



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Educational Harbor Christian School



NOVEMBER 24, 2020

EDUCAITONAL HARBOR

415 49th St. East Palmetto, FL 34221

Educational Harbor Employee Handbook

Composed: August 2017

Updated: December 2020

Mission: Our mission at Educational Harbor is to provide quality Christian education that is individualized, research-based, and community driven.

Vision: Our vision is to become a leader in alternative education in Manatee County and surrounding areas.

Note: most of our documents and forms can be found at www.educationalharbor.com/4teachers2

Services we offer:

- Private school
- Consultation on home school and local private schools
- Tutoring
- Umbrella school

Non-Disclosure Agreement

Educational Harbor does not withhold information about our private school to other private schools or parents in regards to curriculum choices, structure of the school, and how we work towards our mission. This is to spread and inspire the idea of individualized choice in education. We do withhold information about specific students or their families.

Non-Discrimination Policy:

Educational Harbor does not discriminate on the basis of a person's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic, veteran's status, or on the basis of any other category protected under federal, state and local laws, in regard to admissions, employment, programs and activities.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Educational Harbor does not discriminate on the basis of peoples with disabilities. Assuming the person has the personality and qualifications necessary to fit with the Educational Harbor team, certain accommodations will be made available to employees with disabilities.

Philosophy: Every child is an individual and deserves a curriculum tailored to their unique learning style. At Educational Harbor Christian, every single student is accommodated to the best of our abilities. We do this through small class sizes, tutoring, close relationships with families, a variety of curriculum, and a hunger to find how each student learns best. Our classes strive to be project-based, engaging, and influenced by student and teacher passions.

Job descriptions

Lead Teacher: This person oversees final decision making at their site. Teachers can ask this teacher about curriculum, students, and what to do in specific situations that lead up to our mission and vision with a pleasant attitude. This person also teaches at least one class, has a teaching certificate, and keeps up with said certificate. They go out of their way to read articles and learn about new ways of teaching. This position is between 30 and 35 hours. Teachers will need to obtain at least 20 continuing education credits during each year.

Director/Administrator: This person is responsible for overseeing calendars and meetings, budgeting, paperwork, scholarship paperwork, enrollment, initial meetings with families, and more with a pleasant attitude. It is a full-time position on salary. This person also keeps in contact with the financial advisor, lawyer, and other community members necessary for Educational Harbor to run smoothly. This person may oversee multiple locations.

Teacher: This person is responsible for lesson planning, is the first communication with parents, and teaching lessons in class with a pleasant attitude. They are responsible for maintaining proper classroom management, records, rubrics, and other paperwork related to students in a neat and organized manner. This position is 30 hours per week. This person may be certified or not depending on training, experience, background, and personality. Teachers will need to obtain at least 20 continuing education credits during the course of each year.

Tutor: This person is responsible for supporting teachers to ensure that each student is getting what they need with a pleasant attitude. This may be small group or one-on-one tutoring during our outside of class hours. This is a part time position between 15 and 22 hours. Tutors may also tutor outside of normal hours on an as-needed basis. This person may also help with lunch and break times for teacher, and answering or responding to messages of attendance and pick up by parents. This person may be certified or not depending on training, experience, background, and personality. Tutors will need to obtain at least 20 continuing education credits during the course of each year.

Secretary: This person is responsible for updating and maintaining records, sending out informational packets, answering the phone during school hours, and supporting the school in whatever way necessary with a pleasant attitude. This person may also help with lunch and break times for teachers, and answering or responding to messages of attendance and pick up by parents.

Background checks:

All school personnel must be cleared through a background check using Educational Harbor's VECHS identity number: E41040049 or the BEC program through the Florida DOE. Educational Harbor has access to background checks that employees may have had at previous schools in the state of Florida.

Employees with criminal background relating to children or money will not be hired.

Employees with other backgrounds may be hired on a case-by-case basis as determined by the board of directors.

Necessary Training for new staff:

Child abuse training

Ed Harbor safety Training

Ed Harbor teacher training 1

Teacher / Family Relationships / Social Media

One of the main components of Educational Harbor is the personal relationship formed between the teacher and the family. These relationships help drive the student's education, interests, and buy-in by the student and family.

Employees are expected to act in a manner befitting a private Christian school. We also expect our teachers to be able to relate to students to gain their trust, as this makes teaching easier. Teachers are encouraged (on their own time) to watch TV shows and read books recommended by students. Teachers are encouraged to chat with students about popular shows, games, and books during class breaks. Teachers should be wary of popular teen media and if a student is watching or participating in media that is dangerous or clearly out of their age limit, the teacher should speak to the director to determine if it is necessary to discuss the media with the parent. First and foremost, teachers should protect students by forming close bonds with them and their families.

Teachers may also share books, TV shows, music, and movies with students if the media is beneficial, educational, or within the age range of the student. The teacher should consider the family's Christian convictions such as not allowing

magic in their home. On a case-by-case basis, Teachers might obtain phone numbers, email addresses, or Facebook handles of students to better communicate work with them. Teachers should NOT engage in Snap Chat with their students. Personal electronic connects are subject to search and seizure by Educational Harbor in the event of an allegation. Most interactions should be in school, school related, or when the parent is present.

Teachers, when they have time, should engage in conversations with parents. Educational Harbor does not encourage personal outpouring of information from teachers to families. Please keep your personal life to yourself. Be wary of “friending” parents or students on social media as everything you post could be viewed by them. If you are interested in or believe something against our mission or vision and a parent calls you out on it, it may affect your relationship with that family, and, more importantly, Educational Harbor. Teachers also must not disclose information about a student outside of the family. This includes, but is not limited to, behavior and grades of a student outside of the family. Teachers should use care when talking to a parent about their own student in the presence of other students or parents. When necessary, teachers should tell the parent that they will call later. Teachers are not to be alone with parents of the opposite sex at any time. All meetings with parents of the opposite sex should include at least one other teacher. Teachers are not to engage in romantic relationships with parents. Illicit romantic relationships are against our code of conduct as we are a Christian school following Christian values.

Teachers are encouraged to give parents daily and weekly updates depending on the student. This can be done through text, email, or in person during drop off or pick up.

If a teacher has a behavioral issue with a student, please include the director or administrator in formal contact with the parent. This might include CCing them on emails. Please follow the behavior plan listed in the student handbook utilizing the training of Conscious Discipline.

Teachers should avoid driving students whenever possible. If driving a student is necessary, they should not be alone with the teacher. Students should always ride in the back seat, preferably in the middle seat if possible. Teachers should never drive a student without written permission (text, email) from the parent.

Code of Conduct

We are a Christian school following Christian values. Teachers do not have to be “saved” in order to work for Educational Harbor, but they must be willing to uphold the values of the Bible. This means:

- relative modesty as dictated by current culture – we live in Florida, and it does get hot. Sleeveless shirts are permitted, as long as the upper chest is well covered. Shorts are permitted as long as they are fingertip length or longer. Teachers are encouraged to dress professionally as often as possible. We understand that sometimes teachers do yoga, dance, or PE with their students and will dress appropriately for these activities.
- Eliminate the posting of inappropriate or political topics on social media if you plan to “friend” parents. If you do not “friend” parents, then make your page private so that parents and students cannot find you. Any post you make while working for Educational Harbor reflects on our school. Please post accordingly.
- Be willing to discuss both creation and evolution and teach Christian curriculum
- Be able to uphold the teachings of the Bible
- Be careful about discussing students or families in a public setting like a restaurant, you never know who may be listening!
- Do not speak about inappropriate topics to the teenagers. We do not teach “sex ed” and leave that up to the parents. Although we do talk about relationships and friendships, how to choose good friends, etc, we do not cover protective sex or anything like that.
- If a student comes to you with a problem and you are uncomfortable with the topic at hand and don’t know how to respond, refer them to the principal.
- If a student is in danger, you must report it immediately to DCF. You are a mandated reporter. Please also report to the principal or vice principal.

At-Will Workplace / Terminations

Florida is an at-will workplace. This means that employees can leave whenever they want, and Educational harbor has a right to let go of employees whenever they want, for no reason. HOWEVER, we at Educational Harbor would like to uphold the following standards:

- At least a month's notice on both sides preceding a termination or quitting
- An effort to correct a situation before termination or quitting is considered

Performance Evaluations

Performance evaluations will be conducted on a bi-yearly basis. Performance will be casual and include a letter placed into the employee's file that includes positive things the employee did throughout the year, any corrections that still need to be worked on, and whether the employee will be returning to Educational Harbor the following year. Consistent and constant communication will be a cornerstone of our team. This means the principal and vice principal may stop in at any time, check out your room, read your lesson plans, and check out what you've got going on. We will do our best not to interrupt your class, and you are always welcome to ask us anything about what we've observed before or after school. Please check the performance evaluation sheet to see what we are looking for. We focus on whether you are incorporating the 5 tenets, whether you are just "teaching the book" or have included hands-on projects, creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking along with a solid curriculum based on the standards and data. Teacher and staff evaluations can be looked up at www.educationalharbor.com/4teachers2

Training for Leadership

Staff is encouraged to try and climb the leadership ladder as Educational Harbor does have plans to expand within the next few years. Some ways that you can do this are as follows:

- Read books on leadership such as "Lead Like a Pirate," "What Great Principals do Differently"
- Ask for more responsibility. Learning how to take care of administrative tasks is one step toward leadership
- Be open to constructive criticism in teaching
- Model Educational Harbor tenets, philosophy, and ideals
- Offer to help other teachers
- Be flexible, open, and fall in love with what you are doing
- Introductory trainings are power points that can be found online at www.educationalharbor.com/4teachers2

Leave / Vacations

- Employees are encouraged to save vacations for break times. Educational Harbor offers many long weekends for employees to use for vacations. Vacations taken outside this time will be unpaid.
- Employees have up to 5 paid sick/personal days to use during the year. Unused sick days are forfeit since we must pay a substitute teacher to take the spot of teachers. Above 5 sick days will result in unpaid sick days.
- Employees who are or become pregnant will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. We will most likely hold your spot for unpaid maternity leave. This will depend on the time of the maternity leave. Pregnant employees will still only have 5 sick leave days for doctor's appointments. Please schedule as many appointments as possible on Fridays and during breaks.
- Educational Harbor is a very small organization that stretches its budget to provide the highest quality education to students. We do not have extra money to hire substitute teachers, resulting in a strict leave policy.
- Unpaid sick days will be subtracted on the next upcoming paycheck, regardless of how the employee is being paid (10 month, 12 month, or hourly).

Attendance / Pay Checks

- Hourly staff will use “TSheets” to clock in and out on a daily basis
- Hourly staff will fill out a time sheet at the end of each bi-weekly period by Monday of pay week.
- Salaried employees will not be docked for the occasional doctor’s appointment or other appointment. The only time their salary would be reduced is if they had already utilized their 5 full days, resulting in substitutes or other arrangements needing to be made. If tardiness or leaving early becomes excessive, then it will be addressed on an individual basis.

Accident Reporting

- Please fill out an incident report when a student injures himself within your sight. Notify the parents as soon as possible (I usually text). Record the communication in your parent communicator. Always call 911 first.
- Wear gloves when dealing with blood. Act as if all blood is contaminated.
- If the mess is too big or you need assistance, please call Stacey and she will deal with the mess.
- We do not have a custodian, so if you are unwilling or unable to clean something, please notify Stacey. (you are NOT expected to clean up bodily fluids)
- If YOU injure yourself, please fill out an accident report as well for insurance purposes.

Beliefs About Teaching and Learning

- We believe the God created this school to serve the needs of the community, bring students to Christ, and assist us in educating them.
- We believe that each child blossoms at their own pace.
- We believe that the teacher cannot change the child, they can only change their own approach and attitude to inspire the child.
- The ultimate goal is to inspire the child to be a life-long learner, teach them how to collect information and data, disseminate truthful information from false, consider information critically, and communicate it effectively.

Lesson plans and Records

- Teachers and tutors are expected to take notes as to what they cover, who they work with, and what they plan to do.
- Lesson plans should be easily accessible should the teacher be absent. Consider having “sub plans” out in case of emergency.
- Lesson plans will be collected at the end of the year, but could be randomly asked for if there is a discrepancy with a parent.
- Make a record of parent communication. There is a form on the following page to use a guide for parent record keeping.
- Keep attendance. If a student misses too many days, we need to address it.
- Keep a record of student behavior. Keep a copy of the student code of conduct so you can refer to it when necessary.
- Keep some sort of notes on student work or a gradebook. We do not offer formal letter grading for students in grades K-8 (unless they need a formal report card for an outside sport or project). However, there should be notes on whether they are passing their math curriculum, reading on grade level, books read, writing samples, and pictures of projects for science and history.
- Formal letter grades for high school should be based on a rubric created before class starts. If the rubric is adjusted at any time, it must be communicated to students immediately.
- Please refer to the lesson plan training presentation and quiz for more information on how to formulate your lesson plans.

- Teachers should have printed copies of the standards that are used for lesson planning. Twice per year, teachers are expected to ensure that their curriculum aligns with the Florida State Standards for the grade-levels they teach. Minimum subjects are mathematics and English (grades K-8) and ALL classes in high school. It is expected that most standards (shoot for 80% minimum) are taught within the course of the year, and if the standards were not all taught, it was due to prioritizing standards as recommended by administration and/or teaching to mastery on other standards and/or environmental disaster that prevented teaching of all standards (examples include 2 weeks off for hurricane Irma in 2017 and 3 months learning-from-home during spring of 2020 for coronavirus). It is assumed that certain mathematics will meet the minimum curriculum standards (such as Abeka mathematics) and utilizing the scope-and-sequence is sufficient for this task.

Identifying students that need additional assistance

- Sometimes you will find a student in your class that does not have an IEP or 504 or SLP who none-the-less needs additional assistance in understanding material OR that finds the materials too easy and needs to be challenged. .
- Here is a list of services available for students:
 - o We can supplement the curriculum, adjust the pacing, or change the curriculum if necessary
 - o We can assign the student to work with a tutor
 - o We can have the student work with another class for certain subjects
 - o You can tutor the student during academic enrichment
 - o You can adjust the student's small group in the class
 - o You can change the student's seating
- Begin in the classroom adjusting pacing and curriculum to see if you can help the student to be slightly challenged, but not frustrated or bored. Be sure to make note of it in your lesson plans
- If you reach a wall where the student is not making progress and you are unsure of what to do next, then you may begin speaking to colleagues such as the principal, vice principal, or someone whose specialty is ESE. Feel free to go to someone with whom you are most comfortable. **Complete a student academic needs form** (www.educationalharbor.com/4teachers2)
- Go through the student's record and speak with their last teacher if possible. See if it is a pattern or something specific to this year or this topic.
- Speak to the parent about the student's strengths and weaknesses and ask if they have noticed the same thing

Classroom expectations. Teachers should have the following items easily visible and accessible in the room:

1. Usable classroom posters that display concepts being taught in the class
2. Positive messages about learning
3. First Aid Kit (by the door)
4. Map of the building displaying the fire exit (by the door)
5. Student work (or a place to hang it)
6. Examples of exemplary work somewhere in the room that is referenced
7. Books and materials neatly organized
8. Student materials neatly organized and easily accessible by students
9. Lesson plans out and accessible in case of emergencies
10. Teachers are NEVER allowed to approach the building and use committee or ANY church members regarding classroom changes. Only administration can speak to the building and use committee.

Culture of the Classroom

1. Teachers in all grade levels should focus on the atmosphere and culture of the classroom. Create a safe space for students to share ideas and give answers.

- a. First, refrain from allowing students to make fun of anyone, even characters in pictures. Model empathy for all people at all times.
 - b. Use “how would you feel if…” to help students empathize with others
 - c. Utilize Conscious Discipline to create a feeling of unity
 - d. Play games together for bonding, celebrating winners together
 - e. Model celebrating someone’s best effort and illicit other student’s help “Wow, Elizabeth, didn’t Jane’s paragraph about ice cream sound delicious?”
2. Teachers should be open to student suggestions whenever possible. We are a project-based program that highly values playing. Whenever a student could create a project, sing songs, or play a game to learn a concept, the opportunity should be given. Some students do prefer tests, and you can go ahead and offer those as well if you can.
 3. Periodically check the 5 tenets while lesson planning to ensure that you are involving a wide variety of communication techniques, using technology on occasion, allowing students to create projects to solve potential problems, etc…
 4. Use surveys to ask students which activities they enjoy the most and why. Ask for suggestions on the types of activities that they prefer. Once, I even had students build an ancient Greek village on Minecraft for a project – so the possibilities really are endless.

If a student is not making progress / is consistently working quickly or acting out of boredom:

1. Document what changes you have made in class – adjusting curriculum, changing small groups, assisting one-on-one
2. Discuss the issues you are noticing with the parent. Take notes on what the parent says. Chances are they may have said something at the initial action plan meeting. The parent may know what helps the student learn.
3. Fill out a Student Academic Needs form
4. Check previous school records for information.
5. Check the student’s last IOWA scores and Developmental Reading Assessment. If they are new this year, ask administration to complete a DRA for the student. If the deficiency is in math, do Abeka placement tests at lower and lower levels until you find the level the student is currently at.
6. Talk to the administrator about adding the student to the tutoring schedule.
7. Talk to other teachers about possibly pairing the student up with other students who may be at their level.
8. Begin Response to Intervention paperwork: if we cannot help the student, that information could be used at the student’s next school.
9. Begin interventions – see interventions list for ideas. You can also speak to administration about interventions.
10. Record interventions on RTI paperwork and in lesson plans.
11. If, after the year is over, you, the tutor, administration, and other teachers have done our best to help the student make progress, but they are still not making progress, AND the student does not have any formal evaluation, AND the parent is not assisting the student or scheduling formal evaluations, then the student may be dismissed from the program. Educational Harbor is unable to diagnose learning disabilities.
12. Student Growth
 - a. Academic growth: Academic growth is monitored in the following ways:
 - i. Teacher observation
 - ii. IOWA scores
 - iii. Other standardized scores (SAT / ACT / PERT / TABE)
 - iv. Success in other accredited programs (FLVS grades, SCF grades, etc)
 - v. Parent observation
 - b. If not making academic growth, the teacher should fill out the “academic needs form”
 - c. Social / Emotional Growth is monitored in the following ways
 - i. How students interact with teachers

- ii. How students interact with peers
- iii. How students interact with other adults
- iv. How students handle change
- v. Teacher observation
- vi. Parent observation
- d. Students who struggle in this area will be assisted in the following ways
 - i. Assignment to a non-academic teacher for social support
 - ii. Assignment to an older student as a mentor
 - iii. Meeting with the parents regarding support and assistance
 - iv. Assignment to a counselor on campus if possible
 - v. Referral for parents to off-campus counseling
- e. Physical growth and development is monitored in the following ways
 - i. Physicals given by the child's doctor
 - ii. Scoliosis checks in 6th grade
 - iii. Teacher observation
- f. Students who struggle in this area may be assisted in the following ways
 - i. Assignment to PE or Gymnastics or dance depending on the student
 - ii. Assignment to Ms. Jessica for Dianne Craft program
 - iii. Suggestion to parent for occupational therapy

Communicating with parents.

1. Teachers must write four updates per student per year, minimum. This can be a progress report or report card.
2. Teachers must meet with parents at least twice per year to inform parents of updates, goals, and achievements of their student.
3. Teachers are expected to update parents on achievements, behavior, and academic issues as needed.
4. Read the Communications Policy for more details on this matter.

Other Job Duties

1. Evaluate the administrators twice per year using the "administrator observation form." This will help the administrators to adjust their behavior and leadership focus to best help you and the school.
2. Collect and analyze data: Once per quarter, in grades 3-12, administer a practice IOWA test to students in mathematics computation. Grade the tests and turn them into the principal, who will analyze school strengths and weaknesses. Your job is to look at classroom strengths and weaknesses in order to direct your teaching.
3. Once per quarter, collect writing samples from students and have them compare their work to the writing rubric. This will help students analyze their own writing strengths and weaknesses and can help you as the teacher to decide what to focus on in writing. Always prioritize writing in this way: Ideas and organization of the paper, grammar / sentence structure / readability, creativity and voice.
4. Professional development / Continuous Improvement: Identify your strengths and weaknesses and choose professional development to support what you need to become a better teacher. Request permission to complete the professional development by completing a "Professional Development Request." Every teacher needs 20 CEUs of professional development per year. Professional Development must be aligned with our Mission, Tenets, and Philosophy. Professional development can be completed in a variety of ways:
 1. Books and responses
 2. Workshops through the Homeschool Network
 3. Workshops through Manatee County
 4. Workshops through Step Up for Students

5. Workshops through FCCPSA or affiliates
 6. Online classes
 7. College courses
5. Surveying students periodically to assess classroom atmosphere, obtain student suggestions, and improve lesson planning
 6. Filling out observations and surveys about administration
 7. Attend staff meetings as requested. Teachers are paid an extra half hour per week to attend meetings, regardless of whether there is a meeting that week or not.

Budget Allocations

1. Bi-Annually, the stock room will be filled with paper, pencils, and other office supplies you might need. Please check the stock room before purchasing more items. If you do not see it in the stock room, you will need to purchase it with your reloadable card.
2. Each teacher will receive a reloadable gift card that will be filled when funds are available based on student enrollment. This is for materials that you may need immediately: consumable science materials, crafting materials, poster board, things like this.
3. The school will purchase and provide purchase ink in bulk.
4. All curriculum, student and teacher workbooks, textbooks, teacher keys etc, will be ordered through the school. Email the request form that can be found at www.educationalharbor.com/4teachers2 to both the principal (stacey@educationalharbor.com) and the accountant (tina@educationalharbor.com) along with the date you need the books by.
5. This will be reviewed by the principal to make sure we do not already own the item and the accountant to find the best way to purchase it.
6. Requests for Technology need to be written on a “Technology Request” form and turned into the principal.
7. We have most furniture you might need. Ask before you purchase furniture. You can also text parents as sometimes families have extra desks, chairs, and couches that they are no longer using. Furniture may not be an allotted purchase and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
8. Teachers are responsible for tracking approximately how much is spent on each of their students. We need to know all the books purchased and how much books were, student went on field trips, whether the student gets one-on-one or small group tutoring, and what enrichment classes the student is in. They should use the provided form and keep their records.
9. There will be no reimbursements for purchases made on personal debit cards, or in cash, by the teacher under any circumstance.

Please complete and return to the principal.

I _____, have read and understand the Employee Handbook, the Communications Policies, and Code of Ethics that guide Educational Harbor.

Teacher Signature

Admin Signature

Date