



## **Personnel Handbook**

**2025/2026**  
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**PODER Academy  
2201 Morrie Drive  
Cheyenne, Wyoming, 82001**

**PODER Academy Secondary School  
1100 Richardson Court  
Cheyenne, WY 82001**

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## **Introduction**

The following Personnel Handbook will set forth internal policies related to employees at PODER / P.A.S.S. (Poder Academy Secondary School) and will clearly outline steps for the amicable and timely resolution of employment disputes. The policies and procedures set forth herein may be amended at any time in relation to district policy and/or state and federal law and are not intended to supersede the provisions of employment contracts.

All employees at PODER / P.A.S.S are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the highest standards of personal character and professionalism, recognizing that their interactions with children, parents, prospective parents, co-workers, and the community reflect on the institution as a whole.

## **Equal Opportunity Policy**

PODER / P.A.S.S will seek out the highest qualified personnel without regard to race, age, creed, national or ethnic origin, marital status, gender, gender expression, religious belief, financial status, disability, sexual preference or military status. Discrimination against an employee or Board member regarding any matter related to employment or Board membership will not be permitted. The school will keep records in accordance with the provisions contained in IRS Revenue Procedure 75-50, and will promote equal opportunity in the promotion of all employees in accordance with district, state and federal policy.

## **Hiring**

PODER / P.A.S.S is a Federal 501 (c)(3) non-profit corporation with independent operating authority. Employees at PODER / P.A.S.S are not considered employees of Laramie County School District 1 and shall not be deemed members of any collective bargaining unit and/or bargaining agreement between the school district and its employees.

As a prerequisite of employment, all employees will be required to submit **fingerprints** and obtain criminal background clearances in accordance with Wyoming State law. Information provided by applicants in relation to criminal and/or employment history will be subject to verification. Falsification of such information will constitute grounds for refusal to hire, or immediate termination. The school will reimburse the cost of the criminal background check. Employees who were issued a teaching certificate or a substitute permit by the Wyoming Professional Teaching Standards Board after July 1, 1996, will not be required to undergo the background check since s/he went through that process in obtaining the certificate or permit.

As a condition of employment, all employees are required to submit a **healthcare enrollment** form (or Waiver of Coverage), an I-9, a W2, and a retirement registration form. These forms will be made available upon hire and should be submitted to the Office Administrator. Employees will be held responsible to ensure that all employment information (including IRS tax information) is current and accurate. Failure to do so may result in a payroll delay.

## **Terms of Employment**

*Regular exempt full-time* employees are paid on a salary basis and do not receive overtime pay. Employees in this category will be eligible to receive benefits related to retirement and healthcare and will be entitled to take paid or unpaid leave, subject to the terms and conditions described below.

*Hourly full-time* employees are those whose regular scheduled workweek includes at least 30 hours, and who are paid on an hourly basis. Employees in this category will also be eligible to receive benefits related to retirement and healthcare but will not be entitled to take paid or unpaid leave, unless otherwise stated in the employment contract.

*Part-time* employees are those whose regularly scheduled work week includes less than 30 hours. Employees in this category will not be eligible to receive benefits related to healthcare and will not be entitled to take paid or unpaid leave, unless otherwise stated in the employment contract. They will be eligible for retirement benefits.

Each employment contract is based on a number of contract days along with a daily rate. The daily rate is calculated by dividing the salary by the number of contract days. All leave days or 2-hour passes that exceed the allotted number set forth in the employment contract shall be deducted from the daily rate. Monthly paychecks may fluctuate in accordance with the daily rate and/or use of short-term disability. Any employee using short term disability, or whose contract is terminated prior to completion, shall meet with the Office Administrator and Principal within 10 days of their final day of service to discuss any outstanding payments due to the employee.

The number of contract days set forth in each employment agreement may exceed the total number of school days. The school calendar and/or specific hours of operation are subject to adjustment by the Administrative team. All full-time employees will be required to work a minimum of eight hours on full days (early-release days may differ), not including lunch breaks. All full time employees will be entitled to a minimum of thirty minutes for lunch break each day that will not be considered working hours.

On certain half days, employees may be required to attend professional development activities scheduled during working hours. Some professional development activities may require after-hours travel and lodging. Employees will be given advance notice of such an event so arrangements can be made.

The Administrative team retains the right to adjust any **operational terms** of employment that are not outlined in the employment agreement. Such operational terms may relate to room assignments, daily schedule, grade level assignments for teachers, field trip supervision duties, parent communication, and/or light manual labor required to move school inventory.

### ***Overtime/Compensatory Time off***

Regular full time employees are considered **exempt** as defined by law and are thereby not entitled to receive overtime pay and/or compensatory time off for additional hours worked. All hourly employees are considered non-exempt as defined by law and are eligible to receive overtime pay and/or compensatory time off for any hours worked in excess of 8 hours a day, or 40 hours a week. Employees may not work more than 8 hours in any day or more than 40 hours in any week unless express approval has been given by the Principal.

### ***Termination of Employment***

The Administrative team reserves the right to terminate any employment position in accordance with the terms outlined in the employment contract, and pursuant to district, state and federal policy. Eligibility for unemployment benefits are outlined by The Department of Workforce Services' Unemployment Insurance Program that will pay temporary benefits to workers who have lost their job through no fault of their own. For more information on eligibility and/or claim and payments, visit <http://wyomingworkforce.org>.

### ***Resignation***

Employees may resign at any time, unless otherwise stated in the employment contract, by giving written notice to the Principal at least two weeks prior to the desired resignation date. A notice of resignation received with less than two weeks of notice will reflect negatively on professionalism and will be noted in future letters of recommendation.

### **Professionalism**

#### ***Personal Activities***

Personal activities such as internet usage, personal email and phone calls, or usage of other technology unrelated to work should be limited to lunch breaks, unless prior approval is given by the Administrative team. PODER / P.A.S.S. email accounts, cellphones, and classroom technology should be dedicated exclusively to school business. In addition to a break for lunch, the teaching staff will be given a planning period each day. This time should be spent on preparations related to the day's lesson plan and/or classroom activities, grading, peer observation, etc. Planning periods should not be used as personal time.

#### ***Punctuality***

All teaching staff should arrive at school no later than 7:45am to prepare for classroom activity and should remain at school at least 15 minutes after dismissal. All other employees should arrive at least 15 minutes before start-time. Employees who fail to meet these expectations, and who do not otherwise receive clearance from the Principal, will be given a warning that will be kept in the employee's file. Multiple warnings may lead to termination at the discretion of the Principal.

### ***Professional Attire***

Employees are expected to wear professional attire for all school functions except when specifically indicated by the Principal. All school staff will be required to wear college related attire on Thursdays, and PODER / P.A.S.S. related attire on Fridays. Jeans are permitted on Thursdays and Fridays unless otherwise directed by the Principal. See Appendix A for a description of the dress code.

### ***Adult language***

Employees should refrain from conversations that are adult in nature whenever students are present. Never assume that students do not understand the nature of your conversation or are not listening, even when speaking ‘in code’ or in a whisper. Kids and teens pick up on details very keenly so keep it clean! Employees should address all personal conflicts outside of school or during breaks.

### **Student Safety**

#### ***Dismissal***

Teachers will be held responsible for each student on their roster until a parent/guardian or authorized adult has arrived for pick-up. During dismissal, all students should remain with their teacher in a quiet and orderly fashion with minimal horseplay. Students should always notify their teacher before leaving, and teachers should make eye contact with the person their students leave with.

The Office Manager and/or Principal will communicate with teachers as to who is authorized for the pick-up of each student. If in doubt about who is authorized, teachers should retain the student and consult with the Administrative team. Never feel pressured to let students go with someone you are unfamiliar with.

#### ***Transitions***

Various transitions will occur each day when students are entering and/or leaving a classroom for recess, lunch, specials, field trips, fire drills, or other occasions. Teachers should not leave the classroom until all students have left. Teachers are expected to be back in the classroom when students return. Late transitions will cut into other lunch breaks and planning periods, so every effort should be made by Specials teachers and/or support staff at recess to get students in and out of classrooms at the scheduled time.

**NEVER leave students in a classroom unattended.** If need be, call another member of the school staff to assist if you need to step out for any reason. Teachers should not remain out of the classroom for more than five minutes at a time, unless otherwise cleared by the Administrative team.

### ***Hallway behavior***

All students are expected to remain silent in the hallways. Any student who is talking and/or fidgeting with other students should be corrected immediately. Any student who is not in a direct route to and from the classroom should be addressed. This is done to minimize the excessive horseplay that can often lead to **bullying**. A high level of structure and professionalism is an expectation that should remain consistent throughout the school day.

### ***Bathroom breaks***

Bathroom breaks are one of the most common times when bullying, vandalizing and/or other mischief occurs. Teachers need to be cognizant as to who is gone and for how long. Accordingly, teachers are expected to develop a system for tracking bathroom breaks. Students should be given ample opportunity to leave for restroom breaks within a strict scope of time. Students who abuse this privilege should be monitored more closely and reported to the Principal.

### **Family Contract & Code of Conduct**

Students, parents, and teachers will sign a Student/ *Family Contract* prior to the start of classes that will clearly outline the expectations contained in the *Code of Conduct*. The purpose of this contract is to bring absolute clarity to the expectations and consequences of student behavior so that all parties involved can be held accountable to honor their role in the total commitment. Miscommunication should never be an excuse for a violation of these principles.

While a clear and strict *Code of Conduct* will serve to outline what NOT to do, it is equally critical that school personnel build a student culture that rewards and encourages *positive* behavior. As part of professional development, all teachers and school personnel should establish a series of creative methods to use positive reinforcement, student incentives and praise in order to reward positive behavior.

Last but not least, an intense emphasis should be placed on individual responsibility. Students will be held accountable to adhere to all expectations at PODER / P.A.S.S. regardless of the circumstances at school or at home. Our goal is to develop a no-excuses work ethic in students from the earliest of years that we believe will serve them well in their academic endeavors, and in the workforce at-large.

### **Leave & School Closure**

Regular full-time employees are entitled to a set number of paid leave days as stipulated in each employment contract. There are eight categories of Employee Leave:

#### ***1. Holiday Leave***

Holidays are designated on the school academic calendar, in addition to summer, winter and spring breaks. Regular full-time employees will be eligible for paid holidays and breaks. Administrative staff vacation schedules may differ from instructional staff. Holiday and

vacation schedules are subject to adjustment by the Administrative team.

## **2. Personal Leave**

Regular full-time employees may take personal leave at any time with prior approval from the Principal. Requests for personal leave may not be approved without prior notice. Instructional staff must make every reasonable attempt to take personal leave when the use of such does not conflict with classroom instruction time. After 3 years of employment, each employee will be given 2 additional days of personal leave for a maximum of 6.

These days can be used as sick days and/or personal days, or any combination thereof. The employee must give sufficient prior notice to the Principal.

- Absences of 2 hours or less will be given a pass regardless of the circumstances. Employees will be given a maximum of 6 passes through the course of the school year. After these passes are exhausted, any leave under 4 hours will be deemed a half day of personal leave. Unused passes are not reimbursed. *\*An exception related to pregnancy will be subject to approval by the Administrative team and verification from a medical professional may be requested.*
- Absences of 2-4 hours will be deemed a half-day of personal leave.
- Absences of more than 4 hours will be deemed a full day of leave.

At the end of the school year, any employee who has not used all of their personal days will be paid for unused days in the July paycheck. Any employee who exceeds the allotted personal days may be subject to a write-up from the Principal.

## **3. Sick Leave**

Regular full-time employees are allotted three days of sick leave, in addition to personal leave. Once sick leave is exhausted, personal days may be used in lieu of sick leave.

\* Deductions from payroll will be made for all personal and/or sick leave taken in excess of the allotted number as set forth above, to be deducted from the following paycheck.

## **4. Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)**

Regular full-time employees will be entitled to an unpaid, job protected leave of absence (Maximum of twelve workweeks in a 12-month period) for the following reasons:

- For the birth and care of the newborn child of an employee;
- For placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To care for an immediate family member (i.e., spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or
- To take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition



## **5. FMLA-Related Short-Term Disability**

Employees may be eligible for 25% of their monthly pay while on Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) as set forth above for a maximum of 3 months. Employees must have completed 12 months of employment to be eligible.

Employees may request short-term disability by providing the Principal with a written notice specifying one of the reasons outlined above in the FMLA. A doctor's certificate stating the nature of the disability, and the expected date of return to work, may be requested by the Administrative team.

## **6. Non-FMLA Medical Leave of Absence**

A non-FMLA medical leave of absence may be granted for a period of up to one month, but may be extended with the approval of the Principal on a month-to-month basis for a maximum of twelve (12) work weeks. An employee wishing to extend a medical leave of absence must submit to the Principal a written request prior to the beginning of each month, and a certificate of continued disability may be requested. PODER / P.A.S.S. will continue to provide health insurance coverage for any employee on an authorized medical leave.

Employees on FMLA and Non-FMLA related medical leave of absence must provide PODER / P.A.S.S. with at least one week's written notice of intent to return to work and must provide a doctor's certificate that the employee is fit to return to work. The school reserves the right to require a medical examination by a physician of the school's choice prior to an employee's resumption of duties.

PODER / P.A.S.S. will make a reasonable effort to return an employee on medical leave of absence to the same or similar job as held prior to the leave upon his/her return to work. An employee who does not return to work after a medical leave will be deemed to have resigned at the date on which the leave ended.

## **7. Jury Duty**

If jury duty occurs during operating hours, regular full time employees will receive paid leave for the duration of the service. Regular *hourly* employees may be eligible for paid leave for the first five (5) days of service, subject to the discretion of the Principal. An employee who is summoned for jury duty must provide a copy of the summons to the Principal upon receipt, and must inform the Principal immediately if he/she is selected for a jury.

Regular full-time employees who are summoned for jury duty shall make a reasonable effort to inform the court of any conflict with the school's operating schedule.

## **8. Bereavement Leave**

Regular full-time employees are eligible for 3 days of paid bereavement leave in the event of a death to the employee's parent or step-parent, child or step-child, sibling or step-sibling, or married spouse. Requests may be subject to verification and must be used for purposes of bereavement and/or funeral arrangements.

## **Weather Days and Other Closures**

PODER / P.A.S.S. may be closed due to inclement weather or other situations from time to time. At the discretion of the Principal, employees may be required to report without additional pay to make up for lost contract days for school closure due to inclement weather or other reasons. Employees have a duty to make adequate preparations for potentially hazardous road conditions, and will be subject to the leave policy if unable to report when school is in session at the discretion of the Principal.

## **Benefits**

### ***Medical Insurance***

PODER / P.A.S.S. will offer one or more medical insurance plans to its employees. Employees must work a minimum of 60 days before insurance is to take effect. The Administrative team will select the overall healthcare plans. Any employee who wishes to waive any of the insurance benefits offered by PODER / P.A.S.S. must submit a waiver in writing to the Office Administrator. Employees will be charged \$50 a month out of their paycheck unless they opt out of the school provided insurance.

### ***Workers' Compensation Insurance***

Any employee who suffers an injury in the course of his or her employment must file a report with the State of Wyoming Workforce Services and the Office Administrator immediately after any injury occurs. The employee is responsible for filing any other necessary forms, applications, and/or other information as required by applicable government policies.

### ***Retirement***

PODER / P.A.S.S. participate in the Wyoming Retirement System, and all employees are eligible for membership in these systems. The Academy will assume all obligations of participating employers as determined by the system, including liabilities for employer payments and recordkeeping.

### ***Unemployment Insurance***

PODER / P.A.S.S. will contribute to the Unemployment Compensation plan administered by the State of Wyoming.

### ***Changes to Benefits***

PODER / P.A.S.S. reserves the right to change the benefits offered to employees. Any such changes will take place at the expiration of the employment contract, and employees will be notified of any change in benefits.

## **Reimbursements**

### ***Travel***

Employees are eligible for reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred while engaged in school related travel approved, in advance, by the Principal. The school will reimburse at the IRS established rate for school related travel that is paid by the employee. Employees going out of town for a school endorsed activity will be reimbursed mileage and be given extra payment based on the extra pay scale.

### ***Extra Pay Scale***

Employees are eligible for extra pay for duties that fall outside their normal contract days and times. Employees will make \$25/hour for duties performed for less than 6 hours that do not require planning. Employees will make \$35/hour for duties performed for less than 6 hours that require planning. Employees will make \$300 for duties that last 6-8 hours. Employees will make \$375 for duties that go longer than 8 hours in a day. Employees will make \$425 for duties that require them to stay overnight.

### ***Personal Telephone Calls***

Personal long-distance telephone calls made from any PODER / P.A.S.S. telephone is strictly prohibited without approval of the Principal. Employees are required to reimburse the school for costs for any personal phone calls billed to the school.

### ***Other Reimbursements***

Employees will be reimbursed for expenditures made on behalf of PODER / P.A.S.S. provided that such expenditures have been approved *in advance* by the Principal or Office Administrator.

### ***School Credit Cards***

An employee who is authorized to use a school credit card may not charge personal expenses of any kind. Staff members must fill out the credit card authorization form ahead of time to be signed by the Office Administrator and CEO prior to receiving the card. Staff members must return the card and must provide to the Office Administrator a timely accounting of charges made on behalf of PODER / P.A.S.S., including all necessary receipts and justification for such expenditures.

## **Employee Evaluations**

### ***Employee Evaluations***

Employees will be observed both formally and informally, announced and unannounced, on an ongoing basis by the Principal. Formal evaluations shall be conducted annually on a date established by the Principal. These evaluations will be maintained in the personnel file for each employee. Employees will be permitted to submit responses and self-evaluations to their personnel file if they choose to do so.

### ***Employee Write Ups***

Employees that receive three or more write ups during their employment may be subject to termination at the discretion of the Admin Team.

## **Grievance Procedure**

### ***Grievance Procedure***

Any employee with a grievance towards another employee should reach out and attempt to resolve the conflict directly with the other party. If the issue is still not resolved, any employee wishing to make a formal grievance about a procedure, action, or directive of another employee or supervisor should notify the Principal in writing, as soon as possible after the event giving rise to the complaint, and not more than five days after the issue first arose. The Principal will be the investigator and final arbiter of all such grievances and respond in writing in a timely manner. If the complaint involves a procedure, action, or

directive of the Principal, an employee may file a written complaint with the COO or Office Administrator. In such instances, the COO and Office Administrator will jointly be the investigator and final arbiter of the complaint. A request for an appeal of the COO / Office Administrator's decision must be made in writing to the CEO within 5 days of receiving the written decision. A request for an appeal of the CEO's decision must be made in writing to the Board of Directors within 5 days of receiving the written decision. All personnel matters by the Board may be conducted in a closed executive session as set forth in the Open Meetings Act.

### **Salary Schedule**

Salary increases for teachers, support staff, and office staff will be determined by the Administrative team. Salary increases for Administrative team members will be determined by the CEO. Salary increases for the CEO will be determined by PODER / P.A.S.S. Board of Directors. Salary increases are based on numerous budget and performance-based factors that include standardized test scores, employee evaluations, professionalism, personal attitude, stakeholder surveys, and overall teamwork. An end-of-the-year *bonus* may also be awarded to teachers based on performance and standardized test scores as outlined in each employment contract.

#### **Salary increase schedule effective SY 24'-25':**

- First 3 years of employment: maximum of 7.5%
- Years 4-6 of employment: maximum of 5.5%
- Years 7-9 of employment: maximum of 3.5%
- Years 10 and beyond of employment: maximum of 1.5%

#### **Salary Caps:**

All staff requiring a certification/specialization – \$75,000

Office Managers- \$55,000

Facility Managers - \$53,000

Paraprofessionals - \$48,000

Salaries for staff are subject to adjustment by the Administrative team for inflation and/or extenuating circumstances.

## **Miscellaneous**

### ***Confidentiality***

Employees are required to maintain the confidentiality of personnel and student records at all times in accordance with the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act and/or other relevant state and federal policy. All requests for personnel and/or student records should be directed to the Administrative team, even if it's a parent requesting records on behalf of their own child. (i.e. exit tickets, assessments, medical records, etc...) We also strongly discourage employees from sharing personal financial information related to salary, hourly rate, salary increases, reprimands, employment contract details, and/or medical information.

### ***Personnel Inquiries***

Teachers and supporting staff are not authorized to respond either verbally or in writing to personnel inquiries about any employee. All inquiries should be directed to the Administrative team, who will handle such requests in accordance with state and federal law.

### ***Parent communication***

Teachers and/or support staff are not authorized to excuse student absences or tardiness, and should limit their communication with parents to academic and/or disciplinary issues regarding students of that parent only. Parents are not permitted to advocate on behalf of other students who are not their children.

### ***Return of Materials***

An employee who is terminated or who resigns must return all curricular material, student work, office keys, identification, security cards and codes, and office materials and supplies in such employee's possession to the Principal. No information or copies of information, including but in no way limited to files, memos, computer-stored items, rosters, or other similar information, may be taken by such employee without the express permission of the COO.

### ***Legal Custody***

In some cases, one or both parents of a student may *not* have legal custody. Teachers will be apprised as to who is permitted to pick up each student and who is not. All custody issues should be directed to the Administrative team. Teachers should make every effort to get to know parents/guardians as soon as possible for identification purposes. **Any individual that does not have legal custody of a child on record in the office, is not permitted to leave with a student.**

### ***Ban on Acceptance Of Gifts***

School employees are not permitted to accept gifts of any kind of a value exceeding fifty dollars (\$100.00) -- including but not limited to money, goods, food, entertainment, or services -- directly or indirectly from: (a) individuals, schools, or companies serving as vendors or potential vendors for this school; (b) elected officials or their representatives; (c) candidates for public office or their representatives; or (d) political party officials or their representatives, unless authorized by the Principal. Exceptions will only be made in the case of a gift intended for and used by PODER and P.A.S.S.. Offers of gifts in excess of \$100.00, even when refused, must be communicated immediately by the employee receiving such an offer to the Administrative team.

### ***Change in Personnel Information***

Employees must notify the Principal and/or Office Administrator immediately of any change in name, family status, address, telephone number, or other relevant personnel information.

### ***Examination of Personnel Files***

An employee may examine his/her personnel file at any time, but only with approval from the Administrative team. An employee may take written notes about the contents of the file, and may add comments for inclusion in the file at any time. No personnel file is to be removed from the office.

### ***Intellectual Property***

Copyrights, patents or other intellectual property created by any employee in the course of his/her employment, and any royalties or similar payments deriving therefrom, are the property of PODER and P.A.S.S.

### ***Gymnasium Usage***

Administrators are allowed to use the gymnasium at any time when not in use and may include any immediate family members to use the gymnasium as well. All other employees must fill out a facility usage form and it must be approved by the Office Administrator before using the gymnasium and may only bring immediate family members. PODER / P.A.S.S. is not liable for any injuries or lost items that may result during the usage of the gymnasium. Administrators and employees are responsible for any and all damage that occurs while using the gymnasium. No food or beverages (besides water) are allowed in the gymnasium and the gymnasium should only be used for recreational purposes.

## **Sexual Harassment / Discrimination Reporting (Title IX)**

PODER / P.A.S.S. will promote respect and civility for all students, staff, volunteers, and visitors. The school does not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment. Consistent with our mission, vision and values, the schools will respond to all reports of sexual misconduct, civil rights discrimination, and workplace misconduct in the most judicious, prompt, and equitable manner.

### **Who may file a complaint?**

Any person can report misconduct regardless of whether the person is the alleged victim. However, only the Complainant (or parent/guardian) may file a formal complaint. Complaints may be submitted in writing or verbally to the school's Title IX coordinator.

### **What is considered sexual harassment?**

Conduct is considered sexual harassment if it's unwelcome, based on a person's sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, and interferes with that person's ability to do his or her job, or with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from a school's educational program.

Sexual harassment as defined by Title IX includes any of three types of misconduct:

1) **Quid pro quo harassment** - Asking for sexual favors of some kind in exchange for special treatment on the job, in the classroom, etc or ill-treatment if the victim will not consent to sexual favors.

2) **Hostile Work Environment** - Unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a person equal educational access.

3) Any instance of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

### **What happens when a complaint is filed?**

After receiving an incident report, the Title IX coordinator will contact the complainant to offer supportive measures and will then conduct an assessment within 72 hours to determine if an investigation should proceed. Investigations must be prompt, fair, and impartial.

Once an investigation is initiated, the following steps will occur...

- The Title IX Coordinator will appoint an Investigator. The Investigator will then send a Notice of Investigation to both parties.
- The Investigator will have an initial meeting with the complainant to:
  - Review the incident report
  - Collect or request all relevant evidence and documents
  - Review rights and options with respect to the incident reported
  - Review relevant interim supportive measures
- The Investigator will then schedule an initial meeting with the person(s) accused to review the same four points outlined above.
- The Investigator will meet with witness(es) who have direct knowledge of events and review any relevant documentation.
- The Investigator will draft a written report to summarize the allegations, relevant evidence, findings, and outcomes. External resources may be used to assist in preparation of the written report including anyone trained in Title IX or sexual harassment/discrimination proceedings. The Investigator will then meet with the Title IX coordinator to review the report. The Investigator may in certain cases seek to resolve the matter informally if both parties agree.
- The Investigator will provide the report to both parties for review with 10 calendar days for response.
- After both parties have an opportunity to respond, the Investigator will make any revisions and then send the final report to a **separate decision-maker** who will issue a written final determination at the end of 10 calendar days.
- The final determination shall include the following:
  - Description of alleged violations (including relevant policies violated)
  - Summary of findings of fact and rationale supporting the determination
  - Description of sanctions imposed on the respondent
  - Remedies to be provided to the complainant designed to restore or preserve access to the education program or activity
  - Procedures/timelines for any appeal
- At the conclusion of the investigation, the Investigator will provide all documentation, records, notes, evidence, and reports to the Title IX Coordinator to

retain for 7 years.

\* The preponderance of the evidence standard will be used for all formal complaints of sexual harassment.

### **Confidentiality**

Interviews, allegations, statements, and identities will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible as allowed by law. However, PODER / PASS will not allow the goal of confidentiality to be a deterrent to an effective investigation.

### **Corrective Action**

A timely resolution of each complaint will be reached and communicated to the employee. Appropriate corrective action, up to and including termination, will be taken promptly against any employee found to be engaging in discrimination and/or harassment. The corrective action issued will be proportional to the severity of the conduct. The alleged harasser's employment history and any similar complaints of prior unlawful discrimination and/or harassment will be taken into consideration.

### **Retaliation**

PODER / PASS prohibits retaliation of any kind against employees, who, in good faith, report harassment and/or discrimination or assist in investigating such complaints. If an employee feels he/she has been subjected to any form of retaliation, the employee should report that conduct to a Title IX Coordinator and/or Investigator.

### **To file an Appeal:**

Any party can request an appeal of the final determination on the following basis:

- Procedural integrity that affected the outcome of the matter
- Newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter
- Conflict of interest or bias, which affected the outcome of the matter

An appeals officer shall be separate from the Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, and Decision maker. Parties will have 10 days to file a written appeal. If an appeal is filed, the determination will be final after the decision is made in the appeals process. If an appeal is not filed, the original determination will be final after 10 days.

### **Responsible Employees:**

All employees have a duty to report sexual misconduct and are required by law to notify the school's designated Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will direct victims to appropriate resources for emotional support and or provide information on available options for resolution. Reports from PODER Academy or PODER Secondary can be routed to either designated Title IX Coordinator listed below:

- **Title IX Coordinators:** COO



- **Designated Investigator:** Office and Building Administrator
- **Decision-Maker** - Principal of opposite school
- **Appeals Officer** - Separate independent mediator assigned by the Title IX Coordinator

### **Formal Complaint Form**

If you believe you have been a victim of misconduct related to sexual harassment and/or discrimination, please complete the Incident Report Form found on the website ([www.poderacademy.com](http://www.poderacademy.com)) and submit it to a Title IX Coordinator via email or in person.

A Title IX claim does not preclude a complainant from filing under Title VI or with the Office of Civil Rights. Staff & students are encouraged to report possible crimes to law enforcement. Please be advised that criminal processes are independent of the schools. Even when a report has been made to law enforcement, employees are required to make a report to the Title IX Coordinator.

### **Outside Contractors**

PODER / P.A.S.S. will take similar measures through the actual employer of contractors whose employees have been reported for sexual harassment. If the contractor is not responsive in investigating and resolving the matter, PODER / P.A.S.S. will prohibit the offending employee(s) from any involvement with the school or may choose to terminate the contract.

### **Mandatory Reporting**

Under Wyoming law, any person who knows of, or has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, or who observes any child being subjected to conditions or circumstances that would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, is required to report that abuse to the school social worker, or to a member of the Admin team, who will then make a report to the appropriate agency. The school is not required to notify parents when such a report is made.

## **Appendix A: PODER / P.A.S.S. Dress Code**

A professional appearance is an important part of the school's mission as we look to project ourselves to the students and community in a positive manner. The following overview will set forth some general guidelines for appropriate dress. However, the guidelines are not all inclusive, and employees will be held responsible for exercising their own best judgment when it comes to professionalism.

Clothing that is too revealing (i.e. your back, your chest, your feet, your stomach or your undergarments) is generally not appropriate for school. Employees should make every effort to avoid torn, dirty, frayed, and wrinkled items of clothing, and any clothing that has words, terms or pictures is generally discouraged.

Monday through Wednesday requires business casual dress. Business casual is a term used to describe a type of dress that is a little more casual than traditional business wear. Many employers adopt this dress code to allow employees to feel more comfortable while maintaining a professional appearance.

### **Guidelines for business casual dress**

- *Hats* – Hats and ball caps are inappropriate. Head covers required for religious and/or cultural purposes may be exempt, subject to approval from the Principal.
- *Footwear* – Dress heels or hard-sole shoes, deck-type shoes, loafers, flats, dress boots and walking shoes are appropriate. Flip-flops, slippers, hiking boots, sneakers and overly flashy athletic shoes are not appropriate. Shoes should be clean and polished (not scuffed). \*Please remember that schools are more active than the typical office environment. Dress heels may become problematic and uncomfortable over the span of a day on your feet.
- *Slacks, pants and suit pants* – Generally slacks that are wool, flannel, corduroy, linen, cotton (similar to Dockers or khakis) or nice-looking capris (for women) are acceptable. Inappropriate: jeans, sweatpants, leather pants, cargo pants, short shorts, leggings, biking shorts, exercise pants and overalls.
- *Skirts, dresses and skirted suits* – Casual dresses and skirts of a length that let you sit comfortably in public are fine (usually skirts should fall to the knee). Short, tight skirts, miniskirts, beach or sun dresses and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate for school.
- *Shirts, tops, jackets and blouses* – Casual button-down oxford shirts, dress shirts, and sweaters are acceptable. Basic white and chambray are good colors. For women, sweater sets are also fine. Inappropriate tops: tank tops, midriff tops, halter tops or shirts with offensive graphics (logos, pictures, slogans) or sweatshirts.
- *Accessories (jewelry, makeup, perfume or cologne, scarves, belts)* – Generally accessories should be conservative and in good taste. Wear perfume and cologne sparingly since some people are allergic.

**Thursdays and Fridays** have been declared dress down days. On these days, jeans and tennis shoes are permitted. Employees are not permitted to wear a college related jersey or any tops with cut off sleeves. College related t shirts, sweatshirts, polos, hoodies, or sweaters are permitted. On Fridays, employees are required to wear PODER tops.

No dress code can cover all contingencies. Please ask the Principal or Office Administrator if you are uncertain about what is acceptable. If clothing fails to meet these standards as determined by the Principal or Office Administrator, the employee will be asked not to wear the inappropriate item to work again. If the problem persists, the employee may be sent home to change clothes and will receive a verbal warning for the first offense. All other policies about personal time use will apply. Progressive disciplinary action will be applied if dress code violations continue.