

# MONROE CHARTER



*A Classical Academy*

MONROE CHARTER ACADEMY  
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK  
2024-2025 School Year

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Principal: Dr. Camela Ford  
Address: 2850 Old Charlotte Hwy, Monroe, NC 28112  
Phone: 980-210-3627  
Email contact information: [camela.ford@mcations.org](mailto:camela.ford@mcations.org)

## GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

### Attendance

All faculty are expected to arrive at Monroe Charter Academy ("The Academy") no later than 7:10 a.m. and classes will begin at 7:30 a.m. School is dismissed at 2:30 p.m. If there are no further obligations that day, faculty may leave at 3:00 p.m. After-school hours may vary depending on scheduled meetings and events.

Employees are expected to be at school on all scheduled instructional and workdays. Employees will have 10 days sick/personal days to use at their discretion. A teacher that will be absent from school due to illness/emergency must contact the school as soon as possible, so that a substitute may be obtained.

Faculty who know in advance that they must be absent must request a leave of absence form a minimum of **two weeks** prior to the scheduled leave date. Examples of approved absences are appointments, travel, and professional development. These forms must be turned in and approved by the Principal.

All instructors are required to maintain a folder with **three days** of emergency lesson plans for each class they teach. The emergency lesson plans will be kept in the main office. The school office will be responsible for obtaining all substitutes. This is not the teacher's responsibility.

Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs is prohibited as is the use, sale, manufacture, possession or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol. In the interest of the health of students and faculty, the campus will be tobacco free. Random drug tests will be performed throughout the school year.

### Attire

Faculty members' attire should be reflective of a professional in the educational field and should be differentiated from that of students' attire. Items such as blue jeans (except on Fridays), leggings (except with a long shirt) flip flops, and shorts should not be worn unless exceptions are made by administration for special events. Staff will be permitted to wear jeans on Fridays.

### **Salary**

Employees are considered twelve month employees and will be paid twice a month (5th and 20th) for ten months (September - August).

### **Leave Policy**

Full time teachers will be granted 10 leave days per school year. Days will not be carried over to the next school year. Leave days may not be taken/used at the end of the contracted term and will be forfeited. Teachers will be paid for the time that was not used during the contracted term. Part time teachers are entitled to 5 leave days.

When a faculty or staff member is absent for a portion of the day, (3.5 hours or fewer) the amount of leave deducted will be a half day. Faculty members will not have leave days deducted for prior approved Professional Development workshops or conferences.

### **Staff Evaluations**

Staff at Monroe Charter Academy will be evaluated using a rubric and response form that will be filled out by both the staff member and Principal at the start of each school year. Staff members will fill out a self-evaluation form and self-response form. Goals will be set by both the staff member and principal and reflected on at the end of each school year. The evaluations will be completed through NCEES.

### **Conduct**

The Academy faculty members represent their school at work and while in the community. It is the expectation that their behavior both inside and out of the classroom represent the values of The Academy.

### **Confidentiality**

It is of the utmost importance that confidentiality be maintained. Student, faculty and staff information should not be discussed, except with those individuals who must know circumstances or information. Conversations should be kept professional and appropriate for the school setting. Do not talk about individual students unless you are in a private setting. When you discuss a student, keep in mind the student's right to privacy. Refrain from discussing other employees and faculty members. If issues need to be addressed, go directly to the other person or bring your concerns to the Principal. Do not discuss other faculty members with parents.

In addition to basic confidentiality procedures, it is imperative that all staff adhere to state and federal laws associated with the maintaining of private information. The statutes and laws associated with such confidentiality include but are not limited to PL 94-142, FERPA, HIPAA, the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), Title IX, and the Education Amendments of 1972. Listed below are specific areas of confidentiality and

basic policies and procedures regarding such information and its use in conjunction with conducting school business.

### **Respect**

The Academy administration expects every staff member to treat students with respect and dignity. Students are expected to treat all staff and each other with equal respect and dignity. It is imperative that the teacher is in charge of the class; anything less leads to poor educational opportunity for all. Disrespect or insubordination on the part of the student will not be tolerated, and is covered in the Student Code of Conduct. The faculty and staff are responsible for the supervision of students everywhere on school property and at school-sponsored activities at all times. Students are expected to follow the directions given by any faculty or The Academy staff member.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **The Hiring Process**

The principal will screen the initial applications, then interview qualified applicants. Any applicants that the principal would then like to move through the process will then be interviewed by the Personnel Committee if needed. (If the Personnel Committee interviews a candidate, they will be joined by a third party individual appointed by the Personnel Committee Chair.) The principal will then recommend which candidates they want to hire and will present them to the Personnel Committee for approval. Upon approval by the Personnel Committee, the candidates will then move to the full board for a final vote. The principal will set salaries within the approved range and budget of the Board. The board will ensure that all necessary criminal records checks have been performed. The Academy's Board will make all final hiring decisions. After Board approval, the principal may make an official offer to the employee and an employment packet shall be completed and returned to the principal or designee.

### **Criminal and Drug Background Check**

Our school is committed to providing a safe environment for all students, employees, patrons and visitors who are assigned to or may otherwise be present on school grounds, school property or other places which may support the instructional and extra-curricular activities of the school.

As a means of ensuring the safety of all, a criminal records and drug check will be performed on all employees, including substitutes, prior to employment and as a condition of employment. The Academy will also perform criminal background checks on all potential volunteers.

At the discretion of the board, criminal history checks shall be made either as name checks (using name, social security number and date of birth) or through the procedures set forth in G.S. 115C-332 and G.S. 114-19.2. The criminal records check will be conducted at the school's expense.

Employment is conditional on a favorable review of the background/criminal history and drug checks.

### **Renewal of Contract**

The Academy does not offer tenure. Each staff member will be evaluated annually and a determination will be made as to whether a new contract will be issued.

The Principal will be the direct supervisor of the staff. In that role, it will be his or her responsibility to notice any deficiencies in staff performance. Except for the most egregious offenses, the principal will use available resources at his or her disposal to remediate and develop the staff member so that expectations are met. Forms of development can range from small corrections to formal action plans for improvement. Plans for improvement will include clear performance expectations, support that the staff member will be offered to meet those expectations, and a reasonable, definitive time frame for meeting those expectations. If, after being on a formal action plan, the employee has still not demonstrated the expected improvement in performance, the principal may recommend the employee to the board for termination. The final decision to terminate an employee will belong to the Board of Directors. If an employee feels as though he or she has been wrongly terminated, he or she may follow the formal grievance policy.

### **Suspension or Termination of Employment**

Employee may be suspended or discharged at any time for good cause as shall be determined in the exclusive discretion of the Employer-Administration, and approved by the Board of Directors. It is specifically understood that good cause for suspension shall include, but is not limited to: inadequacy of teaching, misconduct, neglect of duty, physical or mental incapacity, actions involving moral turpitude, suspension or revocation of a teaching license, violation of the terms of this agreement or Employer's policies & procedures, or any conduct not in keeping with Employer's mission statement or conduct tending to reflect discredit upon Employer or tending to impair Employee's usefulness in his or her capacity as Employee.

## **CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**

### **Classroom Guidelines**

Teachers are required to take attendance each day, and post attendance daily in PowerSchool by 8:00am.

Students should not be left alone in the classroom except in emergencies. Please monitor all computer stations that are utilized by students.

Teachers are expected to maintain a classroom that is orderly and engaging. It is imperative that confidential information be stored in a manner that is out of reach of students. Each teacher will communicate classroom expectations with students and parents. Any violation of school/classroom rules will be handled according to the school's established Student Conduct and Discipline Plan. It is also the responsibility of the teacher to monitor and address behavior at all times, in or out of the classroom.

Classroom teachers are responsible for maintaining a reasonable degree of orderly arrangement of furniture and accessories. Pathways to exits must remain clear at all times, according to building fire and safety regulations. Lunch duty staff should check tables and floors for clutter. Chairs should be placed back under desks. Please be considerate and try to help custodial service in maintaining cleanliness.

### **Homework Guidelines**

Homework should be assigned regularly and should count toward determining the student's grade for each marking period. Since homework is formative and should provide the opportunity for students to practice previously taught material, it should be assessed accordingly. This means that it should not be graded in a summative manner. It should be counted as completed or not completed. Sufficient homework must be given on a regular basis in order to count as part of the grade.

Students gradually need to develop initiative, independence, responsibility and accountability. The completion of assigned homework can help to facilitate these traits. To this end, its purposes must be clear and criteria must support high standards.

### **Homework Criteria:**

- a. Nightly homework should consist of 20 minutes of reading every night (K-1) and 30 minutes of reading every night (2-5), a reading, writing and math assignment. In addition, a reading log that parents are required to sign every night.
- b. Related to a well-taught lesson and objectives which are clearly defined
- c. Necessary, useful, purposeful, specific, clearly understood, and reasonable in length
- d. Individualized for the ability/maturity of the student, where possible
- e. Checked and discussed (If it is worth doing, it should be checked)
- f. Assigned on a regular basis so as to be routine
- g. Never assigned as a form of punishment

Often students tell parents that they handed in homework. The teacher must

establish a dependable procedure to make sure that homework is collected, not lost, and that accurate records of receipts are kept.

### **Make-Up Work**

Instructors have the discretion through established classroom policies to not accept work for students who have absences deemed unexcused. All instructors will refuse to accept work missed during an undocumented absence. Instructors may place a deadline on missed work for all excused absences not to be less than the number of days absent. Parents and students should familiarize themselves with each instructor's policy regarding makeup work and absences. Policies for makeup work must be included in the syllabus provided for each course.

### **Cumulative Records**

Cumulative records are the most important records kept on a student. The information is expected to be accurate, up-to-date, and in order. Cumulative records are housed in the main office and must remain there. Information in cumulative records is covered by the Federal Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA). All The Academy employees are expected to maintain that confidentiality.

Knowing the history of each student and evaluating the needs of the class are important to the planning and preparation of instruction. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each faculty member to become familiar with each student's academic history. If a student is having trouble, check his/her personnel file for information which may provide additional insight. Use this information appropriately to guide instructional decisions for the student's benefit. If further consultation is necessary, inform the Principal.

The student's teacher, Principal and/or designee are the only persons, other than the student and the student's parents, permitted to inspect a student's personal file. Such files are confidential and should be treated with the utmost respect. Do not remove the files from the office. Experience has shown that confidentiality is easily jeopardized when confidential files are allowed to be removed from the office.

In addition to classroom and teaching responsibilities, faculty may be required to perform additional duties for the school.

### **IEP**

Any student receiving special education services must have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) written for him/her. The EC Coordinator and the classroom teachers must work cooperatively to develop the plan and assure that the IEP goals are met. Teachers must also assure that they are providing the accommodations specified in the IEP on a regular basis.

### **504 Plans (Written Accountability Plans)**

Section 504 of the Individuals with Disabilities Act – IDEA (PL 94-142 guidelines) considers some students to be disabled who are not otherwise identified. It is important that these students receive appropriate assistance and modifications in the regular education program. The EC Coordinator informs teachers of modifications granted through these plans.

### **Student Illness**

Students who become ill during the day should be allowed to call a parent to be signed out. Teachers may, under such circumstances, send the student with a pass to the main office. After contacting parents, students should remain in the classroom until the parent arrives unless the student is too sick to remain in the classroom.

### **Student Injury**

All student injuries should be reported to the office immediately and recorded on an Injury Report.

### **Emergency Evacuation Plans and Lockdown Procedures**

Emergency evacuation plans and lockdown procedures should be posted. Maintenance issues should be reported as soon as possible to administrative staff.

### **Student Restroom Use**

Students should not be denied the opportunity to use the restroom. If abuse of restroom privileges occurs and cannot be resolved with the student and parent, refer the issue to the Principal.

### **General Environment**

It is the responsibility of all faculty to maintain a safe environment in both the halls and common areas of the school. As needed, faculty members will be assigned additional duties at various points and times around the school. Expectations for student behavior will be clearly communicated and posted. Teachers can take appropriate disciplinary action with students to maintain order in their classrooms, and a referral to administration may be needed for further disciplinary action and consequences.

## **OUT OF CLASSROOM OBLIGATIONS**

### **Meetings**

All faculty are required to attend regular meetings as scheduled by the Principal. Additionally, professional learning teams (PLTs) will meet regularly to coordinate lesson plans, activities, and to share best practices. New teachers working with a mentor will also meet with their mentor on a regular basis.



### **Progress Reports**

Teachers will send progress reports home for all students, with a request that they be returned with a parent signature. The dates for sending these reports home are located in the academic calendar. Please plan accordingly to have grades completed by this point to have an accurate assessment of each student's progress.

### **Parent Conferences**

We encourage parents to maintain consistent, up-to-date contact with their child's teachers. Please contact the parents directly to discuss a problem or to arrange a conference as needed. Email has proven to be an effective means. Teachers and administrators are unable to leave their responsibilities during the day to have an unscheduled conference. "Drop-ins" will be handled through the office. If a parent shows up at your door, please inform them to report to the main office or call the main office for assistance. Staff is required to respond to parent emails and phone calls within 2 working school days.

### **Communication**

Effective communication with other faculty, parents, teachers, and community stakeholders is essential to a well-run school. Additionally, all faculty are expected to check email daily. Unless otherwise instructed, faculty and staff are required to respond to all emails and phone calls within two working school days.

Teachers should send emails to parents of students who are performing poorly academically. Please contact parents before it is too late, even if you have sent the required progress reports. Enlist parental support and help. Document communications to parents concerning academics and behavior. If additional support is needed, discuss the situation with the appropriate staff. The teacher, student, parent, and appropriate school staff will work together to implement appropriate interventions that will lead to student improvement.

Teachers will update their PowerSchool grade books weekly and will include information about when and how often the grade book will be updated in their communication with students and parents.

### **Extracurricular Duties**

All faculty members are expected to contribute to The Academy by taking on one additional activity, such as leading a club or serving on a special committee. Extracurricular activities must be approved by the Principal. Additionally, all teachers must offer regularly scheduled tutoring for all of their students.

## **OBSERVATIONS AND EVALUATIONS**

The Principal or Assistant Principal will observe each teacher four times a year. Observations may be scheduled or unscheduled. Informal walkthroughs may be conducted more frequently. The Principal or Assistant Principal will meet with each teacher a minimum of two times a year to provide feedback on strengths and weaknesses and offer suggestions for improvement.

Each faculty member will receive an annual evaluation from the Principal. Teachers will be evaluated holistically using a range of data such as test scores, observations, surveys, mentor evaluations (for new teachers), and involvement with the community.

## **PERFORMANCE PLANS**

Teachers who are having difficulty meeting The Academy's expectations may be put on a performance plan. The plan will be specific in stating ways a teacher is not meeting expectations, steps a teacher will need to take to meet expectations, and a timeline for completing these steps. Examples of steps may include professional development, modeling, increased observations, and frequent feedback. However, if a teacher does not show adequate improvement on the performance plan within the designated time frame, they may be recommended for termination.

## **GRIEVANCE POLICY**

Situations may occur where an employee believes that the fair and consistent application of a policy that affects him or her has not been followed. If this occurs, the staff member may initiate a formal grievance.

The first step in the grievance process is for the employee to speak to his or her immediate supervisor about the problem/concern. If the issue is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, a written grievance may be submitted to the principal or personnel committee of the Board of Directors (if the grievance involves the principal.) The written grievance should be submitted no longer than 30 days after the disclosure or discovery of the facts giving rise to the grievance. The written grievance should clearly outline the problem and what remedy or solution the employee is requesting. A meeting will take place at a mutually agreed-upon time within 5 days after receipt of the grievance. The principal or personnel committee of the Board of Directors (if the grievance involves the principal) shall provide the aggrieved employee with a response

to the grievance within 10 days after the meeting. If the principal/ personnel committee of the Board of Directors (if the grievance involves the principal) does not resolve the issue to the employee's satisfaction, then the employee may appeal to the personnel committee of the Board of Directors within 5 days of receipt of the response. The personnel committee of the Board of Directors shall arrange a meeting with the employee within 5 days of receipt of the appeal. The personnel committee of the Board of Directors shall conduct any investigation necessary before arriving at a decision and shall provide the aggrieved employee with a written decision within 10 days after the meeting. If the personnel committee of the Board of Directors does not resolve the issue, the employee may submit a written request for a hearing before the full Board of Directors within 5 days of receipt of the personnel committee's written decision. The decision by the Board of Directors will be final and will be provided in writing within 30 days of receiving the appeal.

## **OPERATIONS**

### **Compensation**

Employees will be paid based on their individual contracts bi-monthly. Direct deposit into a personal bank account is available and may be established by completing the appropriate forms. W-4s, NC-4s, and I-9s to the office. Copies of these forms will be placed in a permanent file in case of an employment audit. Each employee will be given the information necessary to fulfill this requirement during meetings prior to the beginning of the school year. Please submit them in a timely manner.

### **Supplies**

All general supplies are stored in the supply room. If you notice that an item is running low, please notify the office manager for reorders. Please do not take the last of an item without informing the office manager. Do not permit students in the supply room. Please be conservative in your use of all supplies. Use recycled paper whenever possible.

### **Copying**

Please reserve your copying for your planning period. Larger copy requests may be submitted to the Office Manager. The copier is for school use only. If the copiers experience mechanical difficulties, please do not try to fix it based on your knowledge and expertise. Notify the office immediately. When possible, use recycled paper and remember to be conservative about paper use. The principal reserves the right to limit the number of copies per staff member.

### **Fax**

A school letterhead cover is available when sending a fax. See the office manager

before sending faxes for official school use. Faxes sent for personal use will be allowed.

### **Return of Property**

Employees are responsible for all school property issued to them. All property must be returned to The Academy upon request or termination of employment.

### **School Closings**

School closings and delays will be announced through local media outlets, the school website, and through social media. Employees will not be expected to report on these days.

### **Exposure Control**

Employees will receive information and training in accordance with the Exposure Control Plan (ECP) and will have the opportunity to review this plan. Training will be provided on the implementation of the ECP. Faculty may request a copy of the ECP at no cost to them. Finally, Personal Protective Equipment will be provided to employees at no cost.