Related Emails should NEVER be deleted. Employees who violate the email policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Internet Usage**

Internet access is provided by ASTEC to assist employees in obtaining work-related data and information. The following guidelines have been established to help ensure responsible and productive Internet usage. While Internet usage is intended for job-related activities, incidental and occasional brief personal use is permitted within reasonable limits.

All data that is composed, transmitted, or received via our computer communications systems is considered part of the official records of ASTEC and, as such, is subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. Consequently, employees should always ensure the business information contained in Internet email messages and other transmissions is accurate, appropriate, ethical, and lawful. Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed, or received via the Internet must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include but are not limited to, inappropriate sexual content or images, racial slurs, gender-specific references, or any other comments or images that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law.

All creative developments that were pursued with ASTEC equipment or during the employment contract period are subject to licensing and ownership by ASTEC, Inc.

The equipment, services, and technology provided by ASTEC remain at all times the property of ASTEC. As such, ASTEC reserves the right to monitor Internet traffic as well as store and/or retrieve any data composed, sent or received through our computers or network.

The unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked or patented material is expressly prohibited. As a general rule, if an employee has not obtained written permission from the owner of specific material, its use is considered unauthorized. Employees are individually responsible for complying with all applicable copyright laws.



All anti-virus programs are preset and monitored. This ensures uniform protection for all computers. Please note that scholars, faculty, and staff alike are prohibited from entering any on-line chat rooms that have not been pre-approved by the ASTEC technology team.

Uses of personal technology items (i.e. laptops, iPads, desktops, tablets, and similar devices) that are connected to ASTEC's network are expected to be in good working order and free of any defects and/or viruses. Should a personal technology item cause any issue with ASTEC's network or internal operating devices, the cost of repairs to the network and or any devices will be the direct responsibility of the owner of the device that caused the issue.

Use of the Internet access provided by ASTEC in violation of law or ASTEC policies will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally liable for any violations of the law or of this policy. In summary, the following behaviors are examples of activities that are prohibited and can result in disciplinary action.

- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages or images
- Using the organization's time or resources for personal gain
- Using, or disclosing someone else's code or password without authorization
- Copying, pirating, or downloading software and electronic files without permission
- Sending or distributing confidential material, trade secrets, or proprietary information outside of the organization
- Violating copyright law
- Failing to observe licensing agreements
- Engaging in any unauthorized activity that may incur liability to ASTEC or initiate unwanted Internet services or transmissions
- Sending or posting messages or material that could damage ASTEC's image or good reputation
- Participating in the viewing or exchange of pornography or obscene materials
- Sending or posting messages that defame or slander other individuals
- Attempting to break into the computer system of another organization or person
- Refusing to cooperate with a security investigation
- Sending or posting chain letters, solicitations, or advertisements not related to business purposes or activities
- Using the Internet for any unauthorized activities such as political or religious causes, or any sort of gambling
- Jeopardizing the security of ASTEC's electronic communications systems
- Sending or posting messages that disparage another organization's products or services
- Attempting to present personal views as representing those of ASTEC or its official representatives
- Sending anonymous email messages
- Engaging in any other illegal activities

## **Cyber Security**

Cyber security is more critical than ever. While ASTEC has a vendor who monitors our system, they cannot control for the most critical factors. According to cyber security experts, the major cause of security breach is an organization's employees. This is primarily for two reasons; downloading unauthorized software and using simple passwords that are rarely changed.

For these reasons, employees are to create a password that is strong that uses upper and lower case and numbers. An example of a strong password that is easy to remember might be, APFop@work8. "A pocket full of posies," a symbol (always use the same one for all passwords) and explanation "work," and a number (always use the same number).

For example, you might use "APFop@home8" for your home email, "APFop@bank8" for your bank and "APFop@youtube8" for a YouTube account.

Employees are not to download the software without permission from the IT Director who will check out the software and let the Superintendent know if it is secure.

## **Google Workspace**

There are many considerations when using Google Workspace and its associated apps. Google items should only be shared with ASTEC employees. When you are "sharing" be sure to use the "specific people" option. If you want a document shared

with all employees or just the middle/high school, share it with your supervisor and ask him/her to share it with these groups. Do not use the “everyone with a link” option.

Only administration and a few select staff have access to send to [elementaryschool@astec-k12](mailto:elementaryschool@astec-k12), [middleschool@astec-k12](mailto:middleschool@astec-k12), [highschool@astec-k12](mailto:highschool@astec-k12), and [all@astec-k12](mailto:all@astec-k12). If you want to send anything to these groups, you will need to forward your email to your supervisor who will determine whether it should be sent. DO NOT MAKE GOOGLE COPIES of documents without the written approval of the author of the document. This is not only plagiarism (taking credit for the work of another), but also, results in multiple copies being edited and distributed that may not be the original and official document.

## Software

ASTECC understands that certain staff and faculty might have preferences in the software and programs they use on ASTECC or personal computers that are connected to the ASTECC network. Before buying, downloading or installing any software on these computers, a written request MUST be submitted via an IT Request through the online BOSSDesk ticket system.

Employees are not to download or install software without written approval from the Superintendent. This ensures that the IT Director knows about the purchase, can check for any conflicts with other software running on ASTECC computers, and has a record of the software. Scholars should never be allowed to download or install software. There are no exceptions.

All original software and licensing will be, cataloged and stored for safekeeping by the IT Director. If any software is to be loaned out or used for installation, only licensed versions of the original software will be used for this purpose.

The software will not be installed on computers or devices that do not belong to ASTECC. This includes, but is not limited to accounting and financial software.

## Computers In The Classroom

Scholars are not to be left unattended at a computer device at any time. Scholars are prohibited from:

- being on a device if the teacher is not signed into the Relay program and is monitoring,
- accessing personal emails outside of their ASTECC email,
- sending or receiving emails to their school email address to others, except for faculty and appropriate school personnel,
- using a computer device without being instructed to do so by an ASTECC faculty member or administrator,
- putting stickers or any marks on the device,
- playing games on classroom devices,
- navigating to unauthorized website,
- engaging in social media or chatrooms

No scholar will be allowed to use a device before attending the approved, annual digital citizenship program.

No scholar is allowed to access any employee’s computer at any time without prior approval and direct supervision. Only scholars such as designated “tech team” are allowed to make hardware or settings changes (mouse, printer, hard drive, etc.). Before letting a scholar use an employee computer, all teacher/staff accounts must be securely logged off.

Employees using their personal computers (Windows and Mac) to access data from the network will need to have their computers attached to the domain. Please do not download software with potential to compromise our network. When in doubt, speak with the IT Director.

*In compliance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act, ASTECC uses approved filtering devices to regularly monitor and ensure compliance with all laws and regulations. Scholars in technology classes are to have assigned seating and are responsible for computer usage under their account on their specific computer.*

In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act, ASTEC uses approved filtering devices to regularly monitor and ensure compliance with all laws and regulations. Scholars in technology classes are to have assigned seating and are responsible for computer usage under their account on their specific computer.

Scholars will be issued a password that they should protect. The network server program automatically audits all computers. Despite these precautions, the best prevention and safety measure is continuous monitoring by a teacher.

**Any scholar violation(s) must be documented and reported to the Headmaster and to the Dean of Students.** Thorough documentation is to be sent to the Central Office, where incidents are tracked. In such an instance, parents will be notified immediately and the appropriate disciplinary or legal action will be taken.

*Only an adult may use an aerosol keyboard cleaner. The cleaner is to be stored and secured out of the reach of scholars.*

Substitute teachers are not to have access to teacher or student computers. This includes teachers who substitute for other teachers. It does not apply to long-term substitutes who are given special permission from the Headmaster. If damage should occur while the classroom is under the supervision of the substitute because the absent teacher did not secure them the day before, any damages will be the responsibility of the absent teacher. Attendance will need to be submitted by paper by a substitute.

## **Computer Vandalism**

Vandalism will result in the cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as "any malicious attempts to access, harm, alter, or destroy data or equipment belonging to ASTEC or another user." This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of any computer program with malicious intent.

Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic messages is prohibited. Any unauthorized attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other system users or deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.

Violation of ASTEC's policies and procedures concerning the use of computers and networks will result in the same disciplinary actions as any other violation of ASTEC's policies. ASTEC Schools will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of ASTEC's computer systems and networks.

Damages to any ASTEC property including but not limited to computers, printers, etc. will be charged to the individual responsible for the damage. Both teachers and scholars should take care when using school equipment. It is the responsibility of the scholar and/or teacher to report the damage immediately or as soon as it's known. It is the responsibility of the teacher to regularly monitor equipment utilized by their scholars. Otherwise, damage caused by a scholar, but not reported, may result in the sole financial responsibility of the teacher.

**Staff Technology Use Agreement will have a separately signed document required beyond signing this handbook.**

As an employee of ASTEC Schools, you understand the use of a computer or assigned technology to facilitate student instruction and enhance student achievement is a privilege and a necessity to support research and education through unique resources and collaborations of work.

Certain positions such as secretarial, financial, and human resources will use only ASTEC desktop computers. These computers may not be removed from school property.

Employees are responsible for the school equipment, including accessories and peripherals issued by ASTEC and that you must care for the equipment in such a manner as to prevent loss or damage. ASTEC is not liable for damage, loss, or theft of equipment due to an intentional act, neglect, or abuse or your failure to follow Board policies, rules or guidelines, including

unauthorized software you put on an ASTEC computer device. The employee is responsible for reimbursing ASTEC for the replacement/or cost of damages.

*You will immediately notify your supervisor of repair or replacement matters. You are responsible for your personal equipment and any damages and/or repairs caused by viruses introduced to the ASTEC network via your computer.*

You will immediately notify your supervisor of repair or replacement matters. You are responsible for your personal equipment and any damages and/or repairs caused by viruses introduced to the ASTEC network via your computer.

The sooner damage to an ASTEC device is reported, the more likely it is for administration to determine the cause and who is responsible for the damage as the camera footage can only be saved for a couple of weeks.

It is the responsibility of the employee to secure the equipment at all times. The equipment should not be left unsecured and/or locked in any unattended and/or unsecured area, i.e., classrooms, instructional areas, offices, or common areas. ASTEC laptops may NOT be taken from school property.

By signing the ASTEC Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Form, employees are signing an ASTEC Schools' Technology Use Agreement. You acknowledge that you understand and will abide by the guidelines and prohibitions as stated in this handbook. You understand and acknowledge ASTEC Schools reserves and will exercise the right to review, audit, intercept, access, and disclose all matters on the ASTEC Schools' network and email systems at any time with or without notice, and that such access may occur during or after the regular school workday.

You also acknowledge that you understand if you violate the policies outlined in the employee handbook, you will lose your access to the Internet and may face other disciplinary action(s).

## **Social Media Policy**

See APPENDIX for the Digital and Social Media Policy.

**\*Of Note:** All ASTEC students are required to complete "Digital Citizenship" training. Students who post negative information about the school, school personnel, or other students will be disciplined and blocked from ASTEC social media.

## **Safety**

### **Safety Certifications**

*In addition to and in accordance with SB 293, all employees who lead scholars in any type of physical activity either during or after school hours must have documentation of course completion of CPR, "Sudden Cardiac Arrest", and "Care and Prevention of Athletic Injuries," and any other state-required certificates, or have an approved equivalent on file with Human Resources.*

Prior to participation in an athletic activity, a student and the student's parent or guardian will need to review and sign the Athlete/Parent/Guardian Sudden Cardiac Arrest Symptoms and Warning Signs Information Sheet developed by the Health Department and the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE).

## **Student Information**

ASTECC does not print a student directory and will not provide scholar information to a third party unless the parent or guardian has given prior written consent.

## **Scholar Activities in the Parking Lot**

As a general practice, avoid holding activities such as athletic practices, class activities, etc. in the mall parking lot if another suitable location is readily available. In instances where an activity must take place in the mall parking lot, teachers and sponsors should obtain permission from the Headmaster at least five school days in advance of the activity.

The Headmaster will direct the teacher to coordinate with the Facilities Director to arrange for barriers to cordon off the area. During the activity, scholars must be supervised at all times.

ASTECC shares its facility with many other tenants who also park in the Mall parking lot. ASTECC has earned an excellent reputation as a good neighbor with those we work with in the Mall. We must all remember that we need to continue to be good neighbors.

Those monitoring the high school drivers parking lot are required to make sure students:

1. are driving the parking lot speed limit of 15 mph or less,
2. have a visible ASTECC driving tag hanging from rearview mirror,
3. and parents keep the volume of car stereos at the decibel allowed by law,
4. are driving in the proper direction when entering and exiting the lot,
5. are only parking east of Row 14 (not IN Row 14),
6. are courteous to other drivers and to alternate exiting with those trying get out of the parking lot,
7. and, **never keep a Mall employee or another car from exiting the parking lot.**

## **Live Animals in School**

ASTECC recognizes that the appropriate use of live animals as instructional resources can enrich the educational program. The observation and nurture of live animals can help children learn specific biological and behavioral principles and gain respect for all living things.

A staff member who uses live animals shall observe proper precautions for the safety of pupils and the animals. The Headmaster must approve the use of any animal in a course of instruction or the establishment of an animal habitat in a classroom.

Any animal used in school must have been lawfully acquired in accordance with applicable state law and local ordinances. An animal susceptible to rabies must have been vaccinated against rabies.

A teacher or other qualified adult must assume primary responsibility for the animal, its nourishment, and its sanitary living conditions. The staff member in charge must make proper arrangements for the animal's care and feeding over weekends, holidays, and school vacation periods.

Any experiment that deprives the animal of nourishment or exposes the animal to harm must be conducted under strict supervision and as humanely as possible. The effects of the experiment must be reversed as quickly as possible. If correction is not possible or feasible, the animal must be disposed of by humane methods.

## **Goggles and Eye Safety**

ASTECC does not store hazardous chemicals on campus for student use. Scholars handling other potentially dangerous

substances are to wear the goggles assigned to the Science Department. Proper protocol regarding the flushing of the eye is to be followed. Contact the Public Safety Director immediately should an accident occur.

## Emergency Closings

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires, power failures, or earthquakes can disrupt school operations. These circumstances may require the closing of the school. In the event such an emergency occurs during non-working hours, local radio and/or television stations will be asked to broadcast notification of the closing. A SchoolMessenger notification call will be sent to all scholars and personnel.

Please Note: Oklahoma City Public Schools (“OKCPS”) does not determine whether or not ASTEC Schools will close. SchoolMessenger will notify employee and scholar households as to school closings and emergency situations. Closings will also be posted on news stations, the ASTEC website, and digital media (Facebook/Instagram) pages.

*The fastest way to learn if ASTEC is closed is to go online and check the local news stations’ websites for closings, as closings are reported there first.*

When operations are officially closed due to emergency conditions, faculty and other school employees will make up the contracted day missed due to circumstances beyond the control of ASTEC.

In cases where an emergency closing is not authorized, employees who fail to report for work will not be paid for the time off. Employees may request available paid time off (PTO) such as unused accrued leave. Each employee is responsible for assessing his/her situation and for taking responsible action.

## Asbestos Management and Inspection Plan

ASTEC maintains an Asbestos Management Plan that can be viewed by visitors and employees upon request to the Central Office. Our asbestos inspections indicate there is no presence of asbestos in our building.

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 (AAHERA) provides guidelines for the identification, monitoring, and management of asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in all public and private schools from Pre-K to 12th grade. ASTEC Schools has prepared an Asbestos Inspection and Management Plan (AIMP). The plan is designed to identify any presence of ACM and to provide a program to control those materials and prevent any risk to building occupants. The inspection results and the plan are on file in the office of the Public Safety Director and are available for public review and may be examined by contacting the CEO or Superintendent at (405) 947-6272 or by visiting ASTEC Central offices at 2401 NW 23rd Street, Ste. 39A, during regular business hours with a 24-hour notice.

Though employees will receive in-service training in school safety procedures, each employee should also become familiar with the procedures by reading through them frequently.

## School Trauma Team

In the unlikely, but possible, situation where the scholar and school employees are potentially traumatized, ASTEC relies on its Trauma Team to establish communication, logistical and situation-specific plans, and directives. The members of the Trauma Team are the senior school leaders (CEO, Superintendent, Headmasters, and Dean of Student Success, the chair of the ASTEC Governing Board, the ASTEC Public Safety Director, and the designated School Counselor).

## Student Admits and Hall Passes

Do not admit scholars to class without a valid hall pass or admit slip. Do not release scholars from class without a hall pass. Allow only one student to leave the room at a time whenever possible. No staff member should allow a scholar to move from one school building to the other without an admit slip from the appropriate office. Failure to follow this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including unpaid administrative leave.



## **Classroom Safety**

To protect scholars and avoid liability situations, teachers should never leave scholars unattended in the classroom or in any other area. Should an emergency arise that would necessitate the teacher to leave the classroom, he/she should ask for assistance from the office, the Dean of Instruction or another teacher.

Only with prior approval of the Headmaster may a class be dismissed early. Having scholars in the parking lots or hallways before others are on duty leaves scholars without the required supervision and is a safety concern.

*Teachers are to leave classroom doors unlocked and open during class time unless officially notified of a “lockdown.”*

## **Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP)**

All school personnel must complete annual training and certification in the handling of bloodborne pathogens (BBP). A BBP is a disease or virus that is carried through the blood. Many healthcare professionals are required to undergo bloodborne pathogens training in order to ensure a healthy work environment, patient privacy, and general safety. Those who work in blood banks, hospitals, nursing homes, and other medical settings are often required to obtain certification before handling blood.

ASTECC will provide an opportunity for online training that provides knowledge about common BBP general precautions for handling human blood products, the processes and procedures for dealing with exposure to blood, how to identify hazardous organisms, and how to limit your risk of exposure. Also included are procedures on how to handle equipment used in drawing and storing blood, as well as the basics of what BBPs are, how they affect the body, and the risks they can pose.

*All employees in a public school are required to receive training and pass a test on bloodborne pathogens.*

## **AIDS Prevention Plan**

ASTECC scholars receive AIDS prevention planning annually by qualified specialists. Also, please see the “Bloodborne Pathogens” section in this handbook.

Should it be discovered that a scholar or employee has AIDS, ASTECC employees will keep the information in the strictest confidence. An AIDS Infected Student Multidisciplinary Team will be put in place to ensure the safety of scholars and employees while maintaining the privacy of the individual.

## **Diabetes**

Some medical issues are more serious than others. Diabetes is one of those issues. Once ASTECC is made aware of the diagnosis of diabetes in a student, school personnel will make every effort to comply with the medical directions for the student. However, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and the student to monitor diet and medication, if needed.

Oklahoma State Law requires schools to have a diabetes management plan. ASTECC’s plan for scholars is online and a hard copy is kept in the Central Office. Training on this plan is provided by the school for all employees.



## Meningitis

Meningitis is now so prevalent that Oklahoma schools are required by state law to inform students, parents, and school employees about the types, symptoms, and dangers of meningitis.

Meningitis is an infection of the spinal cord fluid and the fluid that surrounds the brain. Meningitis is usually caused by a virus or a bacterium. Meningitis caused by a virus is usually less severe and resolves without specific treatment, while meningitis caused by bacteria can be severe and may result in brain damage, hearing loss, limb amputation, or learning disabilities.

Meningitis is a growing and serious medical concern for young people. Babies less than a year old have the highest risk for meningococcal disease, but no vaccine is available to protect them. The risk of meningococcal disease increases for adolescents and young adults aged 15 to 22 years, because of behaviors that spread the disease. On average, two to three people in this age group get meningococcal disease every year in Oklahoma. More than half of these could be prevented by a vaccine.

See the information about meningitis in the Appendix.

## Vaccinations

ASTECSchools' policy is that for the safety of all scholars, every scholar should be vaccinated. Any parent who seeks to enroll a student without required vaccinations will be directed to the Superintendent before being enrolled. The Superintendent is the only authorized ASTEC official to discuss vaccination exemptions with parents and scholars.

Only 45% of the adult population takes a flu vaccine. This is said to be responsible for passing the flu on to infants, the elderly, cancer victims, and others with underlying health issues and for many, many deaths. As professionals who work with children and who have a high likelihood of getting and/or passing on the flu to vulnerable populations it is highly recommended that school employees take the responsibility to get a flu vaccine. Remember that flu vaccines are only good for 3 months. October and February are recommended months for flu shots.

COVID vaccinations are highly recommended for all eligible students. ASTEC employees are required to have a flu vaccination each year and an up-to-date COVID vaccination including all CDC recommended booster shots. Employees may obtain a medical or religious exemption that meets ASTEC requirements.

## Scholar Issues

The Parent/Scholar Handbook contains official policies and procedures concerning scholars and school issues. **Employees must become familiar with, enforce, and comply with these policies and procedures** as well as with the additional notes that provide further clarification. Homeroom teachers review the Handbook with scholars. A copy of the Handbook can be found on the ASTEC website at [www.astec-kt12.com](http://www.astec-kt12.com) and on the Faculty Index or the Administration Index.

*Supervisors must know where all scholars are at all times.  
Teachers are not to take scholars out of the building or out of the classroom  
without the permission of their supervisor.*

## Death in Scholars' Families

Please apprise your supervisor if you become aware of the death of a student's sibling or parent. Your supervisor will notify the Executive Leadership of the school. We always want to make an effort to reach out to these families with flowers and/or have someone from the administration attend the service.

## Scholar Guidance

**Informal Guidance:** ASTEC is concerned about the scholars as a whole. School employees are charged with providing positive guidance to ASTEC scholars. Almost daily, we have the opportunity to provide informal positive reinforcement and guidance. The school-age years can sometimes be characterized by negative comments and personal “drama” can be exhibited at any time and at any location on the school grounds. As caring adults, it is our responsibility to sincerely redirect these comments to the positive.

Sending subtle messages that contain negative comments about other scholars, parents, teachers, administrators or the school, in general, will not be tolerated. Positive comments can go a long way in creating a more positive environment for everyone. School spirit is much more than something practiced on game day.

**Formal Guidance:** For legal and ethical purposes, formal guidance is to be left to professionals such as school guidance counselors or therapists. No employee should provide personal recommendations to a scholar.

Likewise, any employee who has knowledge of a scholar’s situation that may cause that scholar physical or emotional harm is responsible for making a referral to a school counselor. The school counselor has the professional training to assess the situation and take the appropriate course of action.

Teachers are to be alert to the behavior of students they see regularly. A student whose behavior demonstrates signs of depression, sadness, or aggression, should be referred to the site counselor as soon as possible.

## In-School Detention

Students may be assigned In-School Detention (ISD) by the Dean of Students and/or the Headmaster. While in ISD, scholars are not to talk to one another and the assigned teacher is not to engage the scholars in conversation. Teachers are to provide work for scholars assigned to ISD. Teachers assigned to ISD are not to take scholars out of the ISD room unless they are escorting ISD scholars to the restroom or getting lunch.

## Scholar Testing

Ensuring the validity of scholars’ tests is a priority at ASTEC. All state standardized testing must be executed under the supervision and monitoring of the Dean of Student Success. Test materials are to be closely guarded under lock and key when not in use. Teachers must follow the state testing regulations provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Education in the handling of materials. No testing will be done without a trained test administrator and a monitor present.

Teachers are also not to administer or have administrative access to the benchmark summative tests of the scholars in the subject area they teach. The Dean of Student Success will handle the security of benchmark answer documents to provide a testing environment that is secure and ensures the validity of the benchmark.

Administrators will schedule NWEA MAP testing three times a year. Teachers are to follow the schedule and manage the tests on the days assigned to them for their students.

## Overall Safety

ASTEC has developed and promoted a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, scholars, and visitors. In addition, ASTEC utilizes a Safe Schools Committee composed of employees, parents, and scholars.

## Introduction to the Department of Public Safety

ASTEC Charter Schools Department of Public Safety (DPS) employs one state-certified peace officer and is available 24 hours a day / 365 days a year, which provides the ASTEC Community with around-the-clock service and protection. ASTEC DPS patrols both campuses on a regular basis. ASTEC scholars, faculty, staff, and visitors should report any suspicious activity to ASTEC DPS.

The department performs annual evaluations on policy and procedures, as well as emergency management plans. A threat assessment is performed annually as well to ensure the campuses are prepared for any critical incident, natural or manmade. Incident reports are kept in the Department of Public Safety office and are available for review Monday-Friday 8 am – 4 pm.

## **The Mission of ASTEC Charter Schools Department of Public Safety**

The mission of each member of the ASTEC Charter Schools Public Safety Department is to work in partnership with faculty, staff, and students to affirmatively promote, preserve and provide a secure environment with a commitment to integrity, respect, fairness, and service.

The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries.

Safety drills are performed throughout the school year in the unlikely, but real threat of fire, tornado, intruder, earthquake and bomb threats. Employees will be trained in the proper evacuation procedures, however, it is the responsibility of the employee to follow the procedures as outlined.

All emergency procedures are included in the Appendix. In addition, administrators have an office handbook available to put the plan into immediate effect. To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and scholars and to protect and conserve ASTEC Schools' equipment, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- Become familiar with safety procedures and safety postings
- Observe all safety rules
- Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times
- Immediately report all accidents to your supervisor
- Immediately report any condition inside and/or outside the facility that is unsafe and may pose a danger to occupants
- Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization
- Do not participate in physical activities during school hours or school-sponsored events that are not a part of your position description and/or duties

All employees should be familiar with the evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas. Fire, tornado, and other emergency drills will be conducted to familiarize employees and scholars with evacuation, lockdown, and lockout procedures. Fire extinguishers are located throughout all district buildings. Employees should know the location of the extinguishers nearest their place of work and how to use them.

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

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

In the case of job-related accidents that result in injury, regardless of how insignificant the injury may appear, employees should immediately notify their supervisor and Human Resources. Such reports are necessary to advise, comply with laws, and initiate insurance and workers' compensation benefits procedures.

ASTEC employees are to be observant of possible situations that may represent a safety hazard to a scholar, client, patron or employee and immediately report the situation to a member of the schools' senior leadership team or to their supervisor.

Employees who lift more than 25 lbs. in the workplace are to wear the appropriate abdominal and/or back support. It is the employee's responsibility to notify his/her supervisor if asked to lift beyond his/her capacity.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact HR who will notify the appropriate employee. The ASTEC Safe Schools Plan is located in the Appendix. Please print it and keep it in a nearby location for easy access.

## **Facilities and School Property**

**Inventory of Assets will have a separately signed document required beyond signing this handbook.**

At the beginning of each school year, the IT Director will provide each employee an inventory list of assets placed in their care. Employees will check this list and sign off on the items on their inventory list, signifying they have received the items, the items are in good working order and are free from damage. The employee also needs to understand they are responsible for all loss and/or damage of assets in their care. Additional items may be checked out to the employee throughout the year by the IT Director and will be added to their inventory list.

Any asset that is damaged or lost must immediately be reported to the IT Director for tracking and repair/replacement purposes via the lost/damaged asset form which can be found on BambooHR.

No asset(s) can be relocated from one space to another without written notification, documentation and prior approval from the IT Director.

Each employee will conduct a “mid-year inventory update” before winter break to assess the conditions and status of items that were on their initial inventory list or were entrusted to them during the year. A “textbook check” will be conducted before every school break. An end-of-the-year asset inventory will be conducted under the direction of the Superintendent and details about the end-of-year checkout procedures will be conducted and discussed at the last “all employee” professional development meeting.

All incoming packages must be processed through the Central Office. If you receive a school package, the Central Office will notify the IT Director, who will add the item to your inventory. You will then be notified to pick the item up from the holding area in the Central Office. PLEASE do not take items from this area unless you have been advised to do so.

Employees are expected to pay the replacement and or repair costs as determined by the Facilities Director, for lost or damaged items under their care. If a scholar damages or loses items, it is the responsibility of the teacher to collect for the damages or to pay the school for the damages themselves. MOST of our teachers have never had to report a lost or damaged item. This represents good stewardship.

## **Return of Property**

Employees are responsible for all ASTEC property, materials, or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. Items lost or broken are to be replaced or paid for. ASTEC will determine the replacement cost of the item(s).

ASTEC property includes all non-consumable items purchased with ASTEC funds; all items given to ASTEC as gifts; and, all items purchased with monies donated to ASTEC.

Employees must return all ASTEC property immediately upon request or upon the termination of employment. An employee’s final paycheck will be delayed until all items have been returned and checked out properly through an assigned administrator or Public Safety Director.

**Equipment Checkout will have a separately signed document required beyond signing this handbook.**

All equipment is inventoried and secured in the Asset Room. In the event an employee needs to check out an item from the Asset Room, the employee will fill out an Asset Checkout form found on the ASTEC Faculty Index under “Assets.” Concerns for damage of equipment must be reported to the IT Director immediately and a damage report submitted. Do not allow another employee to borrow anything that is checked out to you. It is your responsibility until it is checked in with the IT Director. Get a receipt for any item you return or that anyone wants to take from your room or office.

## **Technology Requests**

Issues with technology should be reported through the BOSSDesk ticket system under “Technology Requests.” Please submit your own requests. Be thorough in your description. Do not diagnose the problem, but describe your issue.

## Maintenance Requests

Maintenance requests may be found in the BOSSDesk ticket system. Please submit your own request as this is how tracking is done. Should you have a maintenance type issue that is not technology-related, please submit a request as soon as the issue is discovered. Do not send emails or catch maintenance in the hallway to report the issue. If it is an emergency, call your supervisor and he or she will contact the Facilities Director.

**Moving Furniture** may require a separately signed document beyond signing this handbook.

Do NOT move furniture, chairs, etc. from your room or area. Complete a BOSSDesk ticket maintenance request so that the item may be taken from your inventory. Be sure to get a receipt for any item removed that is checked out to you.

**End-of-Year Check-Out will have a separately signed document required beyond signing this handbook.**

All faculty and staff will be required to go through an end-of-year checkout process. This process is multifaceted and involves many people. Faculty and staff will be required to thoroughly clean their classrooms, assets, and areas with approved ASTEC-supplied cleaning materials and guidelines. If areas and equipment are not cleaned and organized properly, delays in the checkout process will occur and re-inspection of the area and/or equipment will be required.

Teachers will be required to finalize their grades and provide a list of scholars that have earned zero or no credit (NC). In addition, they must provide a list of contacts for all parents of scholars that earned these grades indicating that they have been notified. Classrooms and all assets will be checked to make sure all inventory is accounted for and in working order. Faculty and staff should report damages as soon as they become aware of the damage; they should not wait until checkout day. Once all inventories have been accounted for and the classroom and assets deemed appropriately cleaned and organized. The faculty member will ensure that he/she has received all required signatures on their check-out form, then he/she will report to the Central Office for the final step of checkout.

The final step will be meeting with the CEO or Superintendent and other required Central Office personnel as needed. It will be determined at this time if there are any lost or damaged items. The employee will be held financially responsible for any lost or damaged property. The cost will be assessed and determined by the Facilities Director and deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

## Restitution for Damages or Loss

*Inspect your assigned classroom and all assets immediately upon taking possession and complete a Maintenance and/or IT Request for anything broken, missing or not functioning. Employees are responsible for items checked out to them.*

Scholars and/or employees who damage or lose school property whether by accident or intentionally, are required to make restitution to the school and hence the taxpayers. Making restitution is the ethical course of action for any member of society.

Employees are responsible for the property in their care and for reporting damage to their supervisor immediately. This includes all items checked out to them, as well as the carpet, walls, doors, windows, furniture, equipment, computers, etc., for which they are assigned.

Do **NOT** accept any asset that has damage (i.e., missing computer keys, cracked screens, etc.). If you accept the equipment, you will assume the responsibility and debt for the damage done by an employee or your students. The supervisor will direct the employee to complete an online Restitution/Damage Report.

In the event of classroom property damage, the teacher must complete a Damage Report, naming the student responsible for

the damage. Once the Damage Report is received, parents/guardians of students who damaged or lost ASTEC property must schedule a meeting with the Headmaster to set up a repayment plan.

The Facilities Director will assess the cost of replacement/repair. A \$50 charge will be assessed for the handling and accounting for the processing and time spent by other employees who must replace or repair the item.

Payment plans that include payroll deductions for employees may be available and should be discussed with the Facilities Director who will secure a payment contract. No payments may be extended beyond the school year in which the damage or loss occurred. **Any damages not paid for will come out of your final check for the year.**

## **Walls, Floors and Sinks**

Only the Facilities Director and the experienced professionals he / she designates may paint the walls of any ASTEC facility. ASTEC purchases a specific type and texture of paint that is used on all walls. Additionally, painting by non-professionals often results in greater expenses than the savings of not hiring a professional. Likewise, ASTEC's hard-surfaced floors are not to be waxed as several floors have a special no wax finish that is damaged when waxed.

There are multiple brooms and hoky-type sweepers throughout the building. There should be enough for two teachers to share a set.

Faculty are to have scholars pick up papers from the floor at the end of each hour. If a non-liquid is spilled, please use the hoky sweeper to clean it up. Running the sweeper at the end of the day will keep your floors in good repair.

Soda, colored punch, etc. are not allowed in classrooms. Should there be a liquid spill on the carpet, please complete a Maintenance form right away and contact maintenance so it can be properly cleaned before it stains.

## **Use of Telephones**

It is unprofessional and a liability risk for faculty members to take class time for phone calls, including calls or texts on cell phones. The primary correlation to achievement is "time on task with a teacher present." Talking on the phone, texting, or checking digital media sites takes time away from scholars and instruction. The use of cell phones during class time is prohibited. Cell phones should be turned off during hours of instruction. Cell voice mail may be checked at lunchtime, after hours, or during plan periods. Scholars are prohibited from having a cell phone during the school day. Scholars place their cell phones in a lockbox at the beginning of the day and retrieve it at the end of the day.

Teachers are responsible for monitoring and insuring that the lockbox is securely locked throughout the day.

*Employees who use a cell phone while on duty, either in the classroom, hall, mall, outside, etc. will be given one warning before being suspended without pay. This includes professional meetings and training. Additional incidents may result in termination. This also applies to reading books or engaging in other distractions while on duty.*

Messages for regular incoming phone calls for faculty members will be placed in the employee's mailbox. ASTEC's main number is (405) 947-6272. Incoming calls are directed to the appropriate site or office extensions.

## **Special Phone Considerations**

- First impressions are lasting impressions. Always speak clearly and in a pleasant, well-modulated tone.



- Answer the main numbers with “ASTECC (Elementary, Middle or High) School,” or “ASTECC Central Office.” “How may I direct your call?”
- After the caller responds: “Who may I say is calling? Who are you with?”
- **If you are not someone specifically assigned to answer the phone and you should be in a position where you are covering for one who is, TAKE A MESSAGE. DO NOT ENGAGE IN A CONVERSATION. Let the caller know you will be happy to take their information and have the appropriate person return their call.**
- Do not give out an employee’s direct extension number. The caller is given the opportunity to speak with a staff member or leave a message.
- Greetings should be “upbeat” and the person answering the phone identified by name.
- Answer the phone by the third ring whenever possible.
- Speak in a courteous and professional manner. Treat each call as if it were the most important call ASTECC has ever received.
- Record each message thoroughly and accurately, and date and initial it. Note the time if it is a voice message.

#### **Teachers and other employees who deal with parents/guardians:**

- If an employee deems their conversation with a parent, etc., warrants being recorded, the phone system has this option. According to FCC regulations, the caller does not have to be informed that the call is being recorded.

#### **Secretaries and others assigned phone duty:**

- Be sensitive to the tone of the caller’s voice. If he or she is upset, let the staff member know. Forewarned is forearmed.
- Always confirm information received from the caller and hang up only after the caller has done so.
- If the staff member requested is unavailable, say so and take a message. Do not volunteer information on the staff member’s whereabouts. Be professional and let the caller know the staff member will be given the message as soon as possible.
- When a staff member is working a program or working from home, please do not say, “He isn’t in,” or “He is out of the office.” Instead, follow the Exceptional Phone Courtesy Protocol.
- Update the voice greeting on your voicemail regularly. Let callers know when you will return.
- Be sensitive to the caller’s time. Never leave anyone on hold for more than a minute. Obtain their name and number and give a time when you or the person they wish to speak to can return the call.
- Always get permission from callers to place them “on hold.”
- Record each message thoroughly and accurately, and date and initial it. Note the time and if it is a voice message. Place the message in the staff member’s designated area. Individual staff members are responsible for checking messages regularly.
- All incoming phone calls requiring a response and/or a return call are to be addressed within 24 hours. Even if you do not yet know the answer to the questions asked, at least touch base with the caller. Let them know every call is important to ASTECC.
- Voice mail must be checked several times each day when programs are in session. This is critical to our customer service.
- Become familiar with the phone system and the options available to callers.
- When transferring a call to another extension, do not hang up until the employee is on the line and you have told them who is calling and the nature of their call.

## **Use of Equipment and Vehicles**

Use of Equipment and Vehicles will have a separately signed document required beyond signing this handbook.

**Reservations for vehicles are to be made well in advance through the Facilities Director or his designee.** Equipment and vehicles essential in accomplishing job duties are expensive and difficult to replace. When using ASTECC property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

The IT Director checks in/out all IT and Asset Room items. The Facilities Director checks vehicles. Equipment and vehicles are checked out in good working order and will be inspected upon check-in to ensure the equipment is returned in good working order.

Damage to any equipment, machines, tools or vehicles must be reported to the Central Office immediately and a report filed through BOSSDesk ticket system BambooHR. After-hours issues that occur with equipment, machines, and vehicles are required to be reported to the Facilities Director as soon as possible. Prompt reporting of damages, defects and the need for repairs could prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others.



Authorized drivers should always ensure there is at least one-half tank of gas when they park a bus or the vehicle. The vehicles will be returned clean, free of litter, and free of any defects. Any issues are to be reported to the Facilities Director. He /she or his / her designee can answer any questions about an employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment or vehicles used on the job.

Authorized drivers are required to perform a documented pre and post-trip inspection of each vehicle before and after each day's use. Any issues or questions concerning the vehicles will need to be documented on the appropriate forms and reported to the Facilities Director as soon as possible.

Any employee who drives an ASTEC vehicle must be cleared through the ASTEC designated insurance company in advance. Vehicles and/or drivers must complete the transportation request form.

**NO equipment is to be taken off-site without approval and justification.** If a situation arises that makes it necessary to take ASTEC equipment off-site, the employee must complete and submit the request to the Superintendent. Written approval or denial will be issued within 24 hours. Maintenance tools are not authorized for check out to take off-site.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive or unsafe use or operation of equipment or vehicles, as well as excessive or avoidable traffic and parking violations, can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

ASTEC's insurance prohibits the transporting of non-ASTEC scholars, or the use of non-ASTEC approved drivers to drive their buses.

The use of ASTEC paid postage for personal correspondence is not permitted. Nor is using the copier paper or the copier for personal purposes. Do not give scholars and patrons ASTEC letterhead or envelopes for their own personal use. This is illegal.

## **Use of Buildings**

Employees requiring building keys must check out keys through ASTEC administrators. All doors are to be locked, and lights turned off upon leaving. Employees should DOUBLE-CHECK outside doors when leaving. In addition to the security issues for ASTEC, it becomes necessary for the security company to call the ASTEC Public Safety Director after midnight rounds and requires him/her to immediately return and secure the building.

The ASTEC building may only be used for ASTEC-related activities, unless authorized by the CEO.

## **Housekeeping**

We believe the appearance of workspaces and classrooms, sends a message to our scholars, clients and patrons. We believe that the message should be a positive one, displaying not only pride but also good stewardship of our resources. It is every employee's responsibility to keep his/her respective areas and common areas clean, neat and organized - it is not the custodian's role to do this. Each employee is expected to maintain an attractive and personalized workspace or classroom. This includes not only creating an inviting décor, but also having an area that is cleaned and maintained daily. Periodic inspections will occur throughout the year by the Facilities Director. Please be mindful that food and drink items left in a room or closet will attract roaches and other insects. Food items should be sealed in ziplock containers.

The cost of exterminating a classroom is expensive and will be passed on to an employee who creates an infestation due to lack of cleanliness.

Classroom walls that do not have permanently attached furniture and cabinetry must be kept 80% clear of any flammable substances or items. Items stored on top of cabinets and lockers cannot be any closer to a fire suppression sprinkler head than 18" per state and local fire codes.

Though employees share teacher lounge kitchen duties on a rotating basis, it is still the responsibility of each employee to clean the kitchen area, refrigerator, and other common areas after himself/herself.

## Building Temperatures

The heating and cooling of a school are very costly. For that reason, thermostats are locked and adjusted only by the Facilities Director or his / her designee. DO NOT, under any circumstance attempt to change the temperature setting. Given that each employee has their own temperature preference and that thermostats cannot be adjusted to suit everyone, ASTEC has adopted a temperature policy. When the heaters are on the temperature setting will be 68 °F and when air conditioners are running, the temperature setting will be 73 °F.

Please dress in layers to accommodate the seasons.

## Space Heaters

The Shepherd Center owner has very specific policies in place regarding personal space heaters, as this is a matter of safety for ASTEC and all the mall tenants. As a tenant, ASTEC Schools must adopt and enforce these policies.

### The policy states:

The purpose of this policy is to promote the safety of the building occupants, improve comfort for office staff, and conserve energy. The use of space heaters increases the risk of electrical shock and fire hazards. Our electrical infrastructure is not designed to support the increase of potential electric loads for space heater use. Also, space heaters generate heat that contributes to false readings for building thermostats. We recognize there are some that have a physical need for a warmer temperature. In general, space heaters will be prohibited for building occupants. Security will be checking periodically in suites for illegal heaters.

### Medical exemption for Space Heaters:

A medical document from a medical physician that shows the person has a physical medical requirement for a space heater at their work location will be the exception to the policy. A copy of this document must be given to the HR Director, who will share the information with designated personnel and maintain the document on file, indicating the person's name, and work location in the building. He will show this document to the Health/Safety/Fire inspectors when they inspect the building, so there will not be a violation.

### Requirements for Space Heaters:

Only space heaters that are UL listed, thermostat controlled, and have a built-in safety switch, which cuts the heater off if tipped over can be used. Space heaters must be plugged directly into a wall electrical socket. Extension cords and power strips are prohibited for this use.

All heaters and other electronics should be approved and receive a sticker from ASTEC's Public Safety Director before using.

### Enforcement:

Per this policy, in the event an area or individual is using an unauthorized personal space heater, the ASTEC Public Safety Director will notify the employee and their supervisor that the heater has to be disconnected from the power source and removed from the building. If the heater is not removed and is found still in use, the space heater will be tagged with the employee's name and work location and confiscated. Confiscated space heaters will only be released upon receipt of a Release Form that is signed by the appropriate person's supervisor. Once released, the space heater has to be removed from the building.

Should there be a medical need, the Shepherd Center Office of Facilities Management will keep a file on hand for the appropriate documentation as well as a copy in the mall office.

## Candy, Pop, and Gum in Buildings

Food or drink may only be in designated areas. Candy, pop, and gum will ruin carpets and furniture, thus resulting in unnecessary expenses. Scholars are NOT allowed to have candy, pop, or gum in the buildings. **Neither scholars nor staff may ever have food, liquid, or beverages near computers or electronics.** All employees are to keep food and drink away from their computer keyboards. Faculty are not to chew gum in the classroom or where scholars can see you chewing gum. ASTEC asks that all employees strictly enforce this policy.

Staff is not to take or send scholars into the mall or area establishments for food/drink without permission of the supervisor.

## **Air Fresheners, Candles, and Candle Warmers**

ASTECC does NOT support or permit the use of electric air fresheners, candle warmers, and candles and any device that utilizes electricity or an open flame for heat generation of a scented substance. These items have created fire hazards in the past and will no longer be allowed.

## **Lamps**

Lamps are not to be in classrooms or offices. This is unnecessary in our building and is not a healthy solution for work.

## **Classroom Windows**

Some classrooms and doors have windows. These windows should never be covered except in a lockdown emergency.

# **General Policies**

## **Employee Parking**

Please leave at least four spaces on the east side of the Middle School for patrons and guests unless specifically asked by your supervisor to park there in an effort to control traffic flow.

Elementary school employees park in the designated spaces in front of the school.

There are a large number of parking spaces south and north of the middle and high school campus for the employee's there. We ask that employees park on the north side of the building since high school scholars park in the south parking lot. The exception is the Central Office and High School Office staff who have designated parking just outside the back door of the high school auditorium.

All employees will be provided and are required to submit a parking application to the Facilities Director each year for emergency notification purposes. The application should reflect any and all vehicles that may potentially be parked on-site. Employees will receive an ASTEC parking permit, which should be displayed on the rear-view mirror of their vehicle.

## **Notary**

Site secretaries and the Central Office receptionist are all required to be registered notaries. Notary services for ASTEC school-related business are free. There is a \$5 charge for non-school-related business notarizations which are to be paid in the Central Office. These funds will be used to pay notary renewal fees. ASTEC notaries are to provide these duties only on school property.

## **Keeping it Green**

ASTECC strives to be a "green" school and workplace, and as such we encourage reducing and, when possible, eliminating the use of non-environmentally friendly products and practices. Environmental consciousness decreases the consumption of valuable resources through such workplace practices as:

- Communication through computer networks with email
- Posting memos for all employees
- Two-sided photocopying
- Reusing paper clips, folders, and binders
- Reusing packaging material
- Turning off lights and computers when not in use

By recycling and being environmentally conscious, ASTEC is helping to solve trash disposal and waste problems facing all of us today. Executive Leadership must give pre-approval for a recycling program.

## **Lesson Plans and Pacing Guides**

The lesson plan and pacing guide are vital maps to reaching the required and desired outcomes of students for the school year. They are essential for teacher and student success. Classroom teachers will prepare weekly lesson plans using the official ASTEC Lesson Plan Template and submit the plan for the week to Academics@astec-k12.com by 5:00 p.m. Sunday evening.

This template includes research-based practices and is intended to save the teacher time in having to include all the components on their own. While the template is the same for all ASTEC teachers, no two teachers would teach identical plans the same.

## **Lesson Plan Packets**

Students deserve to continue learning even in the absence of a teacher. Substitutes also deserve lesson plans and materials of the absent teacher. Each teacher will prepare a lesson plan packet, including completing the provided template and having a minimum of 3-days of the lesson. Teachers will make copies for their largest class and reuse them for each of their other classes. These lessons are not to include new material. These handouts are to be review materials or meaningful materials that reinforce concepts previously taught. These assignments should not be new material that a substitute may not be familiar with.

Teachers are to replace used lessons within 3-days of returning in preparation for another possible absence.

Teachers are not to post assignments on Google Classroom as students will not be using computers when the regular teacher is out.

In the case of a lengthy absence, the teacher is to prepare more detailed lessons, working with their Dean of Instruction.

Teachers who do not have prepared lesson plans will automatically receive a “Something’s Not Working,” from their supervisor. The second incident will result in a formal write-up.

In order for a teacher to be paid for substituting for another teacher, he/she must actually follow a lesson plan, monitor and teach the class.

## **Grading Policy**

The ASTEC Board of Directors believes that grades and grading practices should be administered in a fair, equitable and consistent manner. All teachers are expected to assign a minimum of three grades per week, and to follow the approved grading scale.

Elementary school students are evaluated on skill mastery. The evaluation of older scholar’s progress is based on a hybrid model of both a mastery-based and a standard grading scale. Each discipline is represented by instructional objectives and is described in the curriculum outline. Scholar evaluation and grades are based on daily classroom performance, classroom tests, essential skills tests, attendance, and other required actions, activities and projects.

Scholars who do not meet the standards of ASTEC Schools will receive a “NC” (No Credit) or “I” (Incomplete) until all requirements are met. An “Incomplete” (I) grade is given in very rare instances and must be made up to the teacher’s satisfaction within ten (10) school days of the end of the semester. Grades may not be changed for any reason without completing, submitting and having it approved by the Superintendent.

Grades will be determined by class assignments, participation, group work, projects, quizzes and tests. These areas will be “weighted,” and no “group” grade will be weighted such that a scholar’s grade can be lowered due to the lack of effort on the part of another scholar.

Late work will be assessed a reasonable penalty. Papers without names may be treated as a late paper. Scholars who make an honest effort to turn in an assignment will not receive a score lower than a 50. This policy exists so that one or two grades

cannot lower a scholar's grade so drastically they could not recover. However, scholars who do not turn in work nor make an honest attempt toward the completion of an assignment will receive a zero.

Report cards are issued quarterly. Progress reports are given approximately every four and one-half weeks. (check District calendar). This system is based on a growth model. We do not send progress reports during the first nine weeks grading period.

ASTEAC takes plagiarism seriously. Plagiarism must be reported to the Headmaster. The student will be moved to ISD until the incident is thoroughly investigated. If substantiated, the student who commits the violation will receive the grade of a zero and face disciplinary action. Each incident will go before the Academic Honesty Committee who will decide upon the appropriate disciplinary action.

(See Academic Honesty Policy in the Appendix of the Parent/Scholar Handbook.)

## Grades Pre-K - 5 Standards Based Grading

- 4 - Exceeding the grade level standard. Producing quality work consistently
- 3 - Meeting the grade level standard and producing quality work.
- 2 - Progressing toward the standard. Producing the required grade level work with teacher direction and assistance.
- 1 - Beginning to develop the standard. Not yet able to produce required grade level work.

Formative grades - 25% Summative grades 75% Required - at least two formative grades per summative. At least six formatives per grading period and three summatives. Exception - first grading period - to allow for time to do running records and math assessments. A formative assessment is a "on the way" to master assessment. This type of assessment allows the teacher to see what the students have learned and what they still need to learn in order to master the standard by the end of the unit. A summative assessment is the final assessment for the unit. This is the traditional test of a project at the end of the unit to assess if the students have mastered the standards taught during the unit.

## Middle and High School Hybrid Grading Model

ASTEAC uses both Traditional and Mastery-Based Grading at the middle and high school. Report cards will reflect both the Traditional A-F grade as well as a 0-4 grade reflecting the mastery of the course state standards. Point averages shall be calculated based on the following point values:

Scholars will have two grades reported on their report cards. One grade for transcripting purposes will be based on a 100 point scale, and will follow the traditional A to F scale.

A Mastery Grade will be assigned as well on a 1-4 scale that reflects the teacher's evaluation of the scholar's overall mastery of the subject matter.

Mastery Based Grading			
Grade	Grade Point Avg	AP Course GPA	Pre-AP Courses
4	4.0	5.0	4.5
3	3.0	4.0	3.5
2	2.0	3.0	2.5
1	2.0	1.5	0
0	0	0	0

## Mastery Based Grading

Marking Code	Translation	Comments
4	Exceeding the grade level standard. Producing quality work consistently.	This grade will be reported when a student demonstrates performance beyond expectations on a consistent basis.
3	Meeting the grade level standard and producing quality work.	This grade means a student consistently and independently demonstrated mastery of subject material. A 3 should be considered an excellent grade, one that a student should be working towards, as developmentally appropriate.
2	Progressing towards the standard. Producing the required grade level work with teacher direction and assistance.	As indicated in the marking code, a 2 indicates a student can meet expectations with teacher assistance and support, but often does not demonstrate consistent mastery in a set subject area or grade level standard. The student may need to continue developing a specific skill set, and progress is being encouraged.
1	Beginning to develop the standard. Not yet able to produce required grade level work.	A 1 will be reported if there is growing concern for a child's performance in a given subject, skill, or grade level standard.

Below 85% in an AP class or an honors course for middle school scholars may result in the scholar being moved to a non-AP class, at the discretion of the school administration with input from faculty.

ASTECSchools uses a four-point grading scale (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0) to obtain a scholar's grade point average (GPA) in regular classes. A five-point grading scale (A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, F=0) is used to obtain a grade point average for all Advanced Placement courses. Only classes in which grades are earned are included in the scholar's GPA. Some electives are graded on a Pass/Fail scale and do not affect the scholar's GPA.

### Homework Policy

For elementary and middle school scholars ASTEC Schools' policy is that homework will not be assigned unless it is an extension of time for completion of a class activity consisting of skills that have been modeled, monitored, and practiced in the classroom setting beforehand. Teachers are to ensure the scholar understands the concept before allowing the work to be completed at home.

Elementary scholars are encouraged to read at least 20 minutes each school night.

For high school scholars ASTEC Schools views homework as an extension of class work that correlates with the objectives of the current curriculum. Homework is a tool to promote learning, motivate scholars, and strengthen the self discipline scholars need to concentrate. The cooperative efforts of parents and teachers monitoring homework can provide an excellent opportunity for educational partnerships.

### Homework Objectives

- To review, reinforce, or extend classroom learning by providing practice and application of knowledge gained.
- To teach scholars responsibility and organizational skills.
- To promote wise and orderly use of time.
- To provide opportunities for enrichment activities.

### Teacher Homework Responsibilities

- To make specific homework assignments and to make sure scholars know what is expected of them in completing those assignments.
- To include within the homework assignments activities that relate to classroom lessons.
- To evaluate homework assignments and share these results with the scholars.

## Parent Homework Responsibilities

- To encourage and to support the scholar's efforts by being available for questions, while remembering that homework is the scholar's responsibility.
- To communicate with, and support teachers. If a parent feels that the instructions are not clear, or if a scholar frequently has trouble understanding, the parent should contact the teacher for clarification.
- To establish a regular "homework time" to help the scholar better organize his/her time.
- To provide a quiet, well lit place for the scholar to study.

## Scholar Homework Responsibilities

- To complete all assignments as directed by the teacher.
- To know the purpose, deadline, and instructions of the homework assignment.
- To take home any materials and information needed to complete the assignments.
- To ask about and complete work missed during an absence from school.
- To develop good study habits.

Homework can be rewarding, and the effectiveness of a homework policy depends largely on the concern of each scholar's parents and teachers. As each scholar matures, however, his/her success with homework becomes progressively more dependent on his/her own efforts.

## **Student Discipline Model**

ASTECH Charter Schools does not engage in corporal punishment of students. Rather, the "Teaching with Love and Logic," a model by Fay and Funk is used. Teachers and administrators are required to read this book before their first day of employment and to follow the principles of this model when addressing student discipline.

Our goal is not to punish scholars, but to change their behavior for the long term. ASTEC teachers and administrators are trained in this model. It is more thoroughly explained in the Parent/Student Handbook.

## **ASTECH Discipline Policy**

Teachers should not send students to the office for Level 1 incidents unless they have not been resolved and continue. This would escalate the behavior to a higher level.

### Guidelines for Level 1:

- **1st incident** – warning (unless Level 2 offense).
- **2nd incident** (same offense) – make amends (Includes Apology-Look them in eye, call their name, say you are sorry, tell EXACTLY what you are sorry for, without minimizing, make a compact for future situations), appropriately completed Responsibility Form, consequence given and entered in PowerSchool. **THE TEACHER MUST CALL THE PARENT.**
- **3rd incident** (same offense) – make amends (Includes Apology), appropriately completed Responsibility Form, consequence given AND parent contacted and entered in the PowerSchool.

### Guidelines for Level 2:

**First incident** - student makes amends, appropriately completed Responsibility Form, consequences given AND parent contacted, incident entered in the PowerSchool and Dean of Students or Elementary Headmaster is to be contacted.

*NO STUDENT WILL BE SUSPENDED WITHOUT THE WRITTEN APPROVAL  
OF THE HEADMASTER AND SUPERINTENDENT.*



## Levels of Discipline

<b>Level 1</b> <u>Teacher resolves – amends made, Responsibility Form used as a behavior reflection</u> Second level one offense: call parents	<b>Level 2</b> <u>Teacher resolves with Headmaster – amends must be made and consequences paid</u> (Teacher contacts parents and logs Into PowerSchool by teacher)	<b>Level 3</b> <u>Dean of Student /Headmaster/ Superintendent resolves – amends must be made and consequences paid</u> (Logged in Powerschool- Dean of Students)
The following are examples, and not exhaustive lists:		
Disruption	Bullying/Harassment	Bullying/Harassment
Gum/food/drink	*Cheating	Gang related activity
Horseplay	Disrespect	Graffiti
Leaning in chair	Disruption	Inciting violence
Off task	Excessive absences	Physical assault
Phone	2-Inappropriate use of technology or social media (report in an email to Headmaster)	Theft
Responsibility Form not turned in	Phone (See handbook)	Vandalism or Property damage
Talking	Plagiarism	Verbal assault
Uniform violation	Theft	Weapon (any type of gun/toy/drawings)
PDA - Level 1	PDA - Level 2	PDA - Level 3
Other Level 1 incidents	Other Level 2 incidents	Other Level 3 incidents

Teachers call the parent from the Dean of Students office with the dean present.

### School Handbooks

The Parent and Scholar Handbook and the Employee Handbook will be reviewed with employees. Employees are required to read and know the policies located in these documents. All employees are to comply with the policies and procedures set forth in these.

Teachers will be assigned Parent and Scholar Handbook pages to review with each of their classes at the beginning of the school year. All first-hour teachers will review the same assigned section of the handbook. Each hour will continue with a different section of the handbook throughout the day. By the end of the day, teachers will have reviewed the complete handbook with all scholars.



# Appendix



## **ASTECSchools Leadership**

### **ASTECSchools' Board of Directors**

Debra Murray, Board Chair  
Franci Hart  
Marcellus Jones  
Elizabeth Parker  
Gordon Chandler  
Alba Santiago  
DG Smalling

### **Officers of the Board (Non-Voting)**

Dr. Freda Deskin, President  
Josh Mullins, Treasurer  
Jamie Whittington, Secretary and Board Clerk

### **ASTECSchools' Advisory Board**

Jan Allison  
Thomas Baker  
George Bradfield  
Jeff Cato  
Susan Calonkey  
Clay Cockrill  
Lorraine Friedrich  
Dr. Bob Greve  
Gail Huneryager  
Rhonda Kieson  
Dave King  
Dr. Sharon Lease  
Ryan Leonard  
Dr. Terry Neese  
Kerry Robertson-Kirby  
Pama Palmer  
Meg Salyer

### **ASTECSchools Deans**

Dr. Stacey Hughes, Dean of Humanities  
Jason Mack, Dean of Students  
Tracy Pendred, Elementary School Dean of Students  
Danny Porter, Dean of STEM Instruction  
Tammy Russell, Dean of Student Success

### **The ASTEC Fund, Inc., Board of Directors**

Doug Fuller, Board Chair  
Kerry Alexander  
Jerry Burger  
Judy Hatfield  
Lou C. Kerr, Immediate Past Board Chair  
Donnie Jones  
Brad Jordan  
Rita Moore  
Clayton G. Moss

### **Officers of the Board (Non-Voting)**

Dr. Freda Deskin, President  
Josh Mullins, Treasurer  
Jamie Whittington, Secretary and Board Clerk

### **The ASTEC Fund Inc. Advisory Board**

Gary Allison  
Mickey Clagg  
Ruth Leebron-Levenson  
Debi Martin  
Susan McCalmont  
William G. Paul  
General Ben Robinson (Ret.)  
Becky Switzer

### **ASTECSchools Leadership**

Dr. Freda Deskin, CEO/Founder  
Shannon Grimes, Superintendent  
Bridget O'Connor, Elementary Headmaster  
Casey Rainbolt, Headmaster (Middle/High School)

### **ASTECSchools Directors**

Tracy Bauer, IT Director  
John Drake, Athletics and Activities Director  
Breeana Jewell, Human Resources Director  
Joe Koerner, Facilities and Public Safety Director  
Cindy Millican, Co-Teacher Director  
Dana Neal, Communications Director





# **ASTEC Charter Schools PANDEMIC POLICY**

**Amended Board Policy - July 27, 2021**

As of July 27, 2021, the governor of the State of Oklahoma has declared that masks cannot be mandated by schools. HOWEVER, the governing board of ASTEC Charter Schools **STRONGLY** suggests that all eligible students and employees wear masks when recommended by the CDC to protect those who are not or who cannot be vaccinated.

All ASTEC employees are required to have an up to date COVID-19 vaccination, including recommended booster shots, on file with the school or be granted a valid religious or medical exemption from a licensed medical doctor not related to the employee or a member of clergy from a place of worship where the employee regularly attends.

ASTEC has a number of students and/or parents who are immunocompromised and would suffer great harm if they were to contract the Delta Variant of the COVID virus.

Should the governor declare a state of emergency, the following Pandemic Policy will go into immediate effect.

## **Original Board Policy - August 1, 2020**

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak that potentially has a significant impact on school operations as local, regional, and nationwide authorities act to reduce infection rates and transmission. A pandemic occurs when a new virus emerges that people have little or no immunity to and for which there may be no vaccine. ASTEC Charter Schools will monitor applicable local, state, and federal governmental orders, regulations, recommendations, and guidelines (“Governmental Directives”) for child care centers and schools regarding school closures, social distancing, and other health and safety recommendations during an official pandemic.

In case of a pandemic, and to the extent reasonably possible, and while ASTEC Charter Schools are subject to such Governmental Directives, ASTEC Charter Schools will implement the following practices to promote safe school attendance. It is understood that these are best practices developed using existing Governmental Directives and health data. Still, that implementation of these practices offers no guarantees against actual or possible exposure and transmission.

### **I. Program Restructuring and Restrictions**

- A. ASTEC Charter Schools will maintain groups of children in no more than 15 per classroom, until such time these guidelines are amended and will maintain a 6-foot distancing capacity between children as much as possible;
- B. Different groups of children will be kept separate and will not share common areas at the same time;
- C. ASTEC Charter Schools will discontinue the use of ‘community’ snacks, drinking fountains (except to fill water bottles), and sensory play tables;
- D. We will serve meals in classrooms;
- E. Parents may not enter campus during drop off and pick up or congregate outside the facility during drop off and pick up;
- F. Students, parents, visitors, and employees must wear masks inside the school.
- G. Only one parent or guest at a time will be admitted to the school office/lobby.
- H. Onsite tours discontinued until further notice;
- I. Outside visitors are not allowed in classrooms or programs during school hours;
- J. Maintenance (excluding necessary disinfecting and sanitation tasks) will be done after school hours unless for emergency purposes.

### **II. Screening and Travel Restrictions**

- A. Temperature and symptoms
  - 1. Only when deemed necessary. ASTEC Charter Schools will screen children upon entrance to the school for temperature and symptoms of disease, infection, or illness (cough, shortness of breath, rash, etc.), and a log will document temperature and other symptoms observed.
  - 2. Any child with a suspected or confirmed case of disease, infection or illness reasonably believed to be related to the pandemic will be excluded from school until they have been asymptomatic for a minimum of 72 hours

without the aid of medication and documented evidence of a negative test result. The case will be reported to local health authorities and the child's re-entry shall be subject to documentation of a negative test.

3. Employees and parents/guests entering the school shall be subject to ASTEC screening policies, including temperature checks, before entering the school.
4. Students and ASTEC employees may not attend school/work for 72 hours. They must provide documentation of a negative test result before their return if they or a member of their household has possible exposure or if they have attended a venue named by the CDC as one of the seven most dangerous places to attend during the pandemic. A threat is imposed on ASTEC employees and students if social distancing cannot be observed or if everyone at the location isn't wearing a mask. The seven places to avoid include bars, gyms, live, faith-based activities, weddings, funerals, house gatherings or other small events.
5. ASTEC Charter Schools reserves the right to employ substitute teachers as needed or to close programs or areas of the school in the event a suitable staff member cannot be sourced for replacement.

#### B. Travel

1. A child who returns, or whose immediate household member returns from a trip to an area the CDC or comparable health or safety organization has issued travel advisories will be excluded from school for a minimum of 72 hours or based on current CDC guidelines. They must provide evidence of a negative test result before returning.
2. A child who has an immediate family or infected household member will be excluded from school for a minimum of 72 hours or as per CDC guidelines. The school will consult with local health authorities, and re-entry shall be subject to any required clearances imposed by those authorities and documented evidence of a negative test result.
3. Any child who or immediate family member travels by air or any other form of public transportation will be excluded from school for a minimum of 72 hours or based on current CDC guidelines and evidence of a negative test result.
4. Staff members are subject to these same travel policies.

### III. Notifications and Closures

#### A. Notification

1. Parents/guardians must provide methods of contact to ASTEC Charter Schools that enable a quick response to any communications regarding an ill child or possible school closure.
2. Parents/guardians must immediately respond to requests to pick up a child.
3. To the extent practicable, and as permitted by law and confidentiality requirements, ASTEC Charter Schools will notify parents and staff of any confirmed or suspected pandemic illness cases so that they may contact their medical professionals for guidance.
4. For purposes of this policy, ASTEC Charter Schools will utilize School Messenger as the primary method of communicating school closures and other information. In the event of an extended closure, we encourage parents and teachers to use email to keep in touch.

#### B. School Closure and Schedule Changes

1. ASTEC Charter Schools reserves the right, at the sole discretion of the School Administration, to close the school at any time that such action is deemed appropriate in order to minimize the transmission of disease or infection, or as needed to implement this policy. If children or staff members have pandemic-related symptoms, ASTEC Charter Schools will close the affected program (consistent with local or state health department guidance) for a minimum of 24 hours to allow for proper disinfection and sanitization. To the extent possible, ASTEC Charter Schools will comply with all state or local health department restrictions and guidelines regarding school closures, cleaning and sanitization practices, reopening, and re-entry of students after a pandemic infection is detected on school grounds or in school facilities.
2. ASTEC Charter Schools reserves the right, at the sole discretion of School Administration, to close the school or any programs or areas of the school even if there are no confirmed cases of the disease in the school. Such closures may occur regardless of whether other local school district(s) or other local authorities have undertaken a similar action or issued a closure order.
3. A closure of ASTEC Charter Schools may include a distance learning model.
4. In the event of school closure due to a pandemic, whether such closure is in whole or in part, ASTEC Charter Schools reserves the right to alter planned holiday breaks or to extend the school calendar beyond the school year-end date to achieve close to the same number of school days. The school does not guarantee that it will be able to meet this objective.

# **ASTEC Charter Schools**

## **Drug, Alcohol, and Contraband Workplace Policy**

### **I. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**

ASTEC Schools (hereinafter “ASTEC”) has established this Drug and Alcohol Policy (hereinafter “Policy”) to assist us in providing a safe and healthy working environment for our employees; to protect our property and the property of our clients; in efforts to provide safe and efficient operations.

### **II. SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

This Policy will apply to all regular, part-time, casual or contract employees, and applicants for employment, except those employees engaged in functions covered by drug testing regulations promulgated by the United States Department of Transportation, 49 C.F.R, Parts 40 and 199. Compliance with this Policy is required as a condition of original or continued employment.

### **III. DEFINITIONS**

**A. Illegal Drugs:** Non-prescribed controlled substances as defined by the Oklahoma Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substance Act and 21 U.S.C.A. § 812, Schedules I, II, III, IV and V, which include, but are not limited to, drugs such as opioids, narcotics, non-liquid marijuana not prescribed by a physician for treatment of illness or disease (pending guidance from the Oklahoma State Department of Education), hashish, cocaine, and other controlled substances.

**B. Medical Marijuana:** Legal marijuana, in any form that is prescribed by a physician for treatment of illness or disease.

**C. Prescription Drugs** - Drugs prescribed by a physician for treatment of illness or disease.

1. The use of drugs/medicine prescribed by a licensed physician for an individual employee is permitted provided the employee advises ASTEC if he/she is using prescribed drugs that may impact the employee’s ability to work.

2. ASTEC, at all times, reserves the right to have a licensed physician determine if use of a prescription drug or medication by an employee produces effects which may increase the risk of injury to the employee or others while working.

3. If concluded that a prescribed drug will affect performance, ASTEC reserves the right to limit or suspend the work activity of the employee during the period that the physician advises that the employee’s ability to perform his/her job safely may be adversely affected by the consumption of such medication.

4. Employees who have been informed that medication could cause adverse side effects while working or where medication indicates such warning, must inform their supervisor prior to working while under the influence of such substances.

5. Use of medications prescribed by a physician for someone other than the employee in question or use of prescription medication in a manner that does not conform to the physician’s prescription or instructions is strictly prohibited.

**D. ASTEC Premises** - “ASTEC premises” includes all locations at which work is performed by ASTEC, and locations which are assigned to ASTEC for its use by a client or another contractor, including parking lots and storage areas. It also includes automobiles, trucks and all other vehicles and equipment whether owned or leased by ASTEC.

### **IV. STATEMENT OF THE POLICY**

**A.** The use, possession, concealment, transportation, and promotion or sale of the following items or substances by any employee of ASTEC, is strictly prohibited on all ASTEC premises:

- Illegal drugs
- Alcoholic beverages
- Drug paraphernalia
- Unauthorized prescription drugs

**B.** Employees may not be at work, or report to work, under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, illegal drugs, or unauthorized prescription drugs, including marijuana for non-medical purposes (pending guidance from the Oklahoma State Department of Education).

**C.** Employees are permitted to take legally prescribed and/or over-the-counter medications consistent with appropriate medical treatment plans while working for ASTEC. When such medications negatively affect an employee’s job performance, safety, or the efficient operation of ASTEC, the employee’s supervisor or ASTEC will determine if the employee is capable of performing his/her job.

D. No prescription drug shall be brought onto ASTEC's premises by any person other than the person for whom the drug is prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner, and shall be used only in the manner, combination and quantity prescribed. Any employee who is using a prescription drug under a doctor's orders must notify his/her supervisor of the identity and dosage of such prescription drug prior to beginning work if the prescribed medication negatively impacts the employee's ability to safely perform the essential functions of his/her position.

E. The employee shall also authorize ASTEC to contact his/her treating physician to determine if the prescription drug or medication produces side effects that may be hazardous to the employee's work activity. ASTEC also reserves the right to have an independent physician determine if a prescription drug or medication produces such hazardous effects so that its use should be restricted on ASTEC's premises or while the employee is performing certain activities. Failure of the employee to inform ASTEC that he/she is taking a prescription medication that negatively impacts his/her ability to safely perform the essential functions of his/her job may result in disciplinary action, including termination.

## V. DRUG TESTING

**A. Testing Situations:** ASTEC may require a drug and alcohol screen, including blood, urine, hair, saliva or breath tests for drugs and/or alcohol. ASTEC will require blood and urine tests where required by federal regulation. Tests for drugs other than marijuana, opioids, cocaine, amphetamines, and phencyclidine will be administered at the discretion of ASTEC in accordance with the following conditions:

1. At the discretion of ASTEC in all cases of employee absence deemed excessive by ASTEC.
2. At the discretion of ASTEC in all cases involving a person associated with on-the-job injury.
3. In any circumstances where representatives of ASTEC reasonably believe that an employee may be under the influence of intoxicants, alcohol, narcotics or drugs.
4. Random testing of affected employees as may from time to time be required at the discretion of ASTEC.
5. Random testing for safety-sensitive positions such as DOT/CDL drivers.
6. Follow-up testing.

**B. Drug Testing Procedures:** All sample collection and testing for marijuana, opioids, cocaine, amphetamines, and phencyclidine will be performed under the following procedures and conditions:

1. Collection procedures will comply with ASTEC guidelines and be conducted in accordance with the rules of the Oklahoma State Department of Health.
2. The collection of samples shall be performed under sanitary conditions by a laboratory certified by ASTEC or Oklahoma State Department of Health and designated by ASTEC.
3. Samples shall be collected and tested with due regard to the privacy of the individual being tested, and in a manner reasonably calculated to prevent substitutions or interference with the collection or testing of reliable samples. However, under the following circumstances, direct observation will be permitted by a collection site person of the same sex as the tested employee:
  - a. When there is reason to believe that the employee may alter or substitute the specimen to be provided;
  - b. When the employee has provided a urine specimen that falls outside of the acceptable temperature range as listed in the ASTEC guidelines.
  - c. When the collection site person observes conduct indicating an attempt to substitute or adulterate the sample, etc.
4. Sample collection, storage, and transportation to the place of testing shall be performed so as reasonably to preclude the probability of sample contamination or adulteration;
5. Sample collections shall be documented in accordance with ASTEC guidelines;
6. Sample testing shall conform to scientifically tested analytical methods and procedures. Testing shall include verification or confirmation of any positive test result by gas chromatography, gas chromatography-mass spectroscopy, or other comparably reliable analytical method, before the result of any test may be used as the basis of disqualification from employment. Cut-off levels will be consistent with those adopted by the ASTEC or Oklahoma law. The cut-off level for a positive result on a drug screen for marijuana is 50 milligrams per milliliter; and,
7. Employees will be required to sign an Employee Drug and Alcohol Test Consent form.

### **C. Reporting Drug Test Results**

1. ASTEC will contract with a licensed company, who will perform all necessary duties of that designated position as required by applicable law.
2. All drug test results will be reported directly from the laboratory to the medical review official (MRO).
3. The MRO will review all confirmed positive results on drug tests.
4. Negative drug test results will be reported to a designated representative of ASTEC. Negative test results will be reported to the tested employee by the designated representative of ASTEC.

5. Confirmed positive drug test results will be reported to the tested employee by the MRO. The results will also be reported to the designated representative of ASTEC by the MRO.

**D. Alcohol Testing:** In the event an employee is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol, he/she shall be required to take a blood or breathalyzer test conducted by a person so educated and authorized in testing. Employees who test positive are immediately subject to discipline. No alcohol is to be consumed while at work or while representing ASTEC Charter Schools.

**E. Record Keeping**

1. All information, interviews, reports, statements, memoranda, or test results received by ASTEC through its drug-testing program are confidential. Such information will not be disclosed as evidenced, in discovery, or disclosed in any public or private proceeding, except in a proceeding related to an action in a claim for unemployment compensation; in a claim for workers' compensation, or in any other civil litigation or arbitration where drug use by the tested employee may be relevant.

2. An employee who is reported as having a confirmed positive drug test result, upon his/her written request, may be permitted access within seven (7) working days to records relating to his/her drug tests and any records relating to the results of any relevant certification, review, or suspension or revocation-of-certification proceedings.

3. Drug screen results and medical examination records will be kept in an employee medical folder maintained for each employee.

4. Records and drug and/or alcohol test results are the property of ASTEC.

**VI. PROHIBITIONS AND VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY**

**A.** The following are strictly prohibited:

1. Reporting to work or working under the influence or in possession of alcohol, narcotics or illegal or unauthorized prescription drugs.

2. Use, possession, manufacture, distribution, dispensation or trafficking of narcotics or illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia in any manner on or off ASTEC's premises before, during, or after working hours.

3. Use or possession of alcohol in any manner on or off ASTEC's property during working hours.

4. Use of ASTEC's property or an employee's position with ASTEC, directly or indirectly, to manufacture, dispense, distribute or traffic intoxicants, narcotics or drugs.

5. Adulteration, substitution, dilution, or contamination of an alcohol or drug-testing sample under this Policy. A sample will be considered adulterated if the temperature of the sample does not meet with state or federal regulations; if the sample does not meet the weight, density or other requirements established by state or federal law; if, after testing, the sample produces an inconsistent or indecipherable result; or, after testing, is determined to be adulterated, substituted, diluted or otherwise contaminated.

**B.** An employee will be subject to discipline, including and up to immediate termination, or in the case of pre-employment drug testing, the applicant will not be eligible for employment, for the following reasons:

1. Refusals to timely submit to or participate in the drug and/or alcohol testing program when requested to, pursuant to this Policy.

2. Substituting, adulterating or contaminating a urine or blood sample.

3. Testing positive for prohibited measures of alcohol or prohibited drugs in a breath, urine, hair, saliva or blood test.

4. Refusal to submit to a search under the terms of this Policy.

5. Any specimen reported to ASTEC as "diluted."

**VII. EFFECTIVE DATE**

The provisions set forth in this Policy guide are effective immediately upon notice to employees. Each current employee will be furnished a copy of this Policy and will sign a receipt for same. All applicants for employment will be furnished a copy of the Policy before hiring.





## **ASTEC SCHOOLS Drug, Alcohol and Contraband Policy Agreement**

### **READ BEFORE SIGNING THE EMPLOYEES' POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK RECEIPT FORM**

- I have read the ASTEC Schools Drug, Alcohol and Contraband Policy.
- I understand that compliance with the Policy is a condition of employment and that if I violate the Policy or refuse to timely cooperate with the testing procedures, I am subject to discipline up to and including termination.
- I hereby formally waive and give up any expectation of privacy in any of my personal effects brought onto ASTEC's property or maintained on ASTEC's property such as desks, backpacks, lunch boxes, purses, clothing, bags, briefcases and automobiles.
- I understand that I hereby consent to the release of any drug testing results to ASTEC, and these results may be used as evidence in any proceedings that I may institute against ASTEC including, but not limited to, worker's compensation or unemployment claims.
- I acknowledge that I have been given a personal copy of the ASTEC Schools Drug and Alcohol Policy.

**BY SIGNING THE ASTEC EMPLOYEES' POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK RECEIPT, I AGREE TO  
FOLLOW THE ASTEC Schools'DRUG, ALCOHOL AND CONTRABAND POLICY**

### **EMPLOYEE DRUG AND ALCOHOL TEST CONSENT**

I hereby agree and acknowledge that as a condition of my employment with ASTEC Schools, I must submit to a drug and/or alcohol test by breath analysis, urinalysis, hair, saliva or blood testing. I understand I must receive a negative (alcohol and drug free) result to continue my employment with ASTEC Schools. I hereby waive any and all objections to a drug and/or alcohol test by breath analysis, urinalysis, hair, saliva or blood testing by ASTEC Schools or its designee. I also waive any expectation of privacy relative to my submission to the drug and/or alcohol test procedures. Specifically, I understand that I am waiving any rights to privacy relative to the testing and procedures, and I hereby consent to the release of any negative results to ASTEC.

Further, I hereby certify and affirm that I am not now nor have I within the last thirty (30) days used any illegal or unauthorized prescription drugs. I have no reason to believe that the drug screen by breath analysis, urinalysis, hair, saliva or blood testing would detect any sign of illegal or unauthorized prescription drugs in my body. I am voluntarily submitting to this drug test of my own free will. I understand and consent that any positive results will be released to ASTEC, and these results may be used as evidence in any proceedings that I may institute against ASTEC including, but not limited to, unemployment or workers' compensation claims.

**DO NOT SIGN THE EMPLOYEES' POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK RECEIPT IF YOU HAVE NOT  
READ AND UNDERSTAND THIS WAIVER.**



# **ASTEC SCHOOLS**

## **Social and Digital Media Policy**

ASTEC School District supports the use of online digital media to facilitate District programs, departments and school sites in building a more successful parent, community, scholar and employee network. However, information that is applicable to a large number of scholars, their families and other ASTEC supporters is best disseminated through ASTEC sites by designated employees only.

### **I. Applicability**

A. These policies apply to all ASTEC employees.

### **II. Definitions**

A. “Digital Media” includes the various online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily over the Internet to share information and resources. Digital media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, and other multimedia communications. These websites not only provide information, but also allow for interaction during this informational exchange through user-generated content.

B. “Technology” includes computers, notebooks, the Internet, telephones, cellular telephones, personal digital assistants, MP3 players, such as iPods, USB drives, wireless access points (routers), or any wireless communication device. “District Technology” is that which is owned or provided by the district. “Personal Technology” is non-district owned technology.

### **III. Official District Digital Media Presence**

A. These policies are tailored primarily to social networking sites. Some examples include:

1. Facebook
2. Twitter
3. YouTube
4. LinkedIn
5. Instagram
6. Blogs (Web Logs)
7. SnapChat
8. Reddit
9. Google Services
10. TikTok
11. Any district digital media site

### **IV. Requisite Authorization**

A. District presence on any digital media site, including school-related accounts, such as clubs, teams, field trips, classes, or other sites associated with the District must come through the Communications Director. Any sites, accounts, or pages existing without prior authorization should be reported immediately and will be subject to removal. As appropriate, a recommendation for disciplinary action may result. Faculty are required to use Google Classroom to post items for students and their parents. ASTEC Central Office is responsible for social media postings. Please send photos and information to the Communications Director that you would like posted to a larger audience on social media.

B. District Logo - The use of the official ASTEC logo or any variation thereof on a in print or on a digital media site must be approved by the Communications Director. For approved logo use, follow ASTEC Logo Policies.

C. General District Sites and Accounts - The District’s general digital media sites, including the District’s social media pages, will be managed under the direction of the Communications Director and or designee. Duplicate, unofficial sites shall be reported, and investigated.

D. Sponsors and Advertising - Sponsor logos are permissible on District-related websites, with the prior approval of the Communications Director. The page must also include a link to contact information for an individual who can provide information about sponsorship. Advertising for third-party events or activities unassociated with official District business is strictly prohibited.

E. The CEO and Superintendent will give the final approval on digital media issues.

Content Disclaimer – Any approved official presence on digital media sites outside of those created and monitored by the District’s Communications Director and or designee shall include the following text:

*“The views expressed on this site do not reflect the views of the ASTEC Schools District. This site contains user-created content not endorsed by the District. The purpose of this site is” . . . (then specify the purpose).*

V. **Personal Digital Media Use**

A. ASTEC employees should not represent themselves as an employee of the district while using their personal email address for professional digital media activities. Employees should use a professional email address that is completely separate from any personal digital media they maintain. Regular and continuous use of a personal email address, while representing themselves as an employee of the district for professional purposes, may result in ASTEC considering the corresponding use of that address as a professional account.

VI. **Privacy Settings**

A. ASTEC employees should use privacy settings to control access to their personal digital media sites with the objective that professional digital media communications only reach the intended audience. However, ASTEC employees should be aware that there are limitations to privacy settings. Private communication published on the Internet can easily become public. Furthermore, digital media sites can change their current default privacy settings and other functions. As a result, each employee has a responsibility to understand the rules of the digital media site being utilized.

1. ASTEC employees on professional digital media sites shall not post personally identifiable scholar information considered confidential under Federal and State law, and District policy. If images of scholars are to be posted online there must be a photo/media consent form on file at the school for each child featured.
2. ASTEC scholars who participate in professional digital media sites are not permitted to post photographs or videos featuring other scholars or employees without the approval of the ASTEC employee responsible for the site.
3. It is not recommended that ASTEC employees post photos of other ASTEC employees on professional or personal digital media sites without prior permission of the photographed employee.
4. Staff members may not use images of scholars, emails, or other personally identifiable scholar information for personal gain or profit.

VII. **Staff Use of Personal Technology**

A. Limit On-Duty Use – Staff members are not to use their personal technology devices during duty hours. Use of Personal Technology for non-District business should be limited to off-duty time and designated breaks.

B. Personal Social Networking and Media Accounts – Before employees create or join an online social network, they should ask themselves whether they would be comfortable if a ‘friend’ decided to send the information to their scholar, the scholars’ parents, or their supervisor. Educators must give serious thought to the implications of joining an online social network.

C. Guidance Regarding Personal Digital Media Sites. ASTEC employees should exercise caution and common sense when using personal digital media sites.

D. As a recommended practice, ASTEC employees are encouraged to use appropriate privacy settings to control access to their personal digital media sites.

E. It is not recommended that ASTEC employees “tag” photos of other ASTEC employees, ASTEC volunteers, ASTEC contractors or ASTEC vendors without the prior permission of the individuals being tagged.

F. The posting or disclosure of personally identifiable scholar information or confidential information via personal digital media sites, in violation of FERPA, is prohibited.

G. ASTEC employees are prohibited from using ASTEC logos or making representations that their personal digital media sites speak in an official ASTEC capacity.

H. Because online content can be spread in mere seconds to a mass audience, the District encourages employees to ask themselves before posting any information online whether they would be comfortable having this information printed in the newspaper alongside their photo.

I. District employees must be mindful that any Internet information is ultimately accessible to the world. To avoid jeopardizing their professional effectiveness, employees are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the privacy policies, settings, and protections on any social networking websites to which they choose to subscribe and be aware

that information posted online, despite privacy protections, is easily and often reported to administrators or exposed to District scholars.

#### VIII. **Communication with ASTEC Scholars**

A. ASTEC employees who work with scholars and communicate with scholars through professional digital media sites should follow these policies:

1. Professional digital media sites that are school-based shall be designed to address instructional, educational, or extracurricular program matters;
2. Each school year, site supervisors shall ensure parents are notified about the professional digital media activities their children may participate in. ASTEC will instruct parents to contact the Headmaster with any questions.
3. “Friending” District Scholars – Employees should not have online interactions with scholars on social networking sites outside of those forums dedicated to academic use. District employees’ social networking profiles and personal blogs should not be linked to district scholars’ online profiles.
4. Contacting Scholars Off-Hours – When in doubt about contacting a district scholar during off-duty hours using either district-owned communication devices, network services, an Internet access route or those of the employee should begin by contacting the scholar’s parent(s) or legal guardian through their district registered phone number. District employees should only contact District scholars for school-related purposes and
5. Must never disclose confidential information possessed by the employee by virtue of his or her District employment.
6. District personnel shall not send messages to scholars that are personal in nature and unrelated to the business of the school or contain confidential information.

B. ASTEC employees’ communication with ASTEC scholars via personal digital media is subject to the following exceptions:

1. Communication with relatives about non-school issues
2. If an emergency situation requires such communication, in which case the ASTEC employee should notify his/her supervisor of the contact as soon as possible
3. District personnel are prohibited from sending texts or instant messaging any scholars individually. Text messaging can be used, but only as a group broadcast via district approved resources

#### IX. **Press Inquiries**

Any press inquiries received via professional digital media sites should be referred to the CEO.

#### X. **Off-Campus versus On-Campus Social, Digital Media and Internet Use Policies**

A. This section of the Policies is intended to present to district staff members examples of such situations, and Policies for responsible, ethical Internet use.

B. Although staff members enjoy free speech rights guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, certain types of communication, typically by virtue of their subject-matter connection to campus, may relate enough to school to have ramifications for the author or subject at the District site. Employees may be disciplined for online conduct and/or speech, which the District reasonably believes will cause actual, material disruption to school activities, the reputation of the school, its employees or scholars.

C. When using district technology, electronic communication is governed by the District Acceptable Use Policy, which will be enforced accordingly. Scholars and staff should not expect privacy in the contents of their personal files on the district’s Internet system or other District technology, including email. District technology may only be used for educational purposes. Use for entertainment purposes, such as personal blogging, instant messaging, online shopping or gaming is not allowed. The use of District technology is a privilege, not a right.

D. Use of personal technology/devices may violate the District’s Acceptable Use Policy if the District reasonably believes the conduct or speech will cause actual, material disruption of school activities or a staff member’s ability to perform his or her job duties. Off-campus Internet usage is largely unrelated to school; however, in certain circumstances courts have held that the off-campus online communications may be connected enough to campus to result in either scholar or staff-member discipline.

E. Under no circumstances should an employee who is to be supervising students use their cell phone. Employees are not to use cell phones or computers for non-school purposes during work hours. Please use your cell phone or computer for non-work related purposes during a break or assigned lunch. Should you need to use the phone in an

emergency, speak with your supervisor. Violation of this policy will include disciplinary action up to and including termination.

XI. **Applicability of ASTEC Policies and Other Laws**

**A.** These Policies provide guidance intended to supplement, not supersede, existing ASTEC policies. Users of professional digital media sites must comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, including, but not limited to the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) (<https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/privacy-security/childrens-privacy>), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/ferpa>), and intellectual property laws.

**B.** These Policies are not designed to serve as a code of conduct for digital media use and do not constitute separate bases for potential discipline. However, all existing ASTEC policies, regulations, and laws that cover employee conduct may be applicable in the digital media environment, including, but not limited to, the ASTEC Acceptable Use Policy and relevant state and federal law.

**BY SIGNING THE EMPLOYEES' POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK RECEIPT FORM, YOU ARE ACKNOWLEDGING THE RECEIPT AND UNDERSTANDING OF THIS DIGITAL MEDIA POLICY AND WILL ABIDE BY THE STANDARDS DEFINED AND REFERENCED IN THIS DOCUMENT.**



# ASTECSCHOOLS

## Academic Dishonesty Policy

### General Responsibilities of Scholars, Parents Teachers & Administrators

**The Scholar** is expected to uphold the spirit and the letter of this policy both philosophically and behaviorally in completing all school-related tests, quizzes, projects, reports, homework assignments or in-class assignments. No assignment is exempted from this policy.

**The Parent** is expected to adopt the philosophical wholesomeness of this policy and uphold the spirit and the letter of it by reviewing it with his or her scholar and encouraging their scholar to practice academic honesty throughout the scholar's years at ASTEC Schools.

**The Teacher** is expected to review with the scholars the policy of academic honesty at the beginning of each semester and other times during the year as he or she deems it appropriate. The teacher is also expected to enforce the policy in all instances of academic dishonesty following the process as outlined below. The teacher must first carefully consider the evidence of the apparent dishonesty. A perception, which is not supported by reasonable evidence, will not suffice.

**The Administrator** is expected to support the spirit of academic honesty with scholars, parents, counselors, teachers and other staff members in conferences and in each classroom. Disciplinary action taken with scholars concerning the Academic Honesty Policy will follow the process as outlined below.

### Process for Disciplinary Action

An infraction of the Academic Honesty Policy shall include the following:

- The teacher will immediately address the scholar.
- Administration will be notified.
- The parent/guardian will be notified.

The teacher or administrator will meet with the parent to discuss the issue, review this policy, and explain disciplinary consequences.

- Disciplinary action will be enforced.
- Infractions will be recorded on the scholar's permanent discipline file.

Local, state or federal law enforcement officials will be alerted in the event that the infraction is of a criminal nature.

Note: A teacher may choose to handle the first academic honesty infraction him or herself. A second offense will result in written documentation submitted to the Dean of Students who will hand it over to the Academic Honesty Committee. When referred, the infraction becomes a permanent part of the scholar's disciplinary record, and appropriate discipline will be enforced. Teachers and administrators reserve the right to respond to the wrongdoing with disciplinary action of varying severity including In-School Detention, temporary suspension or permanent removal of the scholar from the class, school, or special program depending on the nature of the infraction and the number of previous infractions.

Consequences for a scholar's involvement in an act of academic dishonesty will include one or more of the following actions:

- The scholar may be removed from the course with a grade of "o" (Failure).
- The scholar will receive a grade of zero ("o") on the assignment or test; no make-up work will be offered to compensate for the zero.
- The scholar will be dropped from the class with no credit if the scholar is involved in an act of academic dishonesty where he or she is a scholar aide.
- The scholar will serve a 4-hour Saturday School.
- The scholar will be dropped from the National Honor Society (NHS), Student Council, or resign as Class Officer, if applicable.
- If the scholar is enrolled in AP classes the scholar will lose the "AP" designation on his/her transcript.
- The scholar is in jeopardy of losing OHLAP and/or other scholarships.

- The scholar may face suspension from extracurricular activities including sports programs.
- The scholar may face short-term suspension from ASTEC Schools.
- The scholar may face long-term suspension from ASTEC Schools.

# ASTECSCHOOLS

## Student Technology & Network Acceptable Use Policy

A SEPARATE SIGNED DOCUMENT WILL BE REQUIRED BEYOND SIGNING THIS HANDBOOK

The intended use of each ASTEC network and Internet account is to support education and research which is consistent with the educational objectives of ASTEC Schools. Use of another organization's network or computing resources must also comply with the rules appropriate for that network. The following uses of ASTEC networks or Internet access are prohibited:

- **Program Access:** Scholars may not access any program or part of a program not assigned by an ASTEC staff member. Scholars may not access any email account using ASTEC computers. (School administrators may grant exceptions.)
- **Jump drives:** Scholars may not copy any program or file to or from a flash drive or other media. (An ASTEC technology faculty member may grant exceptions.)
- **User Accounts:** Scholars may not access another individual's files, information, or software without prior authorization from an ASTEC staff member. All users must login using their own user ID. Scholars must keep all passwords secret and contact a technology faculty member immediately if another person has learned a password. Scholars absolutely may not vandalize, damage, disable or "hack" the files of others.
- **System Resources:** Users are not to use the network in such a way that would waste system resources or disrupt the use of the network by others. This includes, but is not limited to, excessive printing and file storage, as determined by the IT Director or his/her designee.
- **Network Etiquette:** Users are expected to adhere to the standards of good conduct prescribed in the scholar handbook. Rules that apply "in person" also apply on the network. Scholars are to be polite and use appropriate language. Scholars may not use profanity or vulgarities, or engage in any other inappropriate, offensive, harassing, or "stalking" language or behaviors.
- **Copyrights:** Users may not violate copyright laws or otherwise use the intellectual property of another individual or organization without the expressed written permission of the owner. The term "owner" includes, but is not limited to: authors, publishers, performers, artists, and their agents. Scholars may employ material under proper use of the "Fair Use" law with permission from the supervising instructor. (Instructors will receive information regarding the intricacies of this law.)
- **Online Activities:** Scholars may not purchase any goods or services through any ASTEC provided online service. Users may not use the network for commercial gain, product advertisement, or political lobbying.
- **Personal Privacy:** Scholars may not reveal their personal name, address, phone number(s), bankcard number(s), etc. or those of anyone else online. Scholars must also be cautious of unsolicited online contact and advertising. Scholars should report communications that are suspicious or cause discomfort to an ASTEC staff member.
- **Unacceptable Uses:** Users may not access, compose, upload, download, or distribute pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material or language. They may not use the network to violate any local, state, federal statute or international law. This includes, but is not limited to, transmission of copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material or trade secrets. Users must immediately back out of any unacceptable web pages that are accessed and delete any unacceptable files and messages received. Users are to report such happenings immediately to the supervising instructor, so that the site may be blocked. In such instances, users will not be held accountable.
- **Cell Phones:** Cell phones will be used only for instructional purposes and at the teacher's request. Cell phones are not to be used inside the school building. Violations will include fines, banning of the phone and disciplinary action up to and including long term suspension.
- **Downloads:** Users must assume that all communications, programs, files, and any other information accessible via the ASTEC network are private, copyrighted property and respect them as such. Users may not upload or download any text or graphic file without doing all the following:
  - Receiving prior authorization by a ASTEC supervising faculty member;
  - Verifying that it is legal to do so under U.S. copyright laws;
  - Ensuring that each file is not infected with a computer virus;
  - Other types of files and large graphic files require prior permission of an ASTEC Technology faculty member.
- **Piracy:** Software may be installed on ASTEC computers under the following conditions:
  - License requirements are met;
  - The IT Director or his/her designee approves software.

- Original program media are kept in the possession of the technology department. (ASTECC technology personnel may grant exceptions).
- **Posting on Facebook or Other Social Media**
  - Students who post negative posts or emoji's on Facebook regarding the school, its employee's or other students will be disciplined and blocked from ASTEC sites.

License requirements regarding the method and number of installations will be strictly followed, including the registration of shareware programs. Only the IT Director or his/her designee may install software programs. Software found on ASTEC computers or networks in violation of this policy will be erased immediately and reported to the appropriate administrator.

- **Privileges:** The use of ASTEC networks and the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. The system administrators will determine what constitutes inappropriate use, and their decision is final. The system administrators may close an account/password at any time, as required or appropriate. Administrators, faculty, and other professional staff of ASTEC may request that system administrators deny, revoke, or suspend specific user accounts/passwords. Failure to follow the guidelines may also result in disciplinary consequences.
- **Inappropriate Internet Posts:** Scholars are prohibited from posting anything on YouTube without faculty consent. Posting video or photographs that display or mention the name ASTEC or identify scholars as attending ASTEC may result in long-term suspension and appropriate legal action.
- **Threatening Behavior:** Scholars are prohibited from engaging and/or participating in threatening behavior, harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying by electronic communication. This includes blogs, personal websites, social networking sites, etc. Evidence of "illegal or inappropriate" behavior posted on the Internet or transmitted via any other electronic communication method, regardless of when or where it was posted, will result in the cancellation of privileges and any additional disciplinary action deemed appropriate, up to and including long-term suspension.
- **Aerosol Keyboard Cleaner:** Only adult employees of ASTEC may use aerosol cleaners on ASTEC property. "Huffing" of keyboard cleaner is a violation of ASTEC's drug policy and will be reported to the authorities.
- **Vandalism:** Vandalism will result in the cancellation of privileges and any additional disciplinary action deemed appropriate. Payment for the repair or replacement of damaged hardware, or for services needed to undo software changes, may be required of the offender. Vandalism includes, but is not limited to, defacing, disassembling, or destroying any part of the computer hardware, software, or software settings. Scholars are not to move any cables, switches, and plugs associated with the computers or network. Vandalism also includes any attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the ASTEC network, the Internet, or any other connected agency or network. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
- **Security:** Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If a user feels able to identify a security problem on the ASTEC network, the user must notify a supervising professional or a system administrator. The user must not demonstrate the problem to other users. Scholars may not, under any circumstances, use another individual's account or reveal their passwords to another individual. Attempts to login to the system as any other user may result in In-School Detention, suspension or cancellation of user privileges. Unauthorized attempts to log in to the system as an Administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the ASTEC network and the Internet.
- **Privacy:** Users are not to expect that files stored on any school-based computer will always be private. Administrators and faculty may review files and messages to maintain system integrity and to ensure that users are acting responsibly. At any point, the IT Director may view an activity log listing web sites visited by each user.
- **Publishing:** Prior to publication on the Internet, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or his/her designee must approve home pages that are intended to represent any school or department of ASTEC and those that are created as part of classroom or work assignments for the school district. The teacher AND the Dean of Instruction must approve, in writing, any video or text to be published to the Internet that represents ASTEC, its programs, employees, etc. in any way.

**Disclaimer** – ASTEC, its employees and agents, make no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, concerning the network and Internet access it is providing. Furthermore, ASTEC is not responsible for:

1. Any damages suffered by a user, including but not limited to, loss of data resulting from delays or interruptions in service, computer viruses, or to personal property;
2. The accuracy, nature, quality, or privacy of information stored on diskettes, hard drives or servers or information gathered through the Internet used to access computers, networks, or the Internet;
3. Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from Internet access.

## Web Page Publishing Guidelines

Throughout the school year, any given ASTEC scholar may produce work, and/or be involved in a class and/or extra curricular project or activity, that ASTEC may wish to publish on its web site. The ASTEC Board of Directors has adopted a Web Page Publishing policy. A copy of the entire policy is available from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or his/her designee. In order to ensure a scholar's privacy and safety, the policy requires that:

- A scholar's picture and name do not appear on the same page unless written permission from the parent(s) or guardian(s) is obtained for each occurrence.
- Published documents do not include a scholar's personal email address, phone number, street address, or names of other family members.
- Parent(s) or guardian(s) may opt not to have their child's photograph, picture, and/or work published, simply by supplying written notification to the Dean of Students.

By signing the Employees' Policies and Procedures Handbook Receipt form, you are acknowledging the receipt and understanding of this Student Technology and Network Acceptable Use Policy and will abide by the standards defined and referenced in this document.



# ASTEC SCHOOLS Anti-Bullying Plan

## A Message from the School Administration:

School bullying is a widespread problem across our nation, but ASTEC Schools is going to be different. It has to be a place we can all come to and feel safe and accepted.

As a school, scholars spend more time each week with one another than most families spend together. We are all different. We look different, we have different problems, we have different talents, and different beliefs. The one thing we can have in common is respect for one another.

Our school has to be a place where we can come and leave all those problems at home and be a part of something positive. I ask each and every scholar of this school to follow one simple rule when it comes to getting along and finding a peaceful solution to problems that will come up – treat others the way you want to be treated yourself.

Take a look at the way you talk to people. If it's negative and rude, stop. If you see someone being picked on, let a teacher or administrator know. You can't control everyone around you, but you can control your own words and behavior.



*Shannon Grimes*  
Superintendent



*Dr. Freda Deskin*  
CEO and Founder

## INTRODUCTION

Bullying behavior by a student is prohibited and will be considered unacceptable behavior. ASTEC Schools will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or at school-related activities. We will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the student's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement. ASTEC Schools expects all members of the school community, students and adults, will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

ASTEC Schools is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can harm the learning process.

Bullying, harassment, and intimidation have a negative impact on the school climate and can be major distractions from learning. Bullying can create unnecessary anxiety that affects the ability or desire of a student to attend school, learn in school, travel on the school bus, feel safe in school areas such as the playground or cafeteria, or participate in special or extracurricular activities. The failure to address bullying behavior also gives other students the message that it is permissible to engage in negative conduct. This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and ASTEC Schools is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. We have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to



incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation and retaliation. The Dean of Students is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

Students found in violation of ASTEC's Anti-Bullying policy are subject to disciplinary action by school officials and local law enforcement. ASTEC has a ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY in regard to bullying, hazing and intimidation.

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING, INTIMIDATION AND RETALIATION

ASTEC Policy and state law prohibits hazing in any form, such as harassment, bullying, and/or intimidation of other students, faculty or staff. This includes the use of any of these forms by way of electronic communication, whether or not the communication originated at school. Senate Bill 1941 allows schools to establish a procedure for a school to request the disclosure of information regarding students who have received mental health care that indicates an explicit threat to the safety of students or school personnel.

### I. **Bullying**

**Bullying** is defined as the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
2. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
4. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
5. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

For the purposes of this policy, bullying will include cyberbullying.

### II. **Cyberbullying**

**Cyberbullying** is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any form of electronic communication, which will include, but will not be limited to any digital media, email, blogs, websites, instant messages, photo messages, etc., whether or not the communication originated at school.

Cyber-bullying will also include:

1. The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or
2. The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses above, inclusive, of the definition of bullying above.
3. The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (e), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

### III. **Retaliation**

**Retaliation** against or **intimidation** of a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying also is prohibited and will be considered unacceptable behavior within the meaning of the Student and Parent Codes of Conduct. Such retaliation or intimidation may result in disciplinary action.

### IV. **Other Behaviors**

**Other behaviors** which are rude and hurtful but do not meet the criteria to be termed bullying, may not require reporting under the law, but will be addressed within the ASTEC Code of Conduct.

**Aggressor** is a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation.

**Hostile environment** is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

**Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**Staff** includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

**Target** is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

**For the purpose of this Plan, Aggressor will be used to identify the person(s) who has engaged in the bullying, cyberbullying or retaliatory behavior. Target will be used to represent the person(s) to whom the action is directed.**

## LOCATIONS

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds. Including property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school; and
- Off school grounds. Including at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

## REPORTING

Any **staff member** (i.e. anyone employed by ASTEC) will report immediately to the Dean of Students or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying, intimidation or retaliation. The requirement to report to the Dean of Students or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. This requirement includes, but is not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, support staff member or substitute teacher.

**School volunteers** will report immediately to the Dean of Students or designee any conduct that may be bullying, cyberbullying, retaliation, or intimidation when she/he has witnessed it or becomes aware of it. They will be notified of and trained in the reporting requirement.

**Parents/guardians.** ASTEC Schools expects parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying, intimidation or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Dean of Students or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. This report to the Dean of Students is best if done in direct conversation but may also be done by email, phone message, or other written communication.

**Students.** ASTEC Schools expects students, who believe they have been subjected to bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation or retaliation, or who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying, intimidation or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Headmaster or designee. This report may also be made to the student's teacher, counselor, or any adult staff member.

Black locked boxes, with a slot for notes, are located throughout the school. Students are asked to write legibly when using this method to report bullying or unusual behavior of other students. These boxes are checked daily. Students are not required to submit their name unless it is necessary for follow up or further information.

Students may also report and discuss an incident of bullying with the Dean of Students, a counselor, a teacher or any other trusted staff member. This report is best done in direct conversation with a staff member, but may also be done by other means or through the student's parent/guardian.

**A Reporting Form (see page 129)** will be made available on the district website for use by any party. This form may be submitted directly to the Headmaster or sent anonymously to the Dean of Students. False reports submitted knowingly

alleging bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with ASTEC's Code of Conduct.

## **INVESTIGATING AND RESPONDING TO REPORTS**

Upon receipt of a report of possible bullying, cyberbullying, retaliation, or intimidation, the Dean of Students, or a designee, will, before fully investigating the allegations of bullying, intimidation or retaliation, take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect them from possible further incidents.

Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target. The Dean of Students or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

In conducting an investigation, the Dean of Students or designee, will consider how the bullying behavior might impact the general learning environment of the school or the impact it may have on bystanders or other students in the school.

**Consequences may be necessary even if the target indicates the aggressor(s) behavior is permissible.**

The Headmaster or designee will promptly conduct an investigation on any report. During the investigation the Dean of Students or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses will be told that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Reporting is an obligation that exists regardless of requests from reporters to not investigate or talk with certain students or individuals. We encourage reporting, but reporting on the condition that no action will be taken or limits placed on the investigation cannot be accepted.

### **Steps of the Investigation:**

- Report is received;
- Interview the target and assess the level of threat present;
- Interview reporter, if other than target, and note and interview other witnesses (especially adults) or any online involvement;
- Interview the alleged aggressor(s);
- Determine the merit and plausibility of the report; and
- Determine the circumstances and establish disciplinary or other consequences, if necessary.

## **CONSEQUENCES AND RESPONSES TO BULLYING**

If the Dean of Students or designee determines that bullying, cyberbullying, retaliation, or intimidation has occurred and consequences are merited, the Dean of Students or designee will:

- Promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation.
- Ensure that all notices to parents comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Dean of Students or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.
- Notify the school's Special Education Teacher if any of the students are on an Individualized Education Plan.
- Take appropriate disciplinary action.
- Notify the local law enforcement agency if she/he has a reasonable basis to believe that the incident may result in criminal charges against the alleged aggressor. If the local law enforcement is notified, the Dean of Students shall document the reasons for the decision. If the local law enforcement agency is not notified or if it determines that

its involvement is not necessary, the Headmaster or designee shall respond to the behavior as is appropriate within the ASTEC's Code of Conduct.

- When a report is received and the Dean of Students determines that the behavior is not a bullying, intimidation or retaliation incident, the Dean of Students will contact the parent(s) of each party if:
  1. a behavioral report was submitted to the Dean of Students,
  2. a bus misbehavior form was submitted to the Dean of Students,
  3. a consequence resulted from the behavior at issue, or
  4. in his/her judgment the Dean of Students determines that this report may be the cause of distress for the student or may create relationship issues between the students involved.

## ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in its seriousness and its impact on the target and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation and retaliation.

Consequences and disciplinary action will be applied in accordance with ASTEC's Code of Conduct. The responses will range from redirection of future behavior to suspension from school. These actions will escalate in severity for repeated offenses or with the severity of the implication of the negative conduct. Actions may be accompanied by the referral to counseling or other therapeutic support. The specific action will be age-appropriate, concrete, and immediate.

The nature and extent of disciplinary action imposed or consequences applied, is a matter within the discretion of the Dean of Students or designee. The Dean of Students or designee will balance the need for accountability and safety with the need to teach appropriate behavior.

Consequences and discipline for acts of intimidation and retaliation will be imposed at the same, or more severe, level as the underlying bullying, cyberbullying or inappropriate behavior.

Students who are not primary participants in the reported act of bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation or retaliation but join in, may be subject to disciplinary action or consequences as if they were primarily involved. "Joining-in" is a form of endorsing the behavior.

Consequences or disciplinary actions taken in an instance of bullying will be shared with the appropriate school staff members to ensure awareness and follow through.

When it is determined that a target is in fear or is being threatened, the Dean of Students or designee will develop a safety plan to immediately take steps to limit and control the behavior of the aggressor(s) who is causing the threat. The safety plan will be developed in collaboration with the appropriate staff and shared with staff to ensure enforcement and follow-up.

The Dean of Students or designee will periodically follow-up with the target(s), and their parents, in any incident to ensure the student believes the situation has improved and that any threat or fear has been significantly reduced or eliminated.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS

**Annual staff training on the Plan:** Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the District. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to receive the training during the school year in which they are hired.

**Ongoing professional development:** The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of the tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school-wide and district-wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- regarding the Center interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
- internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students whose disability affects social skills development.

Additional areas identified by the school or district for professional development include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and
- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students.

**Written notice to staff.** The District will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the school or district employee handbook.

## PARENT AND STUDENT EDUCATION

- Parent education and resources. The school or district will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the on-site Parent Organization and any other parent meetings as scheduled.
- Notification requirements. Each year the District will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The District will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the District's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard-copy and electronic formats. The District will post the Plan and related information on its website.

## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The District will provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the curriculum. The curriculum will be evidence-based. The plan will describe the curriculum to help parents and others understand the District's bullying prevention efforts.

Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following:

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cyber safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;

- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

Initiatives will also teach students about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
- utilizing appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- using positive behavioral supports;
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- using the Internet safely; and
- supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

#### **APPLICATION TO STUDENTS ON INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or that the student may participate in, or is vulnerable to, bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the

IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. This will include a particular focus on the needs of students whose disability affects social skills development.

#### **DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING**

In order to monitor the success of the Plan and to help determine the effectiveness of interventions, curricula and actions the ASTEC Schools will collect, student and staff survey data, parent survey data and the number and nature of bullying, cyberbullying, intimidation and retaliation instances. Reports will be forwarded to the superintendent's office at the end of each school year. Reports of the data will be presented annually to the School Board and made available to the public on the district website.

**BY SIGNING THE EMPLOYEES' POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK RECEIPT FORM, YOU ARE ACKNOWLEDGING THE RECEIPT AND UNDERSTANDING OF THIS ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND WILL ABIDE BY THE STANDARDS DEFINED AND REFERENCED IN THIS DOCUMENT.**





**ASTECS SCHOOLS**  
**Bullying/Harassment Reporting Form**

Your Name (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Your Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Bullying/Harassment Alleged: \_\_\_\_\_ Racial \_\_\_\_\_ Sexual \_\_\_\_\_ Religious \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Behaviors Observed:

- |                               |                              |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| _____ Name Calling            | _____ Inappropriate Touching | _____ Damaging Property      |
| _____ Shoving/Pushing         | _____ Stealing               | _____ Stalking               |
| _____ Inappropriate Gesturing | _____ Writing/Graffiti       | _____ Taunting/Ridiculing    |
| _____ Staring/Leering         | _____ Cyberbullying          | _____ Flashing a weapon      |
| _____ Threatening             | _____ Spitting               | _____ Intimidation/Extortion |
| _____ Hitting/Kicking         | _____ Demeaning Comments     | _____ Other: _____           |
- \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the victim? If more than one, include all names:

Who is the perpetrator (person doing wrong)? If more than one person, include all names:

Describe exactly what happened - Give as many details as possible:

Has this occurred often? If so, how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did the incident occur? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you respond to this incident? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you reported this incident to anyone yet?    Yes    No

If so, whom did you report it to: Teacher | Parent | Friend | Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Evidence: Graffiti Notes | Email | Websites | Video/Audiotape | Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean of Students/Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Report Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents Contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_



## **ASTEC SCHOOLS**

### **Information About Meningitis**

Oklahoma schools are now required by state law to inform students, parents and school employees about meningitis.

Meningitis is an infection of the spinal cord fluid and the fluid that surrounds the brain. Meningitis is usually caused by a virus or a bacterium. Meningitis caused by a virus is usually less severe and resolves without specific treatment, while meningitis caused by bacteria can be severe and may result in brain damage, hearing loss, limb amputation or learning disabilities.

#### **What types of bacteria cause meningitis?**

There are several types of bacteria that cause meningitis, including *Neisseria meningitidis*, *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, Group B streptococcal disease, and *Haemophilus influenzae* type B. *Neisseria meningitidis* is rare but especially risky for certain ages. Disease caused by *Neisseria meningitidis* is usually referred to as “meningococcal” or “meningococcal disease.”

#### **Who is at risk from meningococcal disease?**

Babies less than a year old have the highest risk for meningococcal disease, but no vaccine is available to protect them. The risk of meningococcal disease increases for adolescents and young adults aged 15 to 22 years, because of behaviors that spread the disease. On average, two to three people in this age group get meningococcal disease every year in Oklahoma. More than half of these could be prevented by vaccine.

College freshmen living in dormitories have a greater chance of contracting the disease than other persons their age. Others at increased risk are those with immune system problems, those without a spleen, or travelers going to places in the world where the disease is more common.

#### **How is the disease spread?**

The disease is spread by droplets in the air and direct contact with someone who is infected. That includes coughing or sneezing, kissing, sharing a water bottle or drinking glass, sharing cigarettes, lipstick/lip balm, or anything an infected person touches with his or her mouth.

#### **Is meningococcal disease dangerous?**

Yes, every year in the United States about 2,500 people are infected and about 300 of those people die, in spite of treatment with antibiotics. Of those who live, about 400 a year lose their arms or legs, become deaf, have problems with their nervous systems, develop mental retardation, or suffer seizures or strokes. This is why preventing the disease is important. If a child has symptoms of meningococcal disease contact a health-care provider immediately.

#### **How can meningococcal disease be prevented?**

Vaccines can prevent many types of meningococcal disease, but not all types. There are two vaccines available in the United States that protect against four of the five most common strains of the meningococcal bacteria. The newest vaccine, called Menactra, or MCV4, is currently available for:

- All adolescents 11-18 years of age
- College freshmen who live in dormitories
- Other people at high risk 2 through 55 years of age

The earlier vaccine, called Menomune, or MPSV4, was effective in older children and teenagers but booster doses were needed every three to five years. The new vaccine protects against the same types of meningococcal bacteria and probably will not require booster doses. MPSV4 is still used for children 2-10 years of age and adults over 55 who are at risk.

Teenagers and young adults can also reduce their risk by taking good care of themselves, by eating a balanced diet, getting enough sleep and exercise, as well as avoiding cigarettes and alcohol.

#### **Signs and Symptoms of Meningitis**

- Headache & Fever
- Chills

- Stiff neck
- Extreme tiredness
- Vomiting
- Sensitivity to light
- Rash of small purplish black-red dots
- Confusion
- Seizures

**Is the meningococcal vaccine safe?**

Yes, both vaccines are safe; however, there are risks with any vaccine. About half of the people who get the vaccine will have pain and redness where the shot was given, but because the vaccine is not made from the whole bacteria, it cannot cause bloodstream infections or meningitis. A small percentage of people who get the vaccine develop a fever. Vaccines, like all medicines, carry a risk of an allergic reaction, but this risk is very small.

A few cases of Guillain-Barré Syndrome, a serious nervous system disorder, have been reported among people who got the new vaccine, MCV<sub>4</sub> (meningococcal conjugate vaccine). At this time, there is not enough evidence to tell if the vaccine caused the disorder. Health officials are investigating these reports.

**Does the meningococcal vaccine work?**

Yes. The new meningococcal vaccine protects about 90 percent of the people who receive it from meningococcal disease caused by types A, C, Y, and W-135. These types cause almost two-thirds of all meningococcal disease in teenagers in the United States. It does not prevent type B, which causes about one third of the cases in teenagers.

**Does the meningococcal vaccine prevent all cases of meningitis?**

No. However, 63 percent of the meningitis cases in 18-22 year olds occurring in Oklahoma from 2000 through 2005 could have been prevented by vaccination. The meningococcal vaccine does not include type B. Scientists have not been able to make a vaccine that will protect against type B.

**Where can someone get the vaccine for their son or daughter?**

If a child has health insurance, they can obtain the meningococcal vaccine from their health-care provider.

Local county health departments have the vaccine available now at no charge for all children who:

- Have no health insurance
- Are Medicaid eligible
- Are Native American
- Have health insurance that does not pay for vaccines
- Are either 11-18 years of age, or who are 2-18 years of age and do not have a spleen, or have terminal complement deficiencies, or HIV infection or will be traveling to countries with high rates of meningococcal disease.

**Is this vaccine required to attend school in Oklahoma?**

Meningococcal vaccine is required for students who are enrolling for the first time in colleges and post-high school educational programs and who will live in dormitories or on-campus student housing. This vaccine is not required for children in elementary or high school in Oklahoma.

**Where can I get more information?**

For more information contact a healthcare provider or local county health department or visit these websites:

*National Meningitis Association at [www.nmaus.org](http://www.nmaus.org)  
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <https://www.cdc.gov/meningitis/index.html>*

**ASTEC SCHOOLS  
EMERGENCY  
\*\*LOCK DOWN\*\***

**EMERGENCY-SPECIFIC RESPONSE PROCEDURE**

Any threat or hazard outside of the school facilities.

A detailed description of the responses can also be found in each classroom located by the doorway.

**EXAMPLES:**

- Dangerous animal outside
- Criminal activity in the area
- Civil disobedience

**RESPONSE:**

- A school administrator or his/her designee will announce twice “Your attention please, at this time go to Lockdown, Locks, Lights, Out of Sight”. “ Lockdown, Locks, Lights, Out of Sight”.
- A school administrator or his/her designee will contact the appropriate authorities in regard to the particular threat/hazard.
- Any scholars, or staff, who are outside will be brought inside. The scholar’s parent/guardian will be notified if necessary.
- The school administrators and/or their designees will lock and monitor each school entrance.
- Personnel with exterior windows or doors in their rooms will lock and secure them.
- Teachers will take roll and determine if attendance has changed since the beginning of class and notify their front office if it has.
- Each school office will field information regarding missing or extra scholars in each classroom.
- All faculty and staff will lock and secure doors in their respective locations and continue with instruction or business as usual.
- Depending on the situation, it may be necessary to escalate to a full Intruder Alert. This decision will be made by the school administration and then at that time an Intruder Alert announcement will be made.
- When the threat or hazard is over a school administrator or his/her designee will make the announcement “Your attention please, Lockdown is over.”

**\*Important Note\*:** Should the bell ring, all classes and staff will continue to hold in their current locations until the announcement has been made that the Lockdown is over.



**ASTEC SCHOOLS  
EMERGENCY  
\*\*INTRUDER ALERT\*\***

**EMERGENCY-SPECIFIC RESPONSE PROCEDURE**

Any threat or hazard inside of the school facilities

A detailed description of the responses can also be found in each  
classroom located by the doorway.

**EXAMPLES:**

- Angry or violent parent or scholars
- Threat or potential threat
- Intruder INSIDE the school
- Active Shooter
- Dangerous animal INSIDE the school

**RESPONSE:**

- An employee confronting or becoming aware of an intruder or armed assailant should consider their personal safety before approaching or speaking with the individual(s).
- If an employee is in a situation facing an intruder, angry or violent parent or scholar, or armed assailant, be courteous, offer to assist them, inquire as to the problem, but do not attempt to subdue armed assailants, such actions could result in increased danger or injury to other personnel.
- The employee should also make an attempt to notify or gain the attention of another employee so that response measures can be activated.
- Any employee becoming aware of the situation should use the telephone intercom. Notify the staff by making the announcement twice, “Your attention please, this is an Intruder Alert. Your attention please, this is an Intruder Alert. Locks, Lights, Out of Sight, Locks, Lights, Out of Sight”.
- The employee should call 911 and a school administrator. Once this task is complete, the employee should seek shelter in a locked secure area.
- Upon hearing the Intruder Alert, the “Locks, Lights, Out of Sight” protocol is followed:
  - a. Teachers and staff will close and lock all their windows and doors, and barricade if necessary.
  - b. Turn all the lights out.
  - c. Move all personnel out of the line of sight of all windows and door openings. Behind shelving, furniture, under tables, closets or locked bathrooms are all acceptable places to be.
  - d. Teachers, take a visual roll.
  - e. An Intruder Alert may last for several hours; it is imperative that everyone remains quiet! Silence is essential no matter how long Lockdown lasts.
  - f. No indication of occupancy should be revealed until the Intruder Alert is over.
  - g. If weapon fire is heard drop, cover and remain silent.

All personnel will remain in their rooms/shelters until advised by Law Enforcement or the Emergency Coordinator on the scene that the “all-clear” has been given that the Intruder Alert is over. A school administrator or his/her designee will make the announcement and repeat it twice. “Your attention please, we are all-clear. You may return to your usual activities.”





# ASTEC SCHOOLS

## **\*\*EVACUATION\*\***

### EMERGENCY-SPECIFIC RESPONSE PROCEDURE

Any condition that requires evacuation of the facilities

A detailed description of the responses can also be found in each classroom located by the doorway

#### EXAMPLES:

- Fire
- Fumes
- Smoke
- Bomb Threat
- Terrorist Telephonic Threat

#### RESPONSE:

- Administrators, office staff or designee will activate the fire alarm and/or announce twice, “Your attention please, at this time evacuate the building.” Pulling any fire pull station can activate the fire alarm.
- A school administrator or his/her designee will call 911 and provide the required information.
- A school administrator or his/her designee will alert Shepherd Mall Center Security. (MS/HS only)
- All staff must familiarize themselves with the evacuation plan map posted in each room.
- Remaining staff will exit the building as soon as the evacuation has been initiated and 911 is called. Teachers will see that all scholars exit the facilities, according to the evacuation plan map and proceed to their designated rally areas.
- Teachers are to ensure that all scholars have exited the room.
- Teachers will bring their Class Roster and Red Card/Green Card/Med Card.
- At the rally point teachers will take roll and ensure that all scholars are accounted for and will communicate this to the administration using the pre-arranged system of Red Card/Green Card/Med Card.
- All personnel are to leave “everything as is,” close their doors and leave them unlocked. Important: Do not turn any electrical device on or off.
- All bus drivers and members of the CMT (Crisis Management Team) are to make prior arrangements to have their scholars supervised once they have reached the rally point should their services be required.
- At the rally point, clear communication is imperative.
- Middle school, high school and central office administrators will be in contact with each other to ensure that all personnel have exited the facilities.
- Any additional necessary instructions will be given at this time.
- Bus drivers and members of the CMT will be notified at this time if their services are required.
- All personnel will remain outside at their rally point until the appropriate school personnel or a school administrator has given the “All Clear.”

**\*Special Note Regarding Earthquakes:** Do not move from your location. In the event of an earthquake, immediately instruct scholars and others in your location to drop and take cover. There will not be time for a warning announcement in the event of an earthquake. After the earthquake, follow-up instructions will be announced.



**ASTEC SCHOOLS**  
**\*\*SHELTER\*\***

**EMERGENCY-SPECIFIC RESPONSE PROCEDURE**

Any need for personal protection.

**EXAMPLES:**

- Tornado Warning, Severe Lightning, High Winds
- Earthquakes
- Bomb Threat (Outside the Facilities)
- Hazmat

**RESPONSE:**

- Administrators and/or office staff will monitor radio and television broadcasts during the periods of high weather threat.
- If advised to take shelter, a school administrator or his/her designee will announce twice “Your attention please, scholars and staff, seek shelter for \_\_\_\_\_.”
- Depending on the circumstances the administrator may insert any number of reasons for seeking shelter. A few examples would be:
  - a. Tornado
  - b. Bomb Threat
  - c. Earthquake
  - d. Flood
  - e. Hazmat
- All staff must familiarize themselves with the Shelter Plan and Plan Map posted in each room.
- When the announcement to take shelter is given, all personnel will move according to the Shelter Plan.
- Once all scholars and staff are in their shelter locations, everyone will “duck-and-cover.”
- MS/HS - Faculty, Staff and scholars in the mall area will follow the instructions of the mall Security Personnel. If outside the mall, enter at the nearest entrance and follow the instructions of the mall Security Personnel.
- Elementary - Faculty, Staff and scholars follow the directions of Administration.
- Members of the CMT (Crisis Management Team) and bus drivers will pre-arrange to have their scholars supervised by other teachers once everyone is in their shelter position should it become necessary to use their services. A school administrator will contact the members of the CMT and the bus drivers should it be necessary to call them into service.
- When the need to take shelter is over a school administrator or his/her designee will announce, “Your attention please, there is no longer a need to take shelter. Everyone return to your regular rooms and resume normal school activities.”



# **ASTEC SCHOOLS \*\*SHELTER PLAN\*\***

## **EMERGENCY-SPECIFIC RESPONSE PROCEDURE** (i.e. Tornado, Straight Line Winds, Gas Leak, Large Hail)

### **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:**

In all emergency situations, the school personnel will make decisions in the best interest of all students. No student will be dismissed from school until the emergency situation has been resolved.

In case of a Tornado warning or threat of straight line winds are issued during school hours, the teachers will escort the students to the storm shelter. After entering the building, the teachers will check to make sure all of their students are present and accounted for. If all students are present, they will hold up their green card. If they are missing a student, they will hold up a red card. An administrator will locate the student and reconnect them with their teachers.

For instances involving large hail or lightning during dismissal, the students will be held in their classrooms until the threat has passed.

In an emergency such as a gas leak, the school personnel will follow the guidelines of the local emergency responders. This could include relocation to the ASTEC Middle School and High School campuses located at Shepherd (Mall) Center on NW 23rd street.

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL:**

- Office personnel will move immediately to Room M28.
- Rooms M19, M11 and M22 will move to Room M21.
- Room M17 will move to Room M16.
- Room M27 will move to Room M26.
- Room M25 will move to Room M24.
- Room M8 will move to H6.
- Rooms M1 and M2 will move to Room M3.
- P-1 will move to Room M13.
- P-2 will move to Room M14.
- P-3 will move to Room M15.

If a large group of scholars are at lunch, they should follow the procedure for their lunchroom teacher (i.e., if they go to lunch from Room M27 then they would go to Room M26).

### **HIGH SCHOOL:**

- Room H28 will move to Room H4.
- Room H15 will move to Room H16.
- Room H12 and H14 will move to Room H9.
- Rooms H1 and H1a will move to H4.
- Room H20 will move to H22.
- Multipurpose Room (H6) will move to Room H17
- Room H2 will move to Room H3.
- Room H27 and H29 will move to Room H26.

### **HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE AND CAREER CENTER:**

- Room CC4 moves to CC5; CC5 stays in place; CC1, CC2, and CC5 will move to the interior CC hallway near restrooms.

**HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE AND CAREER CENTER:**

- Rooms CC1 moves to CC2; CC2 stays in place; CC3, CC4, and CC5 will move to the interior CC hallway near restrooms.

**CENTRAL OFFICE:**

- Central Office personnel will remain in their office, with the exception of the reception area. The reception area will move back into the central offices.
- A2 and A13 will move to the hallway outside of the auditorium (HO16).

**HIGH SCHOOL OFFICE:**

- Office personnel will remain in their rooms, with the exception of the reception area.
- Reception will move to HO4.
- Rooms HO16, HO12, HO10 will move to the hallway outside of the auditorium (HO16).



**ASTEC SCHOOLS**  
**\*\*BOMB THREAT OR TERRORIST THREAT\*\***

**EMERGENCY-SPECIFIC RESPONSE PROCEDURE**

- Any employee receiving a telephonic bomb or terrorist threat\* will notify, without alerting the caller, an administrator or another employee.
- The person receiving the call will remain calm, keeping the caller on the line if possible and write down the caller's exact words. The employee will use the telephone Bomb threat checklist to record all pertinent data. This checklist should be kept next to your ASTEC phone.
- Under no circumstances should untrained personnel attempt to move or disarm a suspected bomb. Note the location of the suspect device and report it to law enforcement personnel or administration.



**ASTEC SCHOOLS**  
**\*\*Bomb Threat Checklist\*\***

(Stay near your phone)

Keep the caller on the line as long as possible! If you have caller ID, write down the caller's phone number immediately!

**EXACT TIME AND DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EXACT WORDS OF CALLER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**QUESTIONS TO ASK THE CALLER:** \_\_\_\_\_

- When is the bomb going to explode?
- Where is the bomb?
- What does it look like?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What will cause it to explode?
- Did you place the bomb?
- Why did you place the bomb?
- Where are you calling from?
- What is your address?
- What is your name?
- If the voice is familiar, whom did it sound like?
- Were there any background noises?
- Telephone number call received at:
- Person receiving call:
- Any additional remarks:

**Descriptors – Please circle any words that describe the caller**

**Voice:**

LOUD	INTOXICATED	DEEP
HIGH-PITCHED	SOFT	
RASPY	PLEASANT	

**Accent:**

LOCAL	FOREIGN	RACE/ETHNICITY ESTIMATION: _____
-------	---------	----------------------------------

**Familiarity of Threatened Facility:**

MUCH	SOME	NONE
------	------	------

**Manner:**

CALM	INCOHERENT	EMOTIONAL
RATIONAL	ANGRY	LAUGH
COHERENT	RIGHTEOUS	
DELIBERATE	IRRATIONAL	



## **ASTEC Schools Transportation Policy and Questions**

Anyone requiring an ASTEC vehicle for a field trip, event or activity must complete an online Field Trip Request Form through BambooHR and have it approved.

### Commonly Asked Questions about the Use of School Vehicles and School Trips/Events/Activities

#### **Employee Parking Permits**

In addition, all employees parking on ASTEC Property are required to have an ASTEC Parking Pass clearly displayed on the rearview mirror of their vehicle. In doing so, ASTEC can keep track of any issues related to vehicles parked within the designated parking areas.

#### **How do I request buses for an event, activity or field trip?**

Bus requests are included on the “Field Trip Request Form” on BambooHR. The Athletics and Activities Director and the Headmaster must approve all requests no less than two weeks before the planned trip. The Athletics and Activities Director will coordinate acquiring bus drivers. Be sure to submit information to the Athletics and Activities Director well in advance.

#### **I don't have a CDL. May I drive the Activity Van?**

No. Only approved bus drivers may drive the Activity Van. This van may legally carry 14 passengers plus the driver.

#### **Can I request transportation on a non-school day?**

Yes. However, it may be more difficult to arrange drivers during the Thanksgiving holiday, Winter Break and Spring Break. Requests for daytime field trips cannot be honored, except in emergencies, on early release or exam dates. The last day for field trips will be April 17.

(Exceptions include field trips that occur annually such as All Sport's Day or the Eighth Grade field trip.)

#### **What about early release dates?**

Due to scheduling conflicts, buses cannot be provided during school hours on early release days.

#### **What hours are buses available?**

Typically, buses are available during school hours. Buses must return to school no later than 3:00 p.m., unless arrangements are made in advance. Please, try to adhere to the field trip schedule and communicate with the Athletics and Activities Director if you are running ahead or behind schedule. Field trips on weekends and non-school days are possible if bus drivers are available and field trip sponsors plan well in advance with their supervisor and the Athletics and Activities Director

#### **How many buses should I order?**

**Conventional Bus:** Holds 72 passengers. This includes chaperones and scholars.

**Activity Van:** Holds 15 passengers. This includes driver, chaperones and scholars.

#### **How do I know if my trip has been scheduled?**

Confirmations are sent through the BambooHR system to the sponsor/requestor after the request has been through the approval process and has been entered into the master calendar.

#### **May I change my trip request?**

Yes. Please communicate with your supervisor and the Athletics and Activities Director that your trip is changing. Then, please submit new forms for approval. If you have a trip on a morning where inclement weather prevents travel, notify your supervisor and the Athletics and Activities Director immediately so the driver can be notified. Your supervisor will guide you in rescheduling the trip, if necessary.

#### **How can I cancel a trip request?**

Send an email to your supervisor, Athletics and Activities Director and the Headmaster at least 72 hours in advance of the trip.

**Will the bus operator know how to get to the destination?**

Field trip sponsors should be prepared to give directions to the bus driver in advance of the trip. A rule of thumb is to give the driver the address and printed directions a minimum of 24 hours in advance.

**The performance/event starts early; can we depart without all the buses traveling together?**

We encourage our buses to travel in a group to assist one another in case of a breakdown. However, in order to be at a performance or event on time, the school can direct some groups to leave as necessary.

**May we bring coolers and other equipment on the bus?**

Yes, as long as they do not block the aisle, emergency doors, or in any way hinder a person from getting off the bus in an emergency situation. Please remember the bus driver is not responsible for items left on the bus during or after the trip.

**Does ASTEC receive transportation monies from the state?**

No. ASTEC has no daily bus route. Transportation is used only for school activities and must be figured into the cost of field trips and other activities use.

**It would be faster to use a toll road... is this okay?**

Yes. School buses are exempt from toll charges.

**What else should I know before requesting a bus?**

The field trip sponsor must have a checklist of every scholar who is on the bus when it departs the school. This checklist must be copied and left with the front desk secretary and Headmaster. Medical releases for scholars on the field trip should be with the field trip sponsor. A "scholar count" is to be conducted at the beginning of each trip and before the bus leaves its destination to return to the school.

No food or drink will be consumed in ASTEC vehicles. To do so will result in the loss of any future use by the sponsor/requestor. Exceptions may be made for long trips.

It is the responsibility of the sponsor and driver to see that passengers remove trash and other items and leave the vehicle clean at the end of the trip. If it is not clean upon return, the group/club will be charged a \$25 cleaning fee.

When scholars of mixed gender ride the bus, such as basketball, the boys are to sit on one side of the bus and the girls on the other. Cheerleaders are to sit at the front of the bus with their sponsor. This should be done for all trips, not just sporting trips.

Scholars who ride a school vehicle to a destination are to return from the event/trip in the school vehicle. Passengers are to be counted before the trip and before returning them to the school.

**Are chaperones required to ride the bus on field trips?**

Yes, chaperones are responsible for maintaining safe and appropriate scholar conduct on the school bus during field trips. There must be at least two chaperones in addition to the bus driver on each full bus. Adjustments may be made if the bus is fewer than 50% capacity. However, a bus driver may not be the only chaperone on the bus. The sponsor/requestor is to have a cell phone on and available at all times.

One chaperone should be prepared to remove a disruptive or uncooperative scholar and stay with him/her until a parent can pick the scholar up. You should contact your supervisor immediately if an incident occurs.

**Who can ride the school bus on a field trip?**

ASTEC scholars and staff and approved adult chaperones (per the appropriate screening process and with the approval of the Headmaster) are permitted to ride a school bus.

## **ASTEC Charter Schools Exceptional Phone Courtesy Protocols**

According to Officeskills.org, the following are recommendations for proper phone etiquette:

Presenting a professional image, both in person and on the telephone, is very important. Taking care of your customers (scholars, parents, vendors, contractors, etc.) over the telephone and making them feel well informed and appreciated is essential. The following phone tips should always be followed.

- Speak clearly. A picture paints a thousand words but the caller on the other end of the phone can only hear you. They cannot see your face or body language. Therefore, taking the time to speak clearly, slowly and in a cheerful, professional voice is very important.
- Use your normal tone of voice when answering a call. If you have a tendency to speak loudly or shout, avoid doing so on the telephone.
- Do not eat or drink while you are on telephone duty. Only eat or drink during your coffee break or lunch break.
- Do not use slang words or poor language. Respond clearly with “yes” or “no” when speaking. Never use swear words.
- Address the caller properly by his or her title. (i.e. Good morning Mr. Brown, Good afternoon Ms. Sanders). Never address an unfamiliar caller by his or her first name.
- Listen to the caller and what they have to say. The ability to listen is a problem in general but it is very important to listen to what the caller has to say. It is always a good habit to repeat the information back to the client when you are taking a message. Verify that you have heard and transcribed the message accurately.
- Be patient and helpful. If a caller is irate or upset, listen to what they have to say and then refer them to the appropriate resource. Never snap back or act rude to the caller.
- Always ask if you can put the caller on hold. If you are responsible for answering multiple calls at once, always ask the caller politely if you may put them on hold. Remember that the caller could have already waited several minutes before getting connected to you and may not take lightly to being put on hold. Never leave the person on hold for more than a few seconds or they may become upset and hang up.
- Always focus on the call. Try not to get distracted by people around you. If someone tries to interrupt you while you are on a call, politely remind them that you are on a customer call and that you will be with them as soon as you are finished.

### **Making Calls**

- Always identify yourself properly. When calling a client or customer, whether in person or when leaving a message, always identify yourself properly by providing your name, company name and a contact telephone number. For example, “Good afternoon Mr. Brown, this is Ms. Brown from ASTEC Charter Schools. My telephone number is 405-947-6272.” Always be aware of confidential information when leaving messages. Also, be aware of people around you while talking on the phone. Be discreet! Someone next to you might overhear confidential information that could negatively affect your business.
- Avoid leaving long winded messages. Remember, someone has to listen to your message, write it down and then act upon it. Your message may be just one of many messages that need to be handled. It is often a good habit to write down or type out your message in advance. Keep it brief and to the point.





## **ASTECSchools Transportation Policy and Questions**

Anyone requiring an ASTEC vehicle for a field trip, event or activity must complete an online Field Trip Request Form through BambooHR and have it approved.

### Commonly Asked Questions about the Use of School Vehicles and School Trips/Events/Activities

#### **Employee Parking Permits**

In addition, all employees parking on ASTEC Property are required to have an ASTEC Parking Pass clearly displayed on the rearview mirror of their vehicle. In doing so, ASTEC can keep track of any issues related to vehicles parked within the designated parking areas.

#### **How do I request buses for an event, activity or field trip?**

Bus requests are included on the “Field Trip Request Form” on BambooHR. The Athletics and Activities Director and the Headmaster must approve all requests no less than two weeks before the planned trip. The Athletics and Activities Director will coordinate acquiring bus drivers. Be sure to submit information to the Athletics and Activities Director well in advance.

#### **I don't have a CDL. May I drive the Activity Van?**

No. Only approved bus drivers may drive the Activity Van. This van may legally carry 14 passengers plus the driver.

#### **Can I request transportation on a non-school day?**

Yes. However, it may be more difficult to arrange drivers during the Thanksgiving holiday, Winter Break and Spring Break. Requests for daytime field trips cannot be honored, except in emergencies, on early release or exam dates. The last day for field trips will be April 17.

*(Exceptions include field trips that occur annually such as All Sport's Day or the Eighth Grade field trip.)*

#### **What about early release dates?**

Due to scheduling conflicts, buses cannot be provided during school hours on early release days.

#### **What hours are buses available?**

Typically, buses are available during school hours. Buses must return to school no later than 3:00 p.m., unless arrangements are made in advance. Please, try to adhere to the field trip schedule and communicate with the Athletics and Activities Director if you are running ahead or behind schedule. Field trips on weekends and non-school days are possible if bus drivers are available and field trip sponsors plan well in advance with their supervisor and the Athletics and Activities Director.

#### **How many buses should I order?**

**Conventional Bus:** Holds 72 passengers. This includes chaperones and scholars.

**Activity Van:** Holds 15 passengers. This includes driver, chaperones and scholars.

#### **How do I know if my trip has been scheduled?**

Confirmations are sent through the BambooHR system to the sponsor/requestor after the request has been through the approval process and has been entered into the master calendar.

#### **May I change my trip request?**

Yes. Please communicate with your supervisor and the Athletics and Activities Director that your trip is changing. Then, please submit new forms for approval. If you have a trip on a morning where inclement weather prevents travel, notify your supervisor and the Athletics and Activities Director immediately so the driver can be notified. Your supervisor will guide you in rescheduling the trip, if necessary.

#### **How can I cancel a trip request?**

Send an email to your supervisor, Athletics and Activities Director and the Headmaster at least 72 hours in advance of the trip.

**Will the bus operator know how to get to the destination?**

Field trip sponsors should be prepared to give directions to the bus driver in advance of the trip. A rule of thumb is to give the driver the address and printed directions a minimum of 24 hours in advance.

**The performance/event starts early; can we depart without all the buses traveling together?**

We encourage our buses to travel in a group to assist one another in case of a breakdown. However, in order to be at a performance or event on time, the school can direct some groups to leave as necessary.

**May we bring coolers and other equipment on the bus?**

Yes, as long as they do not block the aisle, emergency doors, or in any way hinder a person from getting off the bus in an emergency situation. Please remember the bus driver is not responsible for items left on the bus during or after the trip.

**Does ASTEC receive transportation monies from the state?**

No. ASTEC has no daily bus route. Transportation is used only for school activities and must be figured into the cost of field trips and other activities.

**It would be faster to use a toll road... is this okay?**

Yes. School buses are exempt from toll charges.

**What else should I know before requesting a bus?**

The field trip sponsor must have a checklist of every scholar who is on the bus when it departs the school. This checklist must be copied and left with the front desk secretary and Headmaster. Medical releases for scholars on the field trip should be with the field trip sponsor. A "scholar count" is to be conducted at the beginning of each trip and before the bus leaves its destination to return to the school.

No food or drink will be consumed in ASTEC vehicles. To do so will result in the loss of any future use by the sponsor/requestor. Exceptions may be made for long trips.

It is the responsibility of the sponsor and driver to see that passengers remove trash and other items and leave the vehicle clean at the end of the trip. If it is not clean upon return, the group/club will be charged a \$25 cleaning fee.

When scholars of mixed gender ride the bus, such as basketball, the boys are to sit on one side of the bus and the girls on the other. Cheerleaders are to sit at the front of the bus with their sponsor. This should be done for all trips, not just sporting trips.

Scholars who ride a school vehicle to a destination are to return from the event/trip in the school vehicle. Passengers are to be counted before the trip and before returning them to the school.

**Are chaperones required to ride the bus on field trips?**

Yes, chaperones are responsible for maintaining safe and appropriate scholar conduct on the school bus during field trips. There must be at least two chaperones in addition to the bus driver on each full bus. Adjustments may be made if the bus is fewer than 50% capacity. However, a bus driver may not be the only chaperone on the bus. The sponsor/requestor is to have a cell phone on and available at all times.

One chaperone should be prepared to remove a disruptive or uncooperative scholar and stay with him/her until a parent can pick the scholar up. You should contact your supervisor immediately if an incident occurs.

**Who can ride the school bus on a field trip?**

ASTEC scholars and staff and approved adult chaperones (per the appropriate screening process and with the approval of the Headmaster) are permitted to ride a school bus.

## **ASTEC Charter Schools Exceptional Phone Courtesy Protocols**

According to Office Skills.org, the following are recommendations for proper phone etiquette:

Presenting a professional image, both in person and on the telephone, is very important. Taking care of your customers (scholars, parents, vendors, contractors, etc.) over the telephone and making them feel well informed and appreciated is essential. The following phone tips should always be followed.

- Speak clearly. A picture paints a thousand words but the caller on the other end of the phone can only hear you. They cannot see your face or body language. Therefore, taking the time to speak clearly, slowly and in a cheerful, professional voice is very important.
- Use your normal tone of voice when answering a call. If you have a tendency to speak loudly or shout, avoid doing so on the telephone.
- Do not eat or drink while you are on telephone duty. Only eat or drink during your coffee break or lunch break.
- Do not use slang words or poor language. Respond clearly with “yes” or “no” when speaking. Never use swear words.
- Address the caller properly by his or her title. (i.e. Good morning Mr. Brown, Good afternoon Ms. Sanders). Never address an unfamiliar caller by his or her first name.
- Listen to the caller and what they have to say. The ability to listen is a problem in general but it is very important to listen to what the caller has to say. It is always a good habit to repeat the information back to the client when you are taking a message. Verify that you have heard and transcribed the message accurately.
- Be patient and helpful. If a caller is irate or upset, listen to what they have to say and then refer them to the appropriate resource. Never snap back or act rude to the caller.
- Always ask if you can put the caller on hold. If you are responsible for answering multiple calls at once, always ask the caller politely if you may put them on hold. Remember that the caller could have already waited several minutes before getting connected to you and may not take lightly to being put on hold. Never leave the person on hold for more than a few seconds or they may become upset and hang up.
- Always focus on the call. Try not to get distracted by people around you. If someone tries to interrupt you while you are on a call, politely remind them that you are on a customer call and that you will be with them as soon as you are finished.

### **Making Calls**

- Always identify yourself properly. When calling a client or customer, whether in person or when leaving a message, always identify yourself properly by providing your name, company name and a contact telephone number. For example, “Good afternoon Mr. Brown, this is Ms. Brown from ASTEC Charter Schools. My telephone number is 405-947-6272.” Always be aware of confidential information when leaving messages. Also, be aware of people around you while talking on the phone. Be discreet! Someone next to you might overhear confidential information that could negatively affect your business.
- Avoid leaving long winded messages. Remember, someone has to listen to your message, write it down and then act upon it. Your message may be just one of many messages that need to be handled. It is often a good habit to write down or type out your message in advance. Keep it brief and to the point.



## **TITLE IX - NON-DISCRIMINATION / CIVIL RIGHTS**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects people from discrimination based on sex education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title IX states that: No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

ASTECC Charter Schools is committed to providing all students, employees and members of the public with a safe and respectful school and workplace environment. The district prohibits discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on real or perceived race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, age or any other classification protected by applicable laws. This prohibition applies to students, employees, vendors and board members in any aspect of the district's programs, including during school hours, extracurricular activities, district sponsored events, or outside of school hours if the conduct affects the education or working environment.

Questions regarding gender discrimination or sexual misconduct should be directed to the ASTEC Charter Schools Title IX Coordinator:

Casey Rainbolt, Headmaster (405) 947-6272  
headmaster@astec-k12.com



## Religious Exemption Attestation for COVID-19 Vaccine

Based upon your religious exemption request, we ask that you complete the below attestation. This will help to validate your understanding of the ubiquity of fetal cell use in the testing and development of common medicines and consumer products and support your claim of a “sincerely held belief”.

The following is a list of common medicines that have used fetal cells in their testing, research, and/or development. This is a commonly used and available, but not all-inclusive, list of every-day medicines that fall into the same category as the COVID-19 vaccine in their use of fetal cell lines:

- Tylenol
- Ibuprofen
- Benadryl
- Claritin
- Pepto Bismol
- Maalox
- Sudafed
- Zolof
- Aspirin
- Simvastatin
- Albuterol
- Suphedrine
- Tums
- Ex-Lax
- Preparation H
- Prilosec OTC
- Lipitor
- Zocor
- Enbrel
- Azithromycin
- Senokot
- Zostavax
- MMR Vaccine
- Varilrix
- Motrin
- Tylenol Cold & Flu
- Acetaminophen
- Havrix

I truthfully acknowledge and affirm that my sincerely held religious belief is consistent and true and I do not use or will not use any of the medication listed as examples or any other medication (prescription, vaccine, or over the counter medication) that has used fetal cell lines in their development and/or testing.

I also truthfully affirm that I will abide by the vaccine accommodation requirements and understand that failure to abide by the accommodation requirements will subject me to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for failure to adhere to the required infection prevention standards for unvaccinated employees. The following is the list of accommodation requirements for religious exemption for an unvaccinated employee:

- Weekly COVID testing
- Proper mask wearing at all times

---

Printed Name

---

Signature

---

Date





## RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION REQUEST FORM

(To accompany a religious exemption letter from clergy.)

Applicant's or Employee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Duty Location: \_\_\_\_\_

### To be completed by Employee

Please identify the ASTEC requirement, policy, or practice that conflicts with your sincerely held religious observance, practice, or belief (hereinafter "religious beliefs").

Please describe the nature of your sincerely held religious beliefs or religious practice or observance that conflict with ASTEC's requirement, policy, or practice identified above.

What is the accommodation you are requesting?

### To be completed by Clergy

How long have you known the person seeking this exemption?

Does this person attend your place of worship regularly and are they a member of your congregation?

Have you received compensation in exchange for this letter of exemption?

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clergy Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clergy Signature



## REQUEST FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION VACCINATION EXEMPTION

ASTECC Charter Schools is committed to protecting the health and wellbeing of students, employees, and the communities it serves while providing access to education. ASTEC Charter Schools requires vaccination for COVID-19 and the flu as a condition of employment.

Your patient is seeking a medical exemption from the \_\_\_\_\_ vaccine.

Healthcare Provider's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Healthcare Provider's Phone Number: Date of Examination: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**[NOTE: THE HEALTHCARE PROVIDER IS NOT TO DISCLOSE THE UNDERLYING DIAGNOSIS WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE PATIENT]**

Please answer the following questions as they relate to a qualifying medical condition under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA). Please provide the following clarification on their request:

*(Circle bold text as appropriate. Additional comments may be added under number 4)*

**A.** Does your patient have a medical and/or psychological impairment that limits their ability to engage in a major life activity, such as the ability to work, care for themselves, perform manual tasks, walk, see, hear, eat, sleep, or engage in social activities? Pursuant to the FEHA amendments that went into effect on January 1, 2001, a condition can be said to "limit" one if the condition makes the achievement of the major life activity more difficult.

**NO**, my patient does not have a medical and/or psychological impairment that limits their ability to engage in a major life activity.

**YES**, my patient has a **MEDICAL** and/or **PSYCHOLOGICAL** impairment that limits their ability to engage in a major life activity.

**B.** Does your patient's medical condition, disability or impairment or currently affect your patient's ability to receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

**NO**, my patient's condition **DOES NOT** affect my patients ability to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

**YES**, my patient's condition **DOES** affect my patient's ability to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

**C.** If **YES** to number two (2), is your patient medically expected to be eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

**NO**, my patient is medically **RESTRICTED** from being administered a COVID-19 vaccination due to their personal medical condition.

**YES**, my patient's limitation is **TEMPORARY** and they will be medically able to receive a COVID-19 vaccination on or about \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

D. If NO to number three (3), please indicate what limitations your patient has that incapacitates their ability to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. (Please DO NOT list any private or protected medical information.)

E. Please use the space below to include any additional information that you believe would be helpful to the interactive process for this employee.

---

Physician's Signature

---

Physician's Printed Name

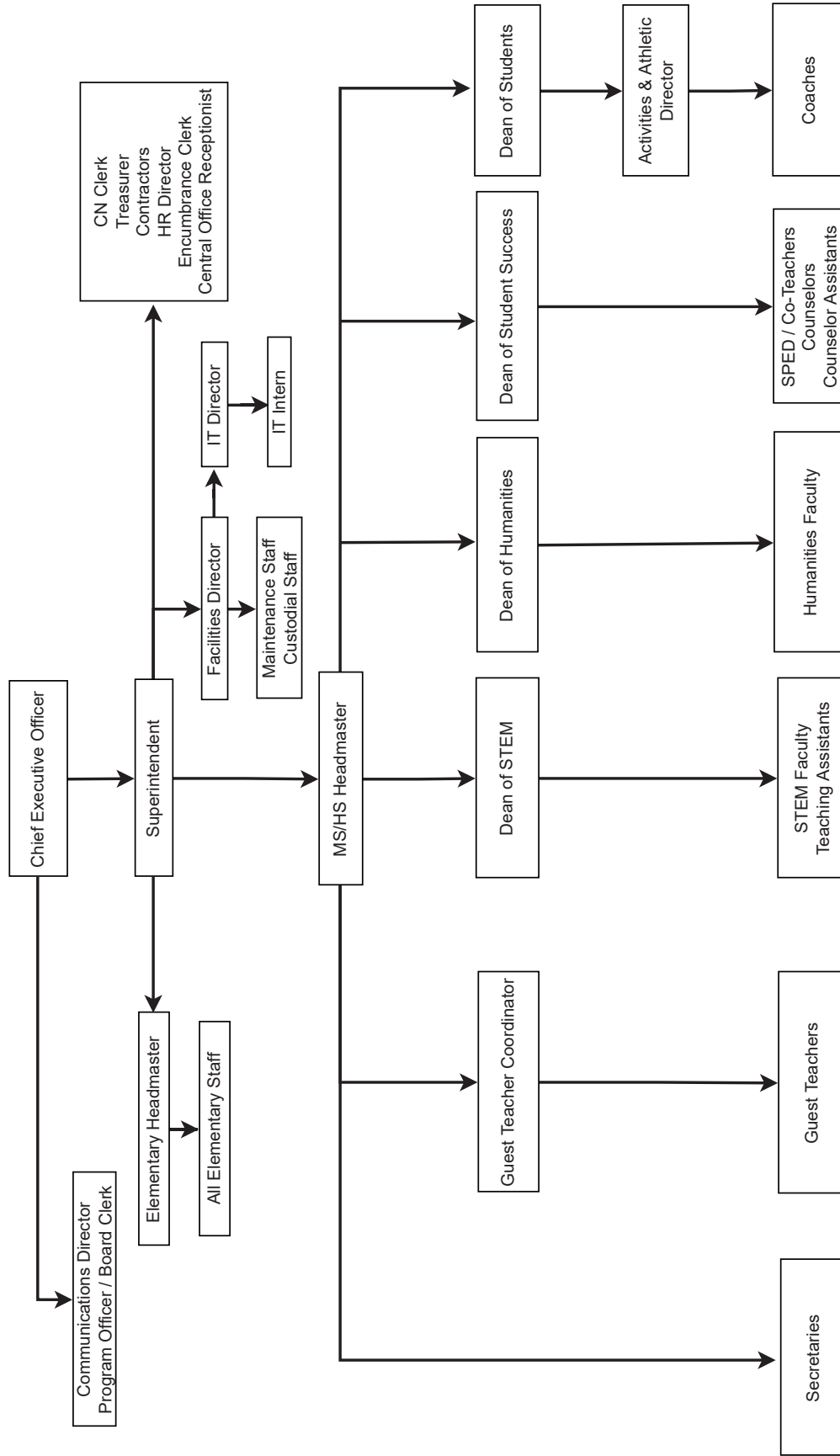
---

Date

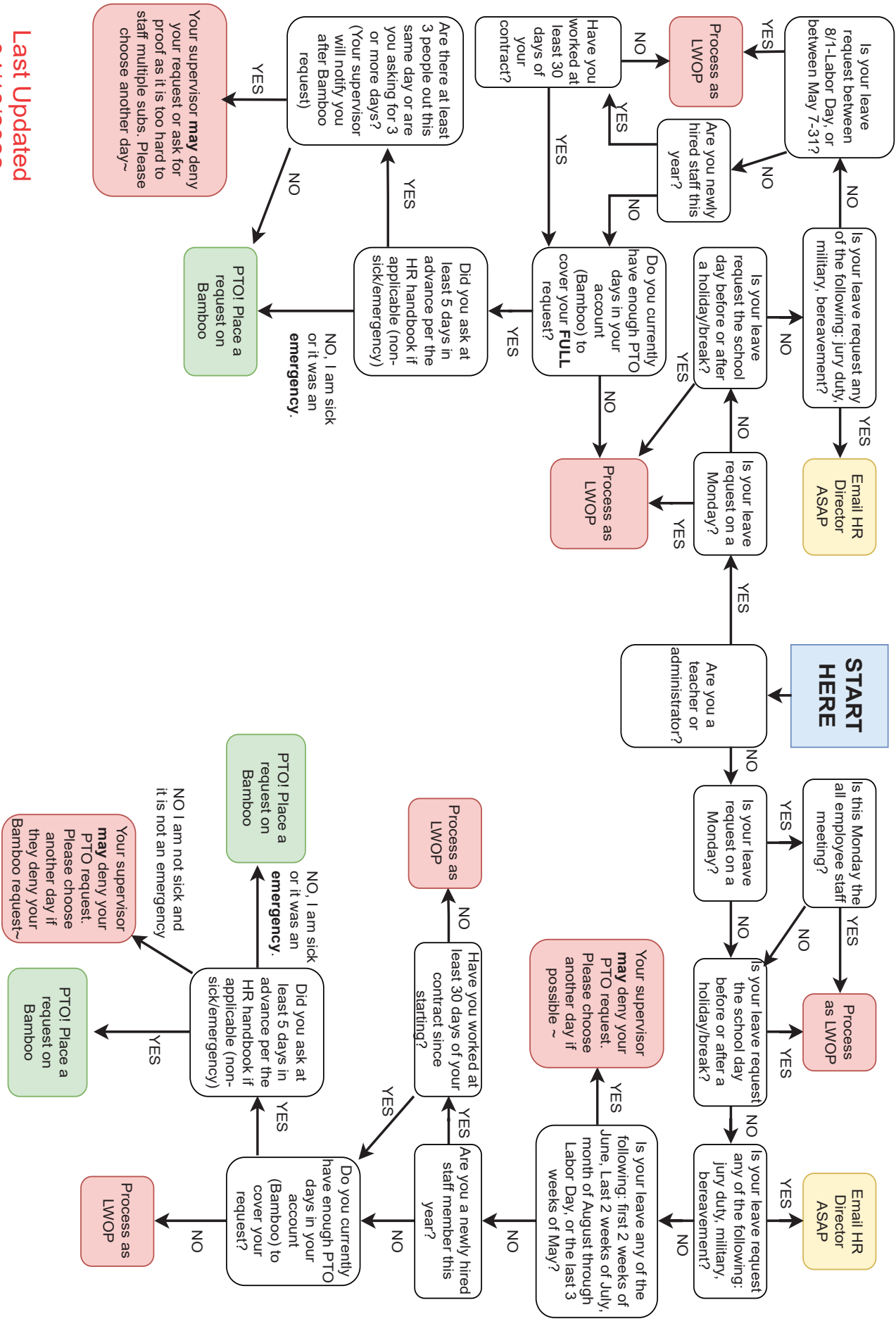
*Please sign and return to patient, or email to [hr@astec-k12.com](mailto:hr@astec-k12.com)*

# ASTECH Charter Schools

Organizational Chart SY22-23



# ASTEC Charter Schools Leave Flow Chart



Last Updated  
04/18/2022

## ASTEC Charter Schools 2021-2022 Faculty Compensation Schedule\*

B.) 2021-2022 Base Salary Schedule**					C- G.) 2021-2022 Total Compensation /w Medical and 5% 401(k) Match				
A.) YEARS OF SERVICE	LEVEL 1:	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3: MASTER	LEVEL 4: IMPACT	YEARS OF SERVICE	LEVEL 1:	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3: MASTER	LEVEL 4: IMPACT
0	\$39,750	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	\$49,128	N/A	N/A	N/A
1	\$40,284	\$41,224	\$42,426	\$45,533	1	\$49,689	\$50,676	\$51,938	\$55,200
2	\$40,817	\$41,914	\$43,118	\$46,279	2	\$50,249	\$51,401	\$52,664	\$55,983
3	\$41,351	\$42,605	\$43,809	\$47,024	3	\$50,809	\$52,126	\$53,390	\$56,766
4	\$41,884	\$43,295	\$44,501	\$47,770	4	\$51,369	\$52,850	\$54,116	\$57,549
5	\$42,418	\$43,985	\$45,191	\$48,515	5	\$51,930	\$53,575	\$54,841	\$58,332
6	\$43,064	\$44,538	\$45,744	\$49,015	6	\$52,608	\$54,155	\$55,422	\$58,857
7	\$43,711	\$45,090	\$46,297	\$49,515	7	\$53,287	\$54,735	\$56,002	\$59,382
8	\$44,357	\$45,643	\$46,849	\$50,015	8	\$53,966	\$55,315	\$56,583	\$59,907
9	\$45,004	\$46,195	\$47,402	\$50,515	9	\$54,645	\$55,896	\$57,163	\$60,432
10	\$45,650	\$46,746	\$47,905	\$51,015	10	\$55,323	\$56,474	\$57,691	\$60,957
11	\$46,121	\$47,200	\$48,358	\$51,668	11	\$55,818	\$56,951	\$58,166	\$61,642
12	\$46,592	\$47,654	\$48,811	\$52,320	12	\$56,312	\$57,428	\$58,642	\$62,327
13	\$47,062	\$48,108	\$49,263	\$52,973	13	\$56,806	\$57,904	\$59,117	\$63,012
14	\$47,533	\$48,562	\$49,716	\$53,625	14	\$57,301	\$58,381	\$59,593	\$63,697
15	\$48,004	\$49,016	\$50,219	\$54,278	15	\$57,795	\$58,858	\$60,121	\$64,383
16	\$48,438	\$49,468	\$50,671	\$54,802	16	\$58,251	\$59,332	\$60,596	\$64,933
17	\$48,872	\$49,920	\$51,123	\$55,327	17	\$58,707	\$59,807	\$61,070	\$65,484
18	\$49,307	\$50,373	\$51,576	\$55,851	18	\$59,163	\$60,282	\$61,545	\$66,035
19	\$49,741	\$50,825	\$52,028	\$56,376	19	\$59,619	\$60,757	\$62,020	\$66,585
20	\$50,175	\$51,277	\$52,480	\$56,900	20	\$60,075	\$61,232	\$62,495	\$67,136
21+	<b>NEGOTIATED</b>				21+	<b>NEGOTIATED</b>			

**A.)** Years of service are defined as "eligible" years of teaching (not admin or support role) for # of full years (i.e. 0.75% of school year or more = 1 year). This does not include Headstart, international teaching, day care, non-public preschool, college instruction or tutorial experience. Must be at a school that you can provide a teacher service record form to count.

**B.)** Base Salary for Bachelor's Degree and holder of an active teaching certificate. If you hold a master's degree, add \$1,000 additional & those with Ph. D, add \$1,500. (Retirement amount will change as well). **Teachers without an active, non-expired, OK Teacher certificate will subtract \$1,000 from the amounts in this table.**

**C.)** Retirement Matching- ASTEC will match **100% of the first 5%** of your salary that you place into your ASTEC-sponsored 401(k) account. Full vesting occurs after 3 complete years of service. Our 401(k) plan is voluntary unlike Oklahoma TRS. Unlike those who have their retirement with TRS, those with 401(K)'s or other retirement systems are eligible for Social Security Benefits AND retirement. Teachers in the Oklahoma TRS receive only those retirement benefits and do not qualify for Social Security Benefits.

**D.)** The amount below in this section is the total compensation possible if you choose to place 5% of your base salary in your 401(K) account **and** participate in the ASTEC sponsored health coverage.

**E.)** Cash in Lieu of Flexible Benefit Allowance - Teachers not enrolled in the District's Health Insurance Plan shall receive a payment of \$69.71/month in lieu of health insurance.

**F.)** Flexible Benefit Allowance for Major Medical - Teachers enrolled in District's Health Insurance Plan shall receive a Flexible Benefit Allowance (FBA) amount equal to the HealthChoice High premium for a single employee. Any excess FBA over the cost of the major medical coverage will be paid as taxable compensation.

**G.)** Total annual value of the compensation and Flexible Benefit Allowance.

### Teaching Level definitions

#### LEVEL 1

Performance Indicators (KPI: assessment). Employees may only remain at this level only for 2 years otherwise they will not be reissued a contract the following year. All non-certified teachers will be paid at a level-I rate and receive \$1,000 less than amount posted above. Those not obtaining their certificate will remain at a level 1 until they submit their certification.

#### LEVEL 2

In order to be rewarded at this level, a teacher must have been at ASTEC Charter Schools for one year and score at least 75% on the end-of-the-year Key Performance Indicators (KPI: assessment). Must hold a teaching certificate for this level.

#### LEVEL 3: MASTER

In order to be rewarded at this level, a teacher must have been at ASTEC Charter Schools for one year and score at least 85% on the end-of-the-year Key Performance Indicators (KPI: assessment). Must hold a teaching certificate for this level.

#### LEVEL 4: IMPACT

In order to be rewarded at this level, a teacher must have been at ASTEC Charter Schools for one year and score at least 93% on the end-of-the-year Key Performance Indicators (KPI: assessment). Must hold a teaching certificate for this level.

\*Pending final implementation of the proposed 2021 legislative session to increase school funding.

\*\* Based on bachelor's degree only and holder of an active OK teacher certification.