

Golden Apple Accelerators Program

Policies and Procedures Handbook



Golden Apple

April 2024

Welcome to the Golden Apple Accelerators Program

Congratulations on your journey to become a licensed teacher through the Golden Apple Accelerators Program. We have high expectations for you as we ensure that you are well-prepared to help students achieve their potential.

This handbook is intended to serve as both a guide and a resource, providing you with a clear understanding of the policies and procedures of the Golden Apple Accelerators Program. As a Golden Apple Accelerator, you are dedicated to becoming an exemplary teacher in a partner school district in Illinois for a minimum of four years. This handbook details the basic tenets and requirements of the program.

We expect to prepare you to positively and significantly impact the lives of students across Illinois. We thank you for aspiring to this high level of service, where students need you the most.

As you realize your dreams, you will provide your future students the opportunity to realize theirs, too.

Alan Mather
President

Alicia Winckler
Chief Executive Officer



For more information on Golden Apple, please visit www.goldenapple.org

Policy and Procedures Not a Contract

The policies and procedures described in this Handbook do not constitute contractual or other guarantees but instead are there to help Accelerators generally understand The Golden Apple Foundation's expectations of them. There are a variety of other expectations of Accelerators not found in this Handbook, including those in your individual Accelerator Contract.

The Golden Apple Foundation reserves the right to amend, update, or revise these policies and procedures as the need may arise without prior notice to Accelerators. We typically will, however, inform Accelerators when revisions have occurred as soon as practicable thereafter, if not before. Unless otherwise specified, all Accelerators in pursuance of teacher licensure, as well as Accelerators in the process of fulfilling the teaching commitment, are subject to the most recent policies and procedures as amended.

Furthermore, Accelerators, in no event, shall be deemed to be employees of The Golden Apple Foundation or authorized to formally represent it without explicit written permission.

Finally, compliance with the Handbook is a requirement, but it does not guarantee continued participation in the Accelerators Program.

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Mission Statement, History, and Purpose of Accelerators Program

Mission Statement

At Golden Apple, our mission is to inspire, develop, and support teacher and school leader excellence, especially in schools-of-need. Since the critical contributor to student achievement is the quality of the teacher in the classroom, Golden Apple provides exceptional, evidence-based preparation and development for teachers at all stages of their careers. Through our innovative programs, resources, and mentorship, we work to transform teachers and teaching, enriching both student and teacher lives.

History

Founded in 1985, Golden Apple strives to advance the teaching profession at crucial phases of educators' careers by: 1) recruiting and preparing aspiring teachers, 2) developing current teacher practitioners and school leaders, and 3) recognizing exemplary educators.

Golden Apple honors outstanding teachers each year throughout the State of Illinois via the Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching and exemplary principals with the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Leadership - in honor of Stanley C. Golder - a founding Board Member. Golden Apple award recipients are master teachers and leaders, highly engaged in many aspects of Golden Apple programming, thus ensuring that the organization can sustainably recognize, engage, and leverage the best educators to support and develop the next generation of teachers.

Since its inception in 1989, the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois program has created partnerships with primary and secondary schools, universities, governmental agencies, and community organizations. In 1993, the program expanded statewide, providing more Scholars the opportunity to develop into excellent teachers for classrooms in schools-of-need throughout the state.

Purpose of Accelerators Program

The Golden Apple Accelerators program launched in 2020. The purpose of the Golden Apple Accelerators program is to recruit career-changers who hold bachelor's degrees and seniors in college who are not in colleges of education and prepare them to teach. These individuals commit to living and teaching in targeted partner school districts in Illinois for four years after obtaining their teaching license. Accelerators will be prepared for successful careers as exceptional teachers for schools within the particular school districts in Illinois to which they are assigned. Golden Apple program staff provides mentoring during the first two years of teaching to help Accelerators develop the skills and knowledge required to excel in the profession.

Key Words & Definitions

Summer Coursework	Coursework that Accelerators participate in during summer months at one of Golden Apple’s Partner IHE.
Academy	Golden Apple Award recipients become lifetime members of the Golden Apple Academy of Educators. The Academy supports the selection of future Award recipients and the professional development of Accelerators.
Exit	An Accelerator may be exited for voluntary or involuntary reasons outlined in this handbook or in the Accelerator Contract.
Fellow	A member of the Golden Apple Academy of Educators.
Induction	Induction is an event that celebrates the newest class of Accelerators.
Partner IHE	An Institution of Higher Education that has signed an agreement with Golden Apple to provide coursework to Accelerators that will lead to an Illinois teaching license.
Partner School District	An Illinois school district or special education cooperative that has signed an agreement with Golden Apple to provide a residency experience for the Accelerator and anticipates employing the Accelerator after the Accelerator obtains their teaching license. Accelerators are required to fulfill their teaching commitment at a school within a Partner School District.
Resident Accelerator	An Accelerator who is currently enrolled in courses at a partner IHE and who is, or will be, participating in the one-year residency portion of the program at a partner school district.
Teaching Accelerator	An Accelerator who has graduated with an educator license who is teaching but has not yet completed the four-year teaching requirement.

Accelerator Outcomes

As a result of this program, Accelerators:

- Grow their future students' learning to help them reach their full potential;
- Demonstrate instructional best practices while meeting the diverse learning needs of all students;
- Serve to facilitate civic leadership in their classroom, school, and community;
- Personalize learning to meet the unique needs of all of their students;
- Strengthen their cultural competency to support students, staff, and community members of all backgrounds;
- Develop an awareness of their own identity and how it impacts others;
- Build collaborative relationships and work effectively as a team member;
- Demonstrate professionalism in the classroom and school community;
- Commit to being lifelong learners; and,
- Improve educational outcomes for students.

Golden Apple Expectations of Accelerators

The State of Illinois and the federal government provide funding for our Accelerators program.

Because the Accelerators program is supported by state and federal funding, changes in funding from the state and/or federal government could alter or remove aspects of the program, including the amount of the stipend provided to Accelerators.

Expectations for Accelerators include meeting requirements set by Golden Apple, including requirements in the Accelerator Contract, the partner institution of higher education (IHE) in which the Accelerator is enrolled, and the State of Illinois. If any of these requirements are not met, an Accelerator may be exited from the program.

Golden Apple, University, and State of Illinois Requirements

Before Summer Coursework at a Partner IHE:

- Meet all requirements of the Partner IHE;
- Provide evidence of enrollment at the Partner IHE;
- Provide an approved state or government-issued photo ID;
- Be a U.S. Citizen, a legal resident of Illinois, or eligible non-resident such as an actively enrolled DACA student;
- Provide an official copy of a birth certificate AND a Social Security or Permanent Resident Card or Non-expired DACAmentation;
- Sign and complete ALL contracts, promissory notes, any applicable direct deposit; and,
- Successfully complete a state and FBI background check, consistent with state and federal law.

While a Resident Accelerator:

- Reside in Illinois (i.e., Accelerator must have an Illinois permanent address throughout the acquisition of their teaching license);
- Earn a minimum 3.0 GPA for each term (on a 4.0 scale) (Please note Golden Apple does not round GPA in any case);
- Maintain a Cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) throughout one's coursework to obtain a teacher license (Please note Golden Apple does not round GPA in any case);
- Submit grades and transcripts (official or unofficial) at the conclusion of each term. Additional stipend installments may not be released without a qualifying transcript from the prior academic term;
- Remain "On Track" with coursework that will lead to a teaching license in the State of Illinois;
- Successfully complete one academic year of the Accelerator residency at a Partner School District;
- Pass and submit evidence of your successful completion of the EdTPA, if EdTPA is required by the state of Illinois (i.e., the Teacher Licensure pre-requisite examination and requisite evidence);
- Participate in Golden Apple Mentoring, including but not limited to participating in classroom observations, meetings, and/or conferring with your Golden Apple Mentor as requested;
- Earn Illinois Teacher Licensure and submit Illinois Educators Identification Number (IEIN) to Golden Apple within 15 months from the start of the program;
- Take any content test or tests required for licensure by the fall deadline established by Golden Apple;
- Pass all required content tests by December 31, 2024;
- Complete the required teacher licensure coursework at a Partner IHE by the end of the last enrollment term as dictated by the Partner IHE;
- Attend all Golden Apple professional development sessions, which are generally held on Fridays throughout the residency year;
- Attend and support the Accelerator's residency school within the Partner School District through the completion of said school's academic year;
- Remain in the classroom and continue to participate in the residency with their Mentor-Teacher until the end of the school/district's academic year;

- Inform classroom mentor teacher and Golden Apple Accelerators Director of any absences in a timely manner; and,
- Appropriately communicate with The Golden Apple Foundation, Partner IHE, and Partner School District, in a timely manner.

While Teaching:

- Participate in Golden Apple Mentoring, including but not limited to participating in classroom observations, meetings, and/or conferring with your Golden Apple Mentor as requested on not less than three occasions each year during your first two years of teaching;
- Attend all Golden Apple professional development sessions required during the first two years of teaching;
- Submit employment verifications for each of the first four years of teaching by the fall deadline;
- Submit a copy of your formal teacher performance evaluation for each of your first four years of teaching; and,
- Teach in a school within a Partner School District within Illinois for at least four years within the first six years from the start of the program.

Communication Expectations

As a requirement of continued participation in the Program, Golden Apple Accelerators must keep current home addresses, non-university email addresses, and phone numbers on file with the Foundation. Any changes for Accelerators are to be reported within 10 days to the Accelerators team at Accelerators@goldenapple.org. It is essential that Accelerators maintain open and frequent communication with Golden Apple throughout the Accelerator Program, which includes responding to Golden Apple, IHE, and school district communications within 48 hours of receipt of such communication.

Accelerators are responsible for submitting materials to Golden Apple throughout their residency and teaching careers. These documents include but are not limited to:

- Unofficial transcripts at the culmination of each term;
- Signed Code of Conduct and Policy Book Agreement on an annual basis;
- Final unofficial Partner IHE transcripts;
- EdTPA Score Page within 10 days of notification, if required;
- Resume and cover letter;
- Illinois License Number (IEIN) within 90 day of completion;
- Updated resume and cover letter;
- Employment Verification Forms; and,
- Teacher Evaluation Summative ratings for the first four years of teaching.

Additionally, Accelerators are to respond appropriately to all Golden Apple communications, including those from Golden Apple Mentors, within two business days absent bona fide medical emergencies. Failure to respond after several attempts will result in an out-of-compliance notification and may result in an Exit from the program.

Consequences of Non-Compliance with Regard to Transcripts, Behavior, and Requirements

Accelerators found to be “out-of-compliance” due to lack of communication, failure to submit documents, or any violation of the Accelerator Code of Conduct or the Accelerator Contract are at risk for a change of status up to and including an Exit from the Golden Apple Accelerators Program. Accelerators who do not submit term transcripts by the appropriate deadline may not qualify for subsequent stipend payments regardless of GPA standing.

Accelerator Status

While in the Accelerators Program, Accelerators are assigned a “status” as an indicator of the state of compliance of that Accelerator with all requirements of the Golden Apple Accelerators Program. All Accelerators start as “On-Track” – which means that the Accelerator is complying with all requirements to complete the program successfully. An Accelerator’s status may change throughout the Residency and Teaching experience based on circumstances, including the ones described below.

On-Track:

- A Resident Accelerator stays On-Track as long as the Resident Accelerator:
 - Is making sufficient progress towards obtaining a teaching license, earning a term and cumulative GPA for the program of 3.4 or above (please note that Golden Apple does not round GPAs);
 - Submits all requisite documents requested by the program by the deadlines specified;
 - At all times, adheres to the professional standards set by the Accelerators Program;
 - Participates effectively in all requisite Accelerator programs; and,
 - Earns their teaching license within 15 months of the start of the program.
- A Teaching Accelerator stays On-Track as long as the Teaching Accelerator:
 - Is progressing towards fulfilling their contractual obligation to Golden Apple by teaching full-time in a school in a Partner School District;
 - Submits employment verifications for each of the first four years of teaching by the fall deadline;
 - Submits a copy of their formal teacher performance evaluation for each of the first four years of teaching; and,
 - At all times, adheres to the professional standards set by the Accelerators Program.

On Watch:

A Resident Accelerator is placed “On Watch” for academic concerns if the Accelerator has a term or cumulative GPA between 3.0 and 3.39. The Accelerator may be contacted by Golden Apple to discuss targeted support and possible next steps to ensure academic success. Once the Accelerator’s GPA rises above 3.39, the Accelerator will be removed from academic On Watch.

- A Resident or Teaching Accelerator may be placed “On Watch” for behavior concerns and be contacted by Golden Apple to discuss targeted support and establish a plan for improvement and future success.
- A Resident Accelerator may be placed “On Watch” for concerns relating to growth in the classroom environment as expressed by their Golden Apple Mentor and/or Mentor-Teacher and/or the Accelerator’s IHE
- A Teaching Accelerator may be placed “On Watch” for concerns relating to growth in the classroom environment as expressed by their Golden Apple Mentor
- An Accelerator may be placed “On Watch” for poor attendance, tardiness, or lack of participation in Golden Apple Professional Development sessions and/or Reflective Seminar meetings hosted by Golden Apple Mentors
- An Accelerator may be placed “On Watch” for failure to make adequate progress towards passing the appropriate state licensure requirements

Probation:

- An Accelerator may be placed on a provisional, performance-based “Probation” status due to one or more of the following:
 - Received one term GPA less than a 3.0 OR a cumulative GPA lower than 3.0
 - Is placed on probation by the Partner IHE
 - Demonstrates attitudes or behavior deemed harmful to the public reputation of the Golden Apple Foundation or the teaching profession

- o Failure to make adequate progress towards passing the appropriate state licensure requirements

Key Words and Definitions for Probationary Status

Probation	Expectations
The Terms	Golden Apple administration will specify the terms that an Accelerator must fulfill within a designated time period to continue in the program.
Compliance	Full adherence by the Accelerator of the prescribed terms is required.
Academic	If academic performance has prompted concern by Golden Apple staff, that Accelerator’s performance during the next marking period in a Partner IHE will be monitored by Golden Apple staff. An academic plan will be created with the Accelerator to ensure success.
Behavior	If behavior warrants concern by the Accelerator staff, that Accelerator’s performance during the subsequent marking period in college will be monitored by Golden Apple Staff. A behavioral plan will be created with the Accelerator to ensure success and the Accelerator will submit evidence of growth.
Stipend Payments	Accelerators on probation status may not be eligible to receive stipend payments for the term following that which they entered Probation status. Once an Accelerator resolves the probation status, the Accelerator becomes eligible to receive stipend payments the subsequent marking period.

NOTE: Any Accelerator who takes a leave while on Probation, will remain on Probation at their return from leave.

Out of Compliance:

- If a Teaching Accelerator is not currently pursuing the mission of Golden Apple by teaching full-time in a school in a Partner School District or by making appropriate progress towards licensure as deemed by the Accelerators Team, their status will be changed to "Out of Compliance." When an Accelerator has a status of "Out of Compliance," the Accelerator will not be able to:
 - o Receive mentoring services from the Foundation; or
 - o Seek full-time employment at The Golden Apple Foundation or any independent contractor roles with or for The Golden Apple Foundation.
- If a Resident Accelerator is not currently pursuing the mission of Golden Apple by making appropriate progress towards licensure as deemed by the Accelerators Team, their status will be changed to "Out of Compliance." When an Accelerator has a status of "Out of Compliance," the Accelerator will not be able to:
 - o Receive mentoring services from the Foundation; or
 - o Seek full-time employment at The Golden Apple Foundation or any independent contractor roles with or for The Golden Apple Foundation.
- The Accelerator will be contacted by Golden Apple if their status is changed to "Out of Compliance." Golden Apple will offer targeted support and possible next steps to gain employment at a school in a Partner School District.

- Once an Accelerator obtains full-time employment in a school in a Partner School District and submits a completed employment verification to Golden Apple, their status will be changed to “On Track.”

Golden Apple reserves the right to change an Accelerator’s status to one or more of the above statuses, in its sole discretion.

Residency Leave of Absence, Teaching Accelerator Leave, and Graduate School

- Accelerators may secure a leave of absence from the program. Accelerators have 15 months from the start of the program to obtain their license. Teaching Accelerators have five years to complete their four years of teaching in a school in a Partner School District. Only approved extensions (a request made in addition to a leave request) will provide an Accelerator with additional time to complete their obligations. Requests for leaves or extensions must be made in advance with appropriate documentation and will be monitored by the appropriate Golden Apple staff member throughout the leave.
 - Accelerators must contact the Manager of the Accelerators Program for a Leave Form and approval.

Exit:

- While completing coursework at a Partner IHE, any Accelerator with two consecutive terms (i.e., term or cumulative) with a GPA lower than 3.0, may be expelled from the program.
- If an Accelerator does not meet program expectations or fails to fulfill the required terms of probationary status, that Accelerator will be expelled from the program.
- Accelerators excused from further participation in the program or who fail to complete the teaching commitment may be expected to repay with interest Golden Apple for up to \$20,000 in stipend funds that were received by the Accelerator.
- Golden Apple reserves the right to exit an Accelerator who takes any action or engages in any activity deemed inconsistent within this Handbook, including but not limited to the Accelerator Code of Conduct, or regulations and/or university, school, or district policies.

Teaching in a Partner School District

In order to fulfill their commitment to the Golden Apple Foundation, Accelerators must teach as a licensed teacher in a school within a Partner School District. The Accelerators shall not transfer to a different school within the Partner School District or transfer to a different school district, including a different Partner School District than the one to which Accelerators were originally assigned, unless approved prior to doing so, by Golden Apple.

Accelerator must teach for at least 10 full weeks of a semester in order to receive half a year's credit toward their teaching commitment.

Accelerator Obligation to Golden Apple Through Teaching

Accelerators have six years from the start of the program to fulfill their four-year teaching obligation in a school within a Partner School District in the State of Illinois. For each year an Accelerator teaches in a school in a Partner School District, 25% of the repayment amount will be forgiven by the Foundation.

If the Accelerator does not completely fulfill this teaching obligation within the time allotted, the Accelerator will be exited from the program and may be responsible for repaying any funds left unforgiven. Only the role of classroom teacher satisfies an Accelerator's commitment unless otherwise approved by the Foundation. Other positions within a school, including, but not limited to, social worker or teacher's aide, do not count as part of the four-year obligation, nor does teaching within a school that is not a school within a Partner School District.

Mentoring and Professional Development

The Golden Apple Foundation is committed to the continual growth of our Accelerators. Accelerators are assigned a Golden Apple Mentor who will observe the Accelerators' teaching practices multiple times throughout the school year, offering recommendations for continued practice and ways to enhance practice. Mentoring has been identified by national research to be a significant, contributing factor to new teachers' success. As a result, participation in Golden Apple's Mentoring Program is mandatory during your residency year and during the first two years of teaching. At the discretion of the mentoring team, mentoring services may be provided to Accelerators teaching beyond the first two years.

Golden Apple Mentors are state-certified evaluators who have been working with aspiring teachers and newly placed teachers for several years.

Accelerators will be assigned a Golden Apple Mentor who will support them throughout their residence and into their first two years of teaching. Accelerators are to be in regular, timely communication with their Golden Apple Mentor. Accelerators are to respond appropriately to all Golden Apple communications, including those from Golden Apple Mentors, within two business days absent bona fide medical emergencies.

Accelerators must participate in Golden Apple Mentoring, including, but not limited to, participating in classroom observations, meetings, and/or conferring with their Golden Apple Mentor on not less than three occasions each year, during their first two years of teaching.

Accelerators are also required to attend the Golden Apple Professional Development Sessions throughout their residency year and into their first two years of teaching. Additionally, Golden Apple Mentors host five reflective seminars meeting per academic year, usually occurring the same day as professional development sessions, both of which Accelerators are required to attend.

Accelerators are responsible for informing and working with their school administrators to secure release from their teaching and/or employment responsibilities on the days they are to attend PD with Golden Apple.

Requisite Documentation While Completing Teaching

Employment Verification: To ensure that Accelerators are progressing successfully towards the completion of their commitment to teach in a school within a Partner School District for four years within five years of obtaining a teaching license, we require that Accelerators submit Employment Verification Forms. It is important that these verifications are signed by authorized agents of the school or district (i.e., which typically include principals, assistant principals, and/or talent / human resource professionals) and submitted by the requested deadline each fall (or within the first 30 days of employment if employment changes in the spring). Included in this Employment Verification is a request for a current, non-lapsed IEIN number, and any updates to personal email addresses or phone numbers to enable The Golden Apple Foundation to maintain contact with Teaching Accelerators. Employment Verification Forms should be submitted within the first 30 days of employment each summer/fall to Accelerators@goldenapple.org, with the subject line “Employment Verification, Current Year.”

As a Teaching Accelerator, if you leave employment in a particular school or district mid-semester or mid-year, you are required to inform the Manager and Director of the Accelerators Program by sending an email to Accelerators@goldenapple.org.

Evaluations: In order to enhance Accelerator programming, set goals and objectives, inform the curriculum for Accelerator Institutes, and better support the professional growth of our Accelerators, Golden Apple will analyze aggregated data from teacher performance evaluations. As a result, Teaching Accelerators are required to submit copies of their teacher performance evaluations to Golden Apple at Accelerators@goldenapple.org every year while completing their four-year teaching commitment in a school within a Partner School District, using the subject line “Teacher Evaluation, Current Year.” Golden Apple will send the requirements for submitting evaluations to Accelerators annually. In addition, at the beginning of each academic year, a Teaching Accelerator shall provide a signed Consent in the form deemed necessary by Golden Apple for Golden Apple to receive evaluation(s) from the applicable school district.

Golden Apple will not share individual evaluations with other stakeholders. Evaluations will be kept on Golden Apple’s secure database.

Accelerator Code of Conduct

It is essential that all Accelerators demonstrate high ethical standards. Accelerators represent great promise to their future students, the teaching profession, and the Golden Apple Foundation. To protect the integrity of this program, and indeed that of the teaching profession, we require that certain academic, ethical, and legal standards of conduct be maintained, both during the school year and while Accelerator Institute is in session.

Expectations of a Golden Apple Accelerator

Accelerators, as *de facto* representatives of the Golden Apple Foundation while participating in the Program, must exemplify excellence. Any conduct that negatively affects the good order, welfare, or name of the Golden Apple Foundation, the Accelerators of Illinois, and/or the Academy is considered a serious breach of trust.

1. Accelerators model professionalism in attitude, demeanor, and behavior.
2. Accelerators display a growth mindset in all learning and collaboration.
3. Accelerators adhere to collegiate codes of conduct, Golden Apple Accelerator Codes of Conduct, and all aspects of the law.

The following are non-exhaustive examples of misconduct that will not be tolerated and may be cause for an immediate exit from the program:

- Use of violence, force, or intimidation which endangers the safety of staff, citizenry, or fellow Accelerators;
- Discrimination or harassment of anyone, regardless of relationship or status;
- Gang membership or participation in any gang activity;
- Conviction of a felony provided that Golden Apple may review any charge which results in a consensual plea to a misdemeanor offense and in its sole discretion, adversely change an Accelerator's status, consistent with applicable state law;
- Violations of the social media policy included herein; or
- Illegal drug use.

Equal Opportunity

In the provision of the Accelerator Program, The Golden Apple Foundation does not discriminate or limit access to the benefits of the program on the basis of race, ancestry, color, creed, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, or disability, or any other factor prohibited by applicable state, local or federal law. In addition, The Golden Apple Foundation will reasonably accommodate disabled Accelerators in their enjoyment of and access to its programs. Should you wish to discuss such an accommodation, please contact Golden Apple's Chief of Staff, Damarr Smith, at dsmith@goldenapple.org.

Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy

Golden Apple is committed to maintaining an Accelerator environment that encourages and fosters appropriate conduct among its Accelerators, students, employees, interns, contractors and others, as well as respect for individual values and sensibilities. Furthermore, we are legally obligated to prevent unlawful discrimination and harassment, even when directed by or at non-employees, such as Accelerators.

Accordingly, Golden Apple intends to enforce this Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Policy at all levels within its programs, as well as with its Accelerators, fellows, vendors, suppliers, visitors, employees and other non-employees, in order to create program environments free from discrimination and harassment of any kind, including **sexual harassment and harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, color, ancestry, national origin, age, disability, religion, veteran status, marital status, citizenship status or any other basis prohibited by federal, state or local laws.**

Such harassment can be illegal, is a violation of this policy and will result in a status change up to and including expulsion from the program.

What is Unlawful Harassment or Discrimination?

For the purposes of this policy, unlawful harassment is any unwelcome verbal, visual, or physical conduct on the basis of the factors referenced above (e.g. race, sex, sexual orientation, age, etc.) where: (a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's participation; (b) a program decision affecting a participant is based on that individual's acceptance or rejection of such conduct; or (c) such conduct interferes with an individual's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or participation environment.

Unlawful discrimination generally occurs when a person is subjected to different terms and conditions of program participation because of the prohibited factors referenced above. It includes unlawful harassment on the basis of those prohibited factors, as well as a variety of other decisions (e.g. scheduling, promotion, pay, discipline or termination) based on prohibited factors. Bear in mind that conduct on the basis of the factors referenced above may not technically violate the law, but are prohibited by this policy.

In particular, sexual harassment can take a variety of forms, ranging from the less severe though still inappropriate (e.g., unwelcome comments and jokes) to more severe (e.g., subtle pressure or innuendo, inquiries about another's sex life, preferences or habits, and requests to date) to the most severe (e.g. express requests for sexual favors or dates, actual physical contact or exposure). The examples above and below are for purposes of illustration only – they are not meant to be an exhaustive list of conduct that might rise to the level of sexual or other harassment:

- (a) unwelcome comments about someone's clothing, hair or body;
- (b) unwelcome flirting, pressure for dates, and/or touching;
- (c) sexually-suggestive jokes, gestures, emails or texts directed to or at another;
- (d) sexually-oriented or degrading comments about another;
- (e) unwelcome sexual inquiries about a person (e.g. their sex life, their preferences, etc.)
- (f) preferential treatment or promise of preferential treatment in exchange for dates or sexual conduct;
- (g) the denial or threat of denial of program benefits or advancement for refusal to consent to sexual advances; and/or
- (h) the display of sexually-oriented pictures, posters, or other material unwelcome or offensive to others.

Scope of Policy

This policy against discrimination and harassment applies to every officer, manager, employee, Accelerator, Fellow, intern and independent contractor of Golden Apple. In fact, where such conduct is directed by a supervisor (or someone in a management position) toward a subordinate, the former will generally be held to a higher standard of accountability because of the degree of control and influence they have or are perceived to have over the program conditions and benefits of the subordinate. Similarly, Golden Apple will not tolerate harassment from (or of) its Fellows, Accelerators, vendors, suppliers or other non-employees who conduct business with Golden Apple, Partner School Districts, or Partner IHEs. Finally, harassment is not only unacceptable at program and institute events; it is unacceptable in any Foundation-related setting, for example trips and social events.

Complaint Procedure

All Accelerators are encouraged but not required to immediately object to conduct which might be sexually or otherwise harassing or discriminatory and to tell the individual engaging in the conduct that is unwelcome and inappropriate. **Additionally, any conduct that may be a violation of this policy must be reported as promptly as possible in accordance with the following complaint procedures.** Without such

reports/complaints, Golden Apple cannot effectively attack the problems of discrimination and harassment. Retaliation against any person for making such reports/complaints is also a violation of this policy and warrants a separate complaint.

Reporting of Incident: All officers, managers, employees, Accelerators, Fellows, interns and independent contractors must report any reported, witnessed, known or suspected sexual or other harassment by another as follows: (1) the Chief of Staff; or, if the Chief of Staff is implicated in the harassment (2) the CEO or President of Golden Apple. You have multiple places to go with a complaint and need never report it directly to the alleged harasser or feel that your complaint will not be taken seriously. This reporting procedure exists for your benefit and following it will reduce the number of people who have knowledge of the complaint. This, of course, helps us to preserve the confidentiality of the matter and the integrity of the investigation, and to reduce the likelihood of any retaliation. ***All those who receive a complaint or notice of alleged discrimination or harassment from another have a duty to pass it on via the reporting procedures referenced above.***

In making reports of discrimination or harassment, it is crucial for investigative purposes that you report *each and every* act that may be a violation of this policy and every witness to such acts. Thus, at some point you will be asked to make a complete written complaint¹ or, if you prefer, to sign off on our written summary of your oral complaint. If our summary leaves anything out, or is incorrect in any way, do not approve it until it is complete and accurate.

Investigation: A prompt (within five (5) working days of the complaint whenever possible) investigation will be commenced by Golden Apple or one of its designees (e.g. outside counsel). To the extent possible, **confidentiality must be preserved. Accordingly, do not discuss the allegations or the facts of the investigation with anyone outside of the person investigating it without prior approval (excepting, of course, governmental bodies). That includes but is not limited to the complainant, the person accused and other witnesses.**

The alleged offender (called the Respondent), however, must be given notice of the complaint and given an opportunity to respond to the complaint. The complaining party (called the Complainant) and the Respondent will both be interviewed as part of the investigation. Other actual or potential witnesses to the acts complained of may also be interviewed. We necessarily depend in large part on you in determining whom to interview, so please make sure you let us know of *all* potential witnesses. During the pendency of the investigation, either the Complainant or the Respondent may request that they be temporarily separated such that they are not required to directly interact during the course of program activities (when practical), or that there be another person present during such interaction.

Decision: The person responsible for conducting the investigation will ordinarily prepare a written decision to the investigation, usually within two weeks of the initial complaint, unless extenuating circumstances exist. This decision will typically include a finding that sexual or other harassment or discrimination occurred, it did not occur, or there is inconclusive evidence as to whether it occurred. A copy of any written decision will be given to the Complainant, the person to whom the harassment or discrimination was allegedly directed (if different from the Complainant) and the Respondent. When written decisions are given, the individuals receiving them shall acknowledge in writing receipt of the conclusion. In most instances, written decisions shall be final.

Review Process: In extraordinary cases, Golden Apple may entertain either the Complainant, the victim (when different from the Complainant) or the Respondent's request for a decision to be reviewed. Any of these dissatisfied parties should submit written comments or objections to the decision within seven days. Request for

¹ A copy of a complaint form is available on request from the Chief of Staff, Damarr Smith.

review should be directed to the Chief of Staff or, if they are implicated in the complaint, to the CEO or President. If a request for review is granted, a designee of Golden Apple will endeavor to review the request and issue a determination within seven (7) days of receipt. This determination shall be final.

No Retaliation

It is unlawful to retaliate in any way against anyone who has complained about, reported or cooperated in an investigation of sexual or other harassment or discrimination, whether that concern relates to harassment of or discrimination against the individual raising the concern or against another individual. Complaints of retaliation should be submitted in accordance with the same procedures outlined above.

Discipline/Sanctions

Disciplinary action will be taken against any Respondent found to have engaged in sexual or other harassment or discrimination of any other employee, Accelerator, Fellow, intern, etc. The extent of the discipline/sanctions imposed generally depends on the nature of the offense and may include suspension, transfer or termination in appropriate circumstances. If the offending party is a non-employee of Golden Apple, other sanctions up to and including cessation of its business relationship with such person may be imposed. In any event, the discipline/sanction imposed shall be calculated to end the harassment or discrimination and/or eliminate any hostile environment.

If an investigation results in finding that the Complainant falsely accused another of harassment or discrimination knowingly or maliciously, the Complainant may be subject to appropriate discipline/sanctions as well.

Finally, individuals who breach the confidentiality provisions of this policy will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including termination. **Having said that, however, this policy of confidentiality will not be construed to interfere with your right to communicate with outside agencies about alleged harassment.**

Outside Enforcement of Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Laws

Discrimination and harassment on the basis of the foregoing factors is also prohibited by a variety of federal, state and local laws, including but not limited to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Illinois Human Rights Act and many other state, county and local laws and ordinances.

In addition, federal and state governments, counties, cities, and towns often have their own agencies responsible for enforcing those laws and investigating complaints. For example, at the federal level the U.S. EEOC is responsible for investigating outside charges of harassment. In Illinois, we have the Illinois Human Rights Department, The Cook County Commission on Human Rights and the Chicago Committee on Human Relations, each of which are responsible for enforcing separate laws. If you would like more information on these governmental agencies, please consult the postings in your particular locations.

Social Media Policy

Accelerators are deemed role models as they are working with students for hours each day. To the families of your students, you are the face of the school. To your administrators, you are the professional face of the school, the embodiment of the educational atmosphere they are trying to foster.

Accelerators are therefore expected to respectfully utilize Golden Apple laptops, cell phones, and digital media for effective teaching and learning purposes only, and not for personal purposes. Furthermore, your social media communications, like any of your behavior, can reflect adversely on the Foundation and its associated programs. Accordingly, the Golden Apple Foundation reserves the right to monitor your social media communications on behalf of or relating to, directly or indirectly, it, its programs or its personnel, as well as the students or their families, teachers, and/or administrators at any school where you will work.

For purposes of this policy, "Social media communication" shall mean all methods of communicating or posting information or images on the Internet, including your own or someone else's blog, journal, or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board or chat room.

The Golden Apple Foundation has established certain guidelines re Accelerators' social media communications. Specifically:

- Accelerators may not use Foundation equipment or devices for social media communications;
- Accelerators may not engage in social media communications while Golden Apple programs are in progress, unless otherwise directed or encouraged to do so by a Golden Apple Instructor or Staff member;
- Accelerators may not post confidential or proprietary information about the Golden Apple Foundation or its directors, mentors, or other personnel;
- Accelerators may not, without express permission, utilize Golden Apple intellectual property (e.g. logos) while engaging in social media communications;
- Accelerators should, generally, not identify their participation in or reference the Golden Apple Foundation when posting regarding personal, social, political or other matters not related to the Golden Apple Foundation; and
- Accelerators who in social media communications have identified themselves as affiliated with the Golden Apple Foundation may not post obscenities, slurs, personal attacks, discriminatory or harassing comments or materials or any other content that can damage the reputation of the Golden Apple Foundation or its directors, mentors, or other personnel.

An Accelerator can be exited from the program because of violations of this policy if deemed harmful to the reputation of the Golden Apple Foundation.

Accelerators shall not, whether directly or indirectly, disparage Golden Apple, its management, officers, products and/or services. For purposes of this policy, "disparage" shall mean make any statements, actions or insinuations that would tend to lessen the standing, reputation, commercial interests or goodwill of Golden Apple in the eyes of an ordinary citizen.

Notwithstanding the generality of the foregoing, this Social Media Policy shall not apply to any truthful statements or disclosures required by law, judicial or administrative process or order, or be read to prohibit Accelerators' ability to report any good faith allegations of unlawful practices to, or participate in any proceedings before, any federal, State or local officials or agencies.



Golden Apple

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Transforming Teachers and Teaching

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