



[Middletown Public Schools](#)

Personnel Policy Manual

Revised July 1, 2025

311 Hunting Hill Road Middletown, CT 06457

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Section 1. Purpose and Policy

1.1. WELCOME

Welcome to the Middletown Board of Education (the “Board”) and Middletown Public Schools (the “District”), where we strive to ensure that all employees feel valued, heard, and respected and have an opportunity to develop and grow professionally. We work to promote an inclusive environment that meets every employee where they are, and that appreciates each employee for their unique set of skills and talents.

As you begin your journey with us in Middletown, we encourage you challenge yourself to be the best version of yourself. Embrace the values of the Board and embrace your duty to create the best environment possible for our students to learn. We all contribute to the education of our students.

We in Middletown welcome your feedback and look forward to your contributions to the District.

1.2. BOARD PHILOSOPHY

If Middletown believes that every student has the right to quality, student-centered education, THEN adults will cultivate creative, accessible, and innovative structures and opportunities with students, AND every student will demonstrate personalized growth and achieve at high levels to thrive in life. The Board believes that every employee shall be encouraged to be the best version of themselves possible at work, by creating a safe, welcoming workplace that values diversity of its staff and students.

1.3. PROGRAM PROCEDURES

Different programs with different regulatory requirements may require additional policies and procedures for a variety of operational reasons. District program administrators/managers, (with the approval of the Superintendent or designee) may develop their own program procedures for the administration of their programs. In the event of any ambiguity, disagreement or inconsistency with program policies and the Manual, the policies in this Manual shall govern. Copies of all program policies shall be sent to the Human Resources Manager. The Human Resources Manager shall provide interpretation as to whether Program Policies are considered consistent with Board personnel policies. Any questions growing out of this review will be addressed and resolved by the Superintendent or Superintendent’s designee.

1.4. SCOPE & APPLICABILITY

The Manual applies to all Board employees and volunteers. The Manual contains only general information and guidelines, and it is not intended to be comprehensive or to address all possible applications of, or exceptions to, the general policies and procedures described.

The Manual does not replace or supersede collective bargaining agreements of those employees in recognized unions. Unionized employees should review their collective bargaining agreements, as such agreements may cover terms and conditions of employment addressed below. Any provision of a collective bargaining agreement that addresses a term or condition of employment applicable to a bargaining unit member supersedes any contradictory provision of the Manual.

The Manual is designed to serve as a primary medium of communication for informing employees and volunteers of approved personnel policies, procedures, practices, working conditions, and employee benefit plans in effect. Employees and volunteers should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the Manual. It also establishes a reference point for monitoring and improving existing policies, procedures, and practices.

The District's administration will use the Manual as a guide when applying policy in a given situation such as: recruiting and hiring new employees, training personnel, counseling employees, disciplining employees, terminating employees and supervising/managing volunteers. The purpose of written policies is to provide clarity on what employees and volunteers may expect from the District and what the District expects of employees and volunteers.

No manual can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. This Manual is not an employment contract and is not intended to create contractual obligations of any kind, either with respect to the employment relationship itself, any relationship with a District volunteer, or to any policies or benefits described herein. Where there are differences between the provisions of the Manual and more specific statements contained in the District's files (such as insurance policies), those statements shall control.

1.5. COMPLIANCE WITH LAW

The Board is aware that laws change from time to time and that the educational system must adapt to changing needs. While it does not intend to change the policies and practices contained in this Manual without good reason, the Board reserves the right to modify any condition of employment, rule, policy or procedure in whatever manner the Board believes to be appropriate, consistent with legal requirements, government regulations, business conditions, or other relevant circumstances, with or without cause or notice.

The Manual is intended to be compliant with changes in the law. The District will strive to promptly communicate changes in the Manual to employees and volunteers prior to any such change going into effect. To the extent that there are changes in the law that impact any policies or the Manual, the District is committed to complying with the law and will not enforce any policy that has been superseded by law.

Our policies are not intended to limit individuals' rights under the Connecticut or United States Constitutions or other laws, or to limit employees or volunteers in their speaking, writing or otherwise communicating about their wages, hours, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment or in acting for their individual or mutual benefit under the relevant federal or state law.

1.6 AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

Except as set forth in applicable collective bargaining agreements or individual employment agreements, and/or as required by law, the District follows a policy of employment at will. This means that the employment relationship between the employee and the District may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the District. Under this relationship, neither the employee nor the District is bound to continue the relationship if either chooses, at its will, to end the relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without notice. The statement of policy within this Manual or statements in any other documents or papers connected with employment do not constitute an employment contract. Nothing contained in these policies or any other documents should be construed as a guarantee of employment or of benefits or that specific working conditions will always remain in effect.

Similarly, the relationship between a volunteer and the District may be terminated at any time by either the volunteer or the District. Neither the volunteer nor the District is bound to continue the relationship if either chooses, at its will, to end the relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without notice.

1.7 SEVERABILITY

In the event that any provisions of this Manual will be held by operation of law, or by a court or an administrative agency of competent and final jurisdiction, to be invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of the provisions of this Manual shall not be affected thereby but shall be continued in full force and effect.

1.8 PROCEDURE FOR CHANGE OR REVIEW

Proposed revisions to the current Manual and/or proposed policy developments may be initiated by any employee, or any committee thereof. Volunteers with suggestions for revision should direct any such suggestions to their supervisor and/or to the Human Resources Manager.

It is the acknowledged intent of the Human Resources Department to involve employees in the implementation of this Manual, as well as the process for revision of information and processes contained herein. Ultimately, the Superintendent has the final decision for interpreting policies and how they apply, or not, to each individual circumstance.

- a. Proposed changes shall be submitted in writing to the Human Resources Manager for review.
- b. The Human Resources Manager shall review the proposed changes and may offer written comment on the proposal.
- c. In the event of a proposed change to the Manual, the Human Resources Manager shall utilize a process that provides affected volunteers, employees, managers, and employee involvement committees with a reasonable opportunity to review and comment on all revised and/or developed policy proposals prior to approval, when possible.
- d. Personnel Policy revisions will be reviewed by the Superintendent and, when appropriate, approved by the Board.
- e. The Manual will be available online and updated electronically. While the District strives to provide notice to all affected volunteers and/or employees prior to the effective date of any change, in some circumstances such notice is not practicable. For that reason, if you have printed a copy of the Manual for your own use, please remember to check online to verify that the information in your printed copy is up to date.
- f. The Human Resources Manager will review and update the Manual on a periodic basis.
- g. The Board reserves the right in its discretion to adopt or revise policies without following the process in this section when deemed necessary for expediency, legal reasons, or business needs.

Section 2.
Equal Employment and Non-Discrimination

2.1 PHILOSOPHY

The Board is committed to establishing a harmonious workplace where all employees and volunteers can work to their fullest potential, in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

2.2 NON-DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT PROHIBITED

It is the policy of the Board that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, alienage, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, veteran status, status as a victim of domestic violence, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law (“Protected Class”) is prohibited, whether by students, members of the public, Board employees, volunteers or third parties subject to the control of the Board. The Board’s prohibition of discrimination or harassment in its educational programs or activities expressly extends to academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities, including athletics, as well as the district website. It is also the policy of the Board to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any discrimination on the basis of Protected Class.

Any individual wishing to file a complaint regarding alleged discrimination may obtain a copy of the Board’s complaint procedures and complaint form that are included in the Board’s Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment based on reasons such as gender/sex, disability, or pregnancy, such complaints will be handled in accordance with other appropriate policies.

Individuals also may file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education (“OCR”):

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109- 3921
(617-289-0111)
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

Employees may also file a complaint regarding employment discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203

(800-669-4000)

Individuals may also file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
450 Columbus Blvd.
Hartford, CT 06103-1835
(800-477-5737)

Anyone who has questions or concerns about this policy, or would like a copy of the Board's complaint procedures or complaint forms related to claims of discrimination, may contact:

Harry Snyder
Human Resources Manager
311 Hunting Hill Avenue
Middletown, CT 06457
Telephone: 860-638-1446
Email: snyderh@mpsct.org
Community Board Operation
Non-Discrimination

Anyone who has questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination on the basis of gender/sex may contact the Board's Title IX Coordinator:

Harry Snyder
Human Resources Manager
311 Hunting Hill Avenue
Middletown, CT 06457
Telephone: 860-638-1469
Email: snyderh@mpsct.org

Any individual who has questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination on the basis of disability may contact the Board's Section 504/ADA Coordinator:

Jennifer Cannata
Assistant Superintendent
311 Hunting Hill Avenue
Middletown, CT 06457
Telephone: 860-638-1438
Email: cannataj@mpsct.org

2.3 DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED

The Board prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, including pregnancy or related conditions. The Board has designated an Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) Coordinator (the Assistant Superintendent of Administration) to assist individuals who are interested in requesting or discussing reasonable accommodations for a disability or to investigate internal employee grievances alleging discrimination on the basis of disability. The ADA Coordinator may be reached at telephone number (860) 638-1438. For more information about requesting disability accommodations and/or pursuing a grievance, employees may review also *Board Policy 4118.14 (Policy Regarding Employees and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act)* and the accompanying administrative regulations.

Individuals alleging disability discrimination may also file complaints with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities at (800) 477-5737 and/or the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission EEOC Boston Area Office at (617) 565-3200 or for TTY service call (617) 565-3204.

2.4 ADA ACCESS TO SERVICES, FACILITIES AND/OR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Board complies with the ADA, the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act, and applicable state and local laws prohibiting discrimination in employment against qualified individuals with disabilities. It is the Board’s policy to, without limitation:

- Employ policies and procedures designed to ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities are treated in a non-discriminatory manner in the pre-employment process and that employees with disabilities are treated in a non-discriminatory manner in all terms, conditions and privileges of employment;
- Keep all medical-related information confidential in accordance with the requirements of the ADA and retain such information in separate confidential files;
- Provide applicants and employees with disabilities with reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job positions, except where such an accommodation would create an undue hardship on the District; and
- Notify individuals with disabilities that the District provides reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities, by including this policy in the Manual.

If you have a disability that limits your ability to fully perform the essential functions of the position you hold or are applying for, you may request an accommodation by notifying the ADA Coordinator. Employees will not be retaliated against for requesting an accommodation. Upon receiving a request for accommodation, the District will work with you to determine if a reasonable accommodation can be made. You may be asked to provide a doctor’s certification of the disability as well as the need for an accommodation. The District will make decisions regarding an employee’s request for an accommodation on an individualized assessment of the facts for each employee.

2.5 SEXUAL HARASSMENT PROHIBITED

The Board has a “zero tolerance” policy that states that any form of discrimination, sex discrimination or sexual harassment is prohibited in the Board’s education programs and activities, whether by students, Board employees, volunteers or third parties subject to substantial control by the Board. It is the policy of the Board to maintain a working environment free from harassment, insults or intimidation on the basis of an employee's sex and free from discrimination based on sex.

It is the express policy of the Board to encourage victims of discrimination, sex discrimination, and/or sexual harassment to report such claims. Employees and volunteers are encouraged to report complaints of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment promptly in accordance with the appropriate process set forth in the *Board Policy 4118.111(Prohibition of Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace)* and the accompanying administrative regulations and forms. The Board directs its employees to respond to such complaints in a prompt and equitable manner. Violations of this policy by employees and/or volunteers will not be permitted and may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Retaliation against any employee or volunteer for filing a complaint, and/or participating in an investigation about discrimination and/or sex discrimination or sexual harassment is prohibited under this policy and illegal under state and federal law.

The Board’s Title IX Coordinator is Harry Snyder (related to adult conduct), and Elba Llantín-Cruz (related to student conduct). Any individual may make a report of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment directly to the Title IX Coordinator using anyone, or multiple, of the following points of contact:

Office Address: 311 Hunting Hill Avenue, Middletown, CT 06457
Email: snyderh@mpsct.org; llantincruze@mpsct.org respectively
Telephone: 860-638-1469

Any individual may also make a report of sexual harassment and/or sex discrimination to the U.S. Department of Education:

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office, U.S. Department of Education,
8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square,
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: 617-289-0111

Employees may also make a report of sexual harassment and/or sex discrimination to the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities,

450 Columbus Boulevard,
Hartford, CT 06103-1835
Telephone: 860-514-3400

If sexual harassment involves physical touching, coerced physical confinement, or coerced sexual acts, the conduct may constitute a crime. Contact the Middletown Police Department at 860 638-4000.

While it is difficult to define sexual harassment precisely, it does include any unwelcome sexual advance, requests for sexual favors or other verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome attention of a sexual nature, such as degrading, suggestive or lewd remarks or noises;
- Vulgar jokes, derogatory or pornographic posters, cartoons, drawings, text messages, behavior on social media including comments/messages, e-mails, screen savers, or other items;
- Verbal comments that are sexually oriented, both in person and through other mediums such as phone or voicemail, or sexual innuendos;
- The threat or suggestion that continued employment advancement, assignment or earnings depend on whether or not the employee will submit to or tolerate harassment;
- Non-verbal conduct such as derogatory or pornographic displays, cartoons or drawings sexual gestures leers or stares; or
- Unwelcome physical conduct or sexual advances such as touching, hugging, kissing, patting, brushing up against someone, or assault.

If you believe that you have been harassed in any manner you should immediately contact the Board's Title IX Coordinator. Should your complaint be related to the Board's Title IX Coordinator, you may file a complaint with the Assistant Superintendent of Administration or the Human Resources Manager. All complaints of sexual and/or other harassment will be treated confidentiality, to the extent possible. The District will not tolerate any retaliation against any complaining employee, volunteer or witness who complains in good faith. Individuals found to have engaged in sexual and/or other harassment will receive appropriate disciplinary and corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

2.6 RETALIATION PROHIBITED

The Board prohibits retaliation against any employee or volunteer for complaining about harassment, sexual harassment, and/or discrimination. This includes threatening an employee or volunteer or taking any adverse action against an employee or volunteer for: (1) reporting a possible violation of the non-discrimination or sexual harassment policy, or (2) participating in an investigation conducted under these policies. Any employee or volunteer who believes that they are experiencing retaliation or being treated unfairly in this regard should immediately report the matter to the Human Resources Manager or Title IX

Coordinator. Any employee or volunteer who is found to have engaged in conduct violating this provision will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment/volunteer status.

Section 3. Employment

3.1. EMPLOYMENT VACANCIES

- a. Vacancy procedures for employment positions within a collective bargaining unit shall adhere to procedures set forth in collective bargaining agreements. To the extent that a collective bargaining agreement does not specify a vacancy procedure, or the collective bargaining procedure is not specific, the procedures below shall apply.
- b. Whenever there is a vacancy in a regular position, the vacancy shall be advertised prior to the position being filled. Employees wishing to apply for a vacant position must apply for the position during the posting period in order to be eligible for consideration.
- c. Vacancy notices may be posted to allow for internal and external applicants to apply.
- d. All postings and general recruiting procedures shall follow the guidelines outlined in the Board's Non-discrimination Policy, applicable law, and any existing collective bargaining agreements.
- e. A vacancy being filled by a current District employee as a result of a department's reorganization needs is not subject to these posting procedures.
- f. The Board's employment practices reflect the philosophy that current employees are given priority consideration for vacant positions when competing with equally qualified external candidates. However, the Board reserves the right in its discretion to refrain from considering any internal candidate who, at the time of application for the posting, is not in good standing, (i.e. an employee under a warning or counseling, not meeting expectations in their current position, etc.), or in circumstances where the best interests of students and the educational program favor the appointment of an external candidate.
- g. Managers are responsible for all hiring decisions made within their department and for taking steps designed to ensure that all Board employment policies have been followed during the interview and hiring process. Although the Superintendent reserves the right to approve any hiring, the Human Resources Manager and/or an Assistant Superintendent may extend a job offer to a prospective employee, but only after the offer is reviewed and approved by the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee.

3.2. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- a. Employees shall serve in a probationary period for the first ninety (90) days of employment, during which time the employee's suitability for long-term employment shall be evaluated.
- b. Consistent with the at-will employment doctrine, unless covered by an applicable collective bargaining agreement or an individual employment agreement, and/or required by law, each employee of the District is employed at the will of the Board and are subject to termination at any time (regardless of length of service), for any reason, with or without cause or notice.

- c. At-will employees may terminate their employment at any time and for any reason.

3.3. ELIGIBILITY FOR EMPLOYMENT/VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Employment History and Reference Checks

Each applicant for an employment position with the District shall be asked to provide in writing: (1) whether the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime; (2) whether there are any criminal charges pending against the applicant at the time of the application and, if charges are pending, to state the charges and the court in which such charges are pending; and (3) whether the applicant is included on the Abuse and Neglect Registry of the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (“DCF”) (the “Registry”). If the applicant’s current or most recent employment occurred out of state, the applicant will also be asked whether the applicant is included on an equivalent database and/or abuse/neglect registry maintained in that other state.

Applicants shall not be required to disclose any arrest, criminal charge or conviction that has been erased.

In addition, the District shall conduct an employment history check for each applicant for an employment position, as set forth below.

The following definitions are applicable to employment checks:

“Sexual misconduct” means any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication, or any other act directed toward or with a student that is designed to establish a sexual relationship with the student, including a sexual invitation, dating or soliciting a date, engaging in sexual dialog, making sexually suggestive comments, self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual or erotic nature, and any other sexual, indecent, or erotic contact with a student.

“Abuse or neglect” means abuse or neglect as described in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-120, and includes any violation of Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 53a-70 (sexual assault in the first degree), 53a-70a (aggravated sexual assault in the first degree), 53a-71 (sexual assault in the second degree), 53a-72a (sexual assault in the third degree), 53a-72b (sexual assault in the third degree with a firearm), or 53a-73a (sexual assault in the fourth degree).

“Former employer” means any person, firm, business, educational institution, nonprofit agency, corporation, limited liability company, the state, any political subdivision of the state, any governmental agency, or any other entity that such applicant was employed by during any of the previous twenty years prior to applying for a position with a local or regional board of education.

Employment History Check Procedures

- A. The District shall not offer employment to an applicant for an employment position if such applicant would have direct student contact, prior to the District:

1. Requiring the applicant:
 - a. to list the name, address, and telephone number of each current employer or former employer (please note the definition of “former employer” above, including the applicable twenty-year reporting period) during any of the previous twenty years, if:
 - (i) such current or former employer is/was a local or regional board of education, council of a state or local charter school, interdistrict magnet school operator, or a supervisory agent of a nonpublic school, and/or
 - (ii) the applicant’s employment with such current or former employer caused the applicant to have contact with children.
 - b. to submit a written authorization that
 - (i) consents to and authorizes disclosure by any current or former employer that is/was a local or regional board of education, council of a state or local charter school, inter-district magnet school operator, or a supervisory agent of a nonpublic school, or any employer where the applicant had contact with children, of the information requested below and the release of related records by such employers,
 - (ii) consents to and authorizes disclosure by the Connecticut State Department of Education (the “Department”) of the information requested below and the release of related records by the Department, and
 - (iii) releases those employers and the Department from liability that may arise from such disclosure or release of records; and
 - c. to submit a written statement of whether the applicant
 - (i) has been the subject of an abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct investigation by any employer, state agency or municipal police department, unless the investigation resulted in a finding that all allegations were unsubstantiated,
 - (ii) has ever been disciplined or asked to resign from employment or resigned from or otherwise separated from any employment while an allegation of abuse or neglect was pending or under investigation by DCF, or an allegation of sexual misconduct was pending or under investigation or due to an allegation substantiated pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-101g of abuse or neglect, or of sexual misconduct or a conviction for abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct, or

- (iii) has ever had a professional or occupational license or certificate suspended or revoked or has ever surrendered such a license or certificate while an allegation of abuse or neglect was pending or under investigation by DCF or an investigation of sexual misconduct was pending or under investigation, or due to an allegation substantiated by DCF of abuse or neglect or of sexual misconduct or a conviction for abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct;
- 2. Conducting a review of the employment history of the applicant by contacting those employers listed by the applicant as described above. Such review shall be conducted using a form developed by the Department, which shall request the following:
 - a. the dates of employment of the applicant, and
 - b. a statement as to whether the employer has knowledge that the applicant:
 - (i) was the subject of an allegation of abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct for which there is an investigation pending with any employer, state agency, or municipal police department or which has been substantiated, unless such substantiation was reversed as a result of an appeal to DCF;
 - (ii) was disciplined or asked to resign from employment or resigned from or otherwise separated from any employment while an allegation of abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct was pending or under investigation, or due to a substantiation of abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct, unless such substantiation was reversed as a result of an appeal to DCF; or
 - (iii) has ever had a professional or occupational license, certificate, authorization or permit suspended or revoked or has ever surrendered such a license, certificate, authorization or permit while an allegation of abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct was pending or under investigation, or due to a substantiation of abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct, unless such substantiation was reversed as a result of an appeal to DCF. Such review may be conducted telephonically or through written communication. The District may request more information concerning any response made by a current or former employer for information about an applicant.
- 3. Requesting information from the Department concerning:
 - a. the eligibility status for employment of any applicant for an employment position requiring a certificate, authorization or permit,
 - b. whether the Department has knowledge that a finding has been substantiated by DCF pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-101g of abuse or neglect or of sexual

misconduct against the applicant and any information concerning such a finding, and

- c. whether the Department has received notification that the applicant has been convicted of a crime or of criminal charges pending against the applicant and any information concerning such charges.
- B. If the District receives information that an applicant for a position with or an employee of the District has been disciplined for a finding of abuse or neglect or sexual misconduct, it shall notify the Department of such information.
- C. The District shall not employ an applicant for an employment position involving direct student contact who does not comply with the requirements described above regarding requesting information from current or former employers.
- D. The District may employ or contract with an applicant on a temporary basis for a period not to exceed ninety (90) calendar days, pending the District's review of information received under this section, provided:
 - 1. The applicant complied with requests to obtain information from current and/or former employers as described above;
 - 2. The District has no knowledge of information pertaining to the applicant that would disqualify the applicant from employment with the District; and
 - 3. The applicant affirms that the applicant is not disqualified from employment with the District.
- H. Any applicant/employee who knowingly provides false information or knowingly fails to disclose information as described above shall be subject to discipline by the District that may include:
 - 1. denial of employment, or
 - 2. termination of the contract of a certified employee, in accordance with the provisions of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-151, or
 - 3. termination of a non-certified employee in accordance with applicable law and/or any applicable collective bargaining agreement, employment contract or District policy.
- L. The District shall not offer employment to any applicant who had any previous employment contract terminated by a local or regional board of education, council of a state or local charter school, interdistrict magnet school operator, or a supervisory agent of a nonpublic school, or who resigned from such employment, if the person has been convicted of a violation of Conn. Gen. Stat. § 17a-101a, when an allegation of abuse or neglect or sexual assault has been substantiated.

DCF Registry Checks

A registry is maintained by the Connecticut Department of Children & Families (“DCF”). Prior to hiring any person for a position with the District, the District shall require such applicant to submit to a records check of information maintained on the Registry concerning the applicant.

For any applicant whose current or most recent employment occurred out of state, the District shall request that the applicant provide the District with authorization to access information maintained concerning the applicant by the equivalent state agency in the state of most recent employment, if such state maintains information about abuse and neglect and has a procedure by which such information can be obtained. Refusal to permit the District to access such information shall be considered grounds for rejecting any applicant for employment.

The District shall request information from the Registry or its out of state equivalent promptly, and in any case no later than thirty (30) calendar days from the date of employment. Registry checks will be processed according to the following procedure:

- A. No later than ten (10) calendar days after the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee has notified a job applicant of a decision to offer employment to the applicant, or as soon thereafter as practicable, the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee will either obtain the information from the Registry or, if the applicant’s consent is required to access the information, will supply the applicant with the release form utilized by DCF, or its out of state equivalent when available, for obtaining information from the Registry.
- B. If consent is required to access the Registry, no later than ten (10) calendar days after the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee has provided the successful job applicant with the form, the applicant must submit the signed form to DCF or its out of state equivalent, with a copy to the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee. Failure of the applicant to submit the signed form to DCF or its out of state equivalent within such ten-day period, without good cause, will be grounds for the withdrawal of the offer of employment.
- C. Upon receipt of Registry or out-of-state registry information indicating previously undisclosed information concerning abuse or neglect investigations concerning the successful job applicant/employee, the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee will notify the affected applicant/employee in writing of the results of the Registry check and will provide an opportunity for the affected applicant/employee to respond to the results of the Registry check.
- D. If notification is received by the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee that that the applicant is listed as a perpetrator of abuse or neglect on the Registry, the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall provide the applicant with an opportunity to be heard regarding the results of the Registry check. If warranted by the results of the Registry check and any additional information provided by the applicant, the Superintendent or the Superintendent’s designee shall revoke the offer of employment and/or terminate the applicant’s employment if the applicant has already commenced working for the District.

Criminal Records Check Procedure

- A. Each person hired by the District shall be required to submit to state and national criminal records checks within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of employment. Record checks will be processed according to the following procedure:
1. No later than five (5) calendar days after the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee has notified a job applicant of a decision to hire the applicant, or as soon thereafter as practicable, the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee will provide the applicant with a packet containing all documents and materials necessary for the applicant to be fingerprinted by the _Middletown Public Schools Human Resources Department, and/or the Connecticut State Police. This packet shall also contain all documents and materials necessary for the Connecticut State Police for the processing of state and national criminal records checks. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee will also provide each applicant with the following notifications before the applicant obtains the applicant's fingerprints: (1) Agency Privacy Requirements for Noncriminal Justice Applicants; (2) Noncriminal Justice Applicant's Privacy Rights; (3) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, United States Department of Justice Privacy Act Statement.
 2. No later than ten (10) calendar days after the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee has provided the successful job applicant with the fingerprinting packet, the applicant must arrange to be fingerprinted by Connecticut State Police. Failure of the applicant to have the applicant's fingerprints taken within such ten-day period, without good cause, will be grounds for the withdrawal of the offer of employment. Any person for whom criminal records checks are required to be performed pursuant to this policy must pay all fees and costs associated with the fingerprinting process and/or the submission or processing of the requests for criminal records checks. Fees and costs associated with the fingerprinting process and the submission and process of requests are waived for student teachers, in accordance with state law.
 4. Upon receipt of a criminal records check indicating a previously undisclosed conviction, the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee will notify the affected applicant/employee in writing of the results of the record check and will provide an opportunity for the affected applicant/employee to respond to the results of the criminal records check. The affected applicant/employee may notify the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee in writing within five (5) calendar days that the affected applicant/employee will challenge such individual's criminal history records check. Upon written notification to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee of such a challenge, the affected applicant/employee shall have ten (10) calendar days to provide the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee with necessary documentation regarding the affected applicant/employee's record challenge. The Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee may grant an extension to the preceding ten-day period during which the affected applicant/employee may provide such documentation for good cause shown.

5. Applicants, employees and/or volunteers who believe that activities (on or off the job) they engage in may lead to a notation on their criminal records shall make the Board aware of this immediately or as soon as reasonably possible by notifying the Human Resources Manager of the event. Failure to voluntarily notify the Board of an incident/indictment that leads to a notation on their record is grounds for discipline and/or discharge from employment/volunteer status. Decisions regarding the effect of a conviction upon an applicant/employee/volunteer, whether disclosed or undisclosed by the applicant/employee/volunteer, will be made on a case-by-case basis. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the falsification or omission of any information on a job or volunteer application or in a job or volunteer interview, including but not limited to information concerning criminal convictions or pending criminal charges, shall be grounds for disqualification from consideration for employment or discharge from employment/volunteer status.
6. No decision to discipline an existing employee and/or deny employment to an applicant or withdraw an offer of employment from an applicant on the basis of an applicant/employee's criminal history record shall be made without affording the applicant/employee written notice of the situation and the opportunity for the affected applicant/employee to respond to the criminal history information in question.
7. If, at any time, the District receives notice of a conviction of a crime by a person holding a certificate, authorization or permit issued by the Connecticut State Board of Education, the District shall send such notice to the Connecticut State Board of Education.

Sex Offender Registry Checks

District personnel shall cross-reference the Connecticut Department of Public Safety's sexual offender registry prior to hiring any new employee or approving any new volunteer. Registration as a sexual offender constitutes grounds for denial of employment and/or volunteer opportunities in the District.

Motor Vehicle Record Checks

In the District, many positions require operation of a vehicle as an essential function of the position. For employees who are required to operate a vehicle and/or transport individuals, a motor vehicle record/driver's license background check will be made at the time of employment. Acceptance of employment or transfer to a new position that requires operation of a motor vehicle is contingent upon passing the motor vehicle background check. Applicants/employees who do not successfully pass the motor vehicle record/driver's license background check, even if having begun employment, will be discharged from employment and/or have their offer of employment revoked.

If an employee who is required to operate a vehicle and/or transport individuals as an essential function of their job is convicted of a motor vehicle violation (e.g. DUI, etc.) that results in loss (suspension/revocation) of license or otherwise loses the right to operate a motor vehicle, the employee is required to report said loss of driving privileges to their manager and to the Human Resources Manager immediately. Failure to report such a conviction and/or loss of license will be grounds for discharge. Loss of the right to operate a motor vehicle may result in the loss of employment if operating a vehicle is deemed an essential requirement of the job.

Annually, all employees who are required to operate vehicle as an essential function of their job, shall provide Human Resources with proof of a valid driver's license. In addition, employees who are required to operate a motor vehicle as an essential function of their job shall provide proof of current auto insurance to Human Resources as requested. All auto insurance must be through a company licensed in the State of Connecticut to offer such insurance.

Clinical / Professional Licensure

Prior to the first day of work, all new hires that require a teaching certificate or permit issued by the Connecticut State Department of Education and/or other form of State issued or professional accreditation or license (for example, teachers, administrators, nurses, therapists, BCBAs, social workers, coaches etc.) will provide the Human Resources Department with a current valid copy of their license/certificate/permit. The Human Resource Department will then take reasonable steps to verify the current validity and any deficiencies on said license/certificate/permit.

The falsification or omission of any information in connection with a job application or job interview, or during employment, including but not limited to providing false information about education credentials, past experience, licensure, certification or other professional credentials, criminal background, status as a sex offender and/or DCF related information shall be grounds for disqualification from consideration for employment and/or discharge from employment.

It is the responsibility of each employee to maintain their license/certificate/permit in valid, up-to-date order. When these professional licenses/certificates/permits are due for renewal, employees, not the District, are solely responsible for taking steps necessary to ensure that their licenses/certificates/permits are current and valid. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide the updated license/certificate/permit to the Human Resources Department in a timely manner. Failure to comply with this provision of the policy can result in termination of employment if the license/certificate/permit lapses or is revoked.

Credit Checks

The District may also ask an applicant for a credit report for employment for certain District positions, where the District's receipt of a credit report is substantially related to the applicant's potential job. "*Substantially related to the current or potential job*" is defined to mean "*the information contained in the credit report is related to the position for which the employee or prospective employee who is the subject of the report is being evaluated because of the position.*" Prior to asking for a credit report, the District will determine whether the position falls within one of the categories as described in this paragraph. The position must: (1) be a managerial position which involves setting the direction or control of the District; (2) involve access to employees' personal or financial information; (3) involve a fiduciary responsibility to the District, including, but not limited to, the authority to issue payments, collect debts, transfer money or enter into contracts; (4) provide an expense account or District debit or credit card; or (5) involve access to the District's nonfinancial assets valued at two thousand five dollars (\$2,005) or more.

When a credit report will be requested as part of the employment process, the District will provide written notification to the applicant regarding the use of credit checks. That notification will be provided in a document separate from the employment application. The notification will state that the District may use the information in the consumer credit report to make decisions related to the individual's employment. The District will obtain written, signed consent before performing the credit or other background checks.

If the District intends to take an action adverse to an applicant based on the results of a credit report, the District will provide the applicant with a copy of the report on which the District relied in making the adverse decision, as well as a copy of “A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act,” which will be provided by the company that provides the results of the credit check. The District will give the applicant a reasonable amount of time, i.e., at least five (5) days, to dispute any of the information in the report prior to making any final employment decision.

If an adverse action is taken based on information from the report, the District will notify the applicant either orally, in writing or via electronic means, that the adverse action was taken based on the information in the consumer report. That notice will include the name, address and phone number of the consumer reporting company that supplied the credit report; a statement that the company that supplied the report did not make the decision to take the unfavorable action and cannot provide specific reasons for the District’s actions; and a notice of the person’s right to dispute the accuracy or completeness of any information the consumer reporting company furnished, and to get an additional free report from the company if the person asks for it within sixty (60) calendar days.

Immigration Law Compliance

The Board is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are legally authorized to work in the United States. The Board does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship, alienage and/or national origin.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are re-hired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 with the Board within the past three years or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid. In certain cases, depending on the nature of the documentation the employee has presented to complete the I-9, it also may be necessary to re-verify their employment eligibility at a later time.

Section 4. Classes of Employees

4.1. REGULAR FULL TIME

“*Regular full-time*” is defined as salaried or hourly-paid employee working a standard work week of 30 - 40 hours with benefits.

4.2. REGULAR PART TIME

“*Regular part-time*” is defined as salaried or hourly-paid employee working a scheduled week of at least 20 hours, but less than a standard 30-40 hour work week.

4.3. FIXED TERM/TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

“*Fixed term/Temporary Employees*” are defined as: unless otherwise covered in an existing collective bargaining agreement, salaried or hourly-paid employees working a scheduled week of up-to 40 hours for more than 6 months with a pre-determined termination of employment date.

4.3. PER DIEM

“Per Diem employee” is defined as an hourly-paid employee available to work as required by the Board. These employees do not work a scheduled week and are not eligible for benefit packages described in this Manual. Per Diem employees are not guaranteed a set number of hours for any pay period or duration of employment. Per Diem employees who do not work for the Board for a period of ninety (90) calendar days will be considered voluntarily resigned and/or separated and their employment is terminated as of the 91st calendar day following the most recent day of active service, without further notice to the employee.

4.6 SEASONAL EMPLOYEES

“Seasonal employees” are defined as employees hired for a pre-set timeframe for a project or other time-limited program/project. Seasonal employees are paid hourly and are not eligible for benefits outlined in the Manual.

4.4. VOLUNTEERS

“Volunteers” are defined as individuals who do not have an employment obligation to the Board. Volunteers are not eligible for benefits. Volunteers may serve in any area of the Board as needed. Existing staff members may also volunteer for the Board in appropriate circumstances (an example would be a school employee who volunteers to serve as a chaperone for the their child’s field trip). Screening for school volunteers depends on their classification. Volunteers are classified in the following three categories:

Level I

Current Middletown Public Schools staff members and students will be classified as Level I Volunteers:

- Level I volunteers do not require formal screening or training.
- Level I volunteers must complete an online volunteer application on an annual basis.
- Level I volunteers are approved to engage in any activity approved for a Level II volunteer.

Level II

- Level II volunteers are other individuals who are approved to engage in volunteer activities in the presence of a Middletown Public Schools employee.
- Level II volunteers must complete the online volunteer application, sex offender registry check and DCF Release on an annual basis.
- Level II volunteers are approved to engage in the activities listed below, as directed by the administration:
 - assisting in a classroom, cafeteria, or library when a staff member is present.
 - accompanying a class on a field trip during the school day with a staff member.
 - helping in the school office during regular school hours when a staff member is present.
 - assisting in the cafeteria or library during regular school hours when a staff member is present.
 - school events, i.e., dances, fairs, etc. under the supervision of a staff member.

Level III

Volunteers will be classified in Level III when they provide services to students when not in the direct presence of a Middletown Public Schools employee.

Level III volunteers must complete an online volunteer application, submit information concerning any prior or pending criminal offenses through a 3rd party background screening company, will be required to submit a DCF Release, and will be subject to a sex offender registry check.

Level III volunteers are approved to engage in the activities listed below, as directed by the administration:

- all Level II activities
- accompanying a class on a field trip when students are divided into small groups supervised solely by the volunteer chaperone for any length of time.
- chaperoning an overnight field trip.
- working in direct contact with students without the direct presence of a Middletown Public Schools employee.

A list of all approved volunteers will be maintained by the Human Resources Department. Only volunteers on the approved list may be utilized by the District.

4.5. HOURS OF WORK

a. Work Day / Work Week

Generally, the Central Office hours of operation are between eight (8) AM and four (4) PM Monday through Friday. Individual schools and programs operate on schedules specific to those schools and programs.

b. Work Schedule

Employees are scheduled to meet the operational needs of the Board and to meet the service needs of our students and the community we serve. Board employees must be flexible as their schedules can change without notice. Central Office administrative staff generally are scheduled to work eight (8) AM to four (4) PM, Monday through Friday. Employees serving in individual schools and programs operate on schedules specific to those schools and programs and their work responsibilities.

No employee shall work outside of their regular working hours or during an unpaid leave. This policy includes checking emails or voice mails. Employees shall not work beyond their regular hours unless approved in advance by an administrator/manager.

4.6. HOURLY / NON-EXEMPT OVERTIME AND WORKING OVERTIME

Nonexempt employees are workers who are entitled to earn at least the federal [minimum wage](#) and qualify for overtime pay, which is calculated as one-and-a-half times their hourly rate for every hour they work above and beyond a standard 40-hour workweek. These regulations follow the federal [Fair Labor Standards Act \(FLSA\)](#).

The Board conforms to the requirements of the FLSA. In accordance with the FLSA, non-exempt (hourly) employees who perform their work in excess of forty (40) hours in a single work week are compensated at one and one-half (1 ½) times their regular base hourly rate for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours (unless an FLSA exception applies).

A condition of employment with the Board is to work overtime when requested. Employees are prohibited from working outside their regular scheduled hours without prior approval from their administrator/manager.

4.8 EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

The term “*exempt employee*” refers to a category of employees set out in the [Fair Labor Standards Act \(FLSA\)](#). Exempt employees do not receive overtime pay and do not qualify for [minimum wage](#).

The determination of whether an employee is classified as exempt is based on the type of work they perform and may also depend on their weekly salary. When an employee is exempt, it primarily means that they are exempt from receiving overtime pay.

It is the expectation of the Board that, in general, exempt employees will work a minimum of forty (40) hours per week. Exempt employees are expected to manage their time, and work as many hours per week necessary to meet the operational demands of their position. Exempt employees may routinely attend Board related meetings and events before and after standard working hours, and/or on weekends to meet the requirements of their jobs.

4.9 HOLIDAYS

The following is a list of the official days the District is closed. Not all employees are eligible for pay on holidays; please check your respective collective bargaining agreement (“CBA”) or hire letter or call the Human Resources Office to determine your paid holidays.

Non-exempt employees required to work on any of the holidays listed below shall be paid their hourly rate of pay for all hours worked.

The following days are recognized as Board holidays:

- New Year’s Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- Dr. Martin Luther King Day
- Good Friday
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- Presidents’ Day
- Indigenous Peoples’ Day
- Veterans’ Day

Section 5. Compensation and Time Keeping

5.1. INITIAL SALARY/WAGE DESIGNATION

The Board seeks to pay competitive salaries/wages. New employees are placed in their salary/wage range based on prior relevant experience, and/or existing salary/wage tables for the position the employee is hired into.

5.2. TIME KEEPING AND TIME RECORDS

All employees, both exempt and non-exempt, are required to accurately record their attendance on a daily basis and submit accurate documentation in a timely manner as required.

In addition, non-exempt employees must accurately record all the hours they work. This ensures accurate payment for time worked.

Unless otherwise specified in writing by the Human Resources Department employees using paper day sheets shall complete and submit their time worked to their administrators/managers/school secretary no later than close of business every Friday in the

week worked. Please check with your department/building administrator for the requirements for your department/school.

Administrators/Managers/Supervisors are responsible for signing off on the accuracy of the time records submitted by their non-exempt employees. All overtime must be approved in advance by a supervisor.

Time and attendance records are the property of the Board and the employee must maintain accurate hours worked, overtime hours, and absences.

All Employees:

- Are prohibited from allowing others to enter time or sign in/out for them.
- Are prohibited from entering time or signing in/out for others.
- Are expected to begin work immediately after logging in or signing in for the day or from lunch.
- Must notify their supervisor immediately if they forget to sign in or out, so that their time will be accurately recorded for payroll.
- Non-exempt employees are not permitted to work “off the clock” (working outside of one’s scheduled hours without receiving compensation).

A meal break should not be calculated as part of hours worked for an overtime eligible employee, unless the employee actually worked during the meal break upon the direction of a supervisor.

5.3. ANNUAL SALARY/WAGE ADJUSTMENTS

Annual Salary/Wage Adjustments:

Based on budgetary limitations, staff salary/wage ranges may be adjusted annually.

Section 6. Leaves

6.1. VACATION LEAVE

Unless otherwise covered in an employment contract, offer letter or collective bargaining agreement, the Board does not offer employees vacation time. The remainder of Section 6.1 does not apply to employees whose employment contract, offer letter or collective bargaining agreement addresses vacation leave.

a. Use of Vacation Time

Management of vacation time is the responsibility of each employee. Such time may only be used once it is accrued and may be used for scheduled absences such as vacations, as well as unscheduled absences such as lateness, family emergencies and transportation problems. Planned or foreseeable vacation time must be requested in advance and approved by the employee's administrator/manager.

Vacation schedules are subject to the approval of an employee's administrator/manager according to the following considerations in order of priority:

- Organizational Needs
- Employee Preference

Some weeks are more popular than others (i.e. holiday weeks, etc.). When a conflict between two or more employees seeking vacation leave at the same time cannot be resolved, the department manager will make the final decision. Vacation time may be taken as needed for non-exempt employees. Exempt employees must use vacation time in full-day increments.

Vacation time may not be used to provide for paid leave if an employee seeks to avoid an undesirable work assignment. If an employee refuses a work assignment and wishes to use vacation leave as a means of avoiding such assignment, a manager may not approve vacation time for such employee seeking to use vacation time in this manner. In cases when a manager approves vacation time use in order to aid an employee in refusing an undesirable assignment, both the manager's approval and the employee's refusal will be treated as a violation of this policy, which will subject both the manager and the employee to disciplinary action. In addition, any such vacation leave authorized in violation of this policy will be revoked.

Unexcused absence or tardiness from work does not become excused or approved by use of vacation time.

The Board shall require an employee to utilize any or all accrued sick, personal and vacation time during an approved FMLA and/or unpaid leave.

Requests for vacation time off should be made at least one month prior to the date to allow for coverage.

b. Overtime

Vacation time does not count toward hours worked for overtime purposes. Employees who work overtime shall not accrue vacation time for hours worked in excess of their regularly scheduled hours and/or for hours worked in excess of forty hours in one week.

c. Employment Status Change

Non-union employees who change to non-benefited status shall receive a payout of their accrued vacation time in the pay period following the pay period in which their accrued vacation time exceeds the maximum amount they would be eligible for in their new status (1 week) depending upon their new full-time equivalent ("FTE") status. If the employee has hours that exceed their new vacation maximum, they will receive a payout equal to the total hours above that new maximum. This will also apply when a part-time employee reduces their part-time status. Employees whose status changes to per diem will be paid out ½ their vacation time as described below.

d. Termination

Upon termination, non-union employees who have completed at least three (3) months of continuous service are entitled to payment of their accrued vacation time at their time of separation.

Employees who are terminated for misconduct shall not receive payout of vacation time upon termination/separation.

6.2. BOARD PAID SICK LEAVE

Unless otherwise outlined in an employee's employment contract, offer letter or collective bargaining agreement, sick leave is accrued and earned annually. Unused sick leave shall carry over from year to year, to a maximum of the work year applicable to the position in question. Employees are encouraged to manage their sick leave to maximize the opportunity to have accrued leave when needed.

6.3. STATE PAID SICK LEAVE

Connecticut General Statutes §§31-57r *et seq.* (the "Paid Sick Leave Law") requires that the Board provide up to 40 hours of paid sick leave per benefit year to qualifying employees in accordance with statutory requirements ("State Paid Sick Leave"). As Middletown offers other paid leave (such as sick, personal, or vacation leave ("Board Paid Leave")). The Board's benefit year for sick leave is July 1st through June 30th. In each benefit year, the Board permits employees to use their first 40 hours of Board Paid Leave in accordance with Paid Sick Leave Law requirements, regardless of any provision of any applicable collective bargaining, contract, or Board policy limitations on the use of Board Paid Leave. The use of such Board Paid Leave for the first 40 hours of the benefit year shall run concurrently with State Paid Sick Leave and satisfy the Board's obligations under the Paid Sick Leave Law. ***Any Board Paid Leave accrued and used in excess of 40 hours in a benefit year shall be subject to applicable collective bargaining, contract, or Board policy requirements.***

6.4. WORK RELATED INJURY LEAVE (WORKERS COMPENSATION)

a. Injury Reporting, Documentation and Pay

An employee injured on the job, however slightly, must report the injury immediately to the school Nurse, and/or if not available, to the Human Resources Department and to the building principal. After this notification, the employee or, if the employee is seriously injured and not available, the employee's manager must file a "First Report of Injury" form with the Insurance and Benefits Specialist in the Human Resources Department. If the employee is out for more than three (3) workdays, a "Wage Statement" and a "Certificate of Dependency" must also be completed.

Missed time attributable to a work-related injury shall be reported on an employee's timesheet, or the Board's time tracking program in accordance with Board coding.

In accordance with statutory requirements, the Board may make reasonable accommodations to return an employee to the employee's former position or placement within vacant similar position within employee's capabilities and qualifications. Alternate work arrangements such as temporary job reassignment or light duty restrictions may or may not be made available and required to be filled by the employee during this time.

6.5. MILITARY LEAVE

a. Routine Training, Drills and Temporary Duty

Employees who are members of the National Guard or on the Reserve List of any branch of the Federal Armed Forces, and who are requested to attend training camp, drills or temporary duty will annually be allowed up to thirty (30) days leave to attend to military duty. Additional military leave shall be without pay or may be taken as vacation time. Absence due to membership in the National Guard includes being called to duty of the Governor, and in such cases additional entitlements to maintain benefits may apply.

Employees on such leave shall be entitled to pay by the Board for the difference between their military earnings, and their base pay as a Board employee. This payment covers up to thirty days of military duty for "required field training" during a calendar year.

To be entitled to the benefits of this section, an employee is required present their administrator/manager with a copy of the orders calling for attendance at the training camp and said orders must be attached to the time sheet.

Military leave is calculated on a calendar year basis (January 1- December 31). Applicable laws shall control in the event of any conflict between those laws and these policies. A copy of the aforementioned laws is available at the Connecticut state website at www.leg.state.CT.us/statutes/statutues2.htm and at <http://uscode.house.gov>.

b. Active Duty for Other than Routine Training

Subject to specific items defined in this policy, it is the overall intent of the Board to offer protection to employees called to or volunteering for active military service, such that their employee rights will be the same, as if they had not left for such military service. If a collective bargaining agreement provides for military leave for a covered employee, the terms of the collective bargaining agreement shall control.

An employee who has not utilized military leave benefits for the calendar year (January 1 – December 31) in which the employee is called to active duty shall be eligible for benefits according to applicable federal or state law (including COBRA regulations). An employee also shall have the option to remain on vacation time status, until the employee's unused vacation time balance is exhausted, receiving all employee benefits during that time. After that time, the Board will compensate employees while in active service for the differential between the employee's military pay, which shall be computed on the military base pay received and other monetary compensation, and the amount designated as the straight-time weekly compensation for the position for the employee. A copy of the military pay voucher shall be submitted prior to authorization for payment to the employee for the period of leave. Unless required by law, the employee shall not receive benefits during this period, including the accrual of any sick or vacation time.

No employee shall suffer loss of seniority, where applicable, while on active military leave. In any case in which a person (or the person's dependents) has coverage under a health plan with the Board, including a group health plan and such person is absent from such position of employment by reason of service in the uniformed services, or such person becomes eligible for medical and dental care by law, the plan shall provide that the person may elect to continue such coverage as provided in this subsection.

In light of the fact that the military will provide full benefits for the employee and their immediate family while on active duty, the employee will be considered on military leave without pay. Beginning the first day of the month following the commencement of military benefits, the Board will cease to provide health and dental benefits for an employee subject to applicable federal and/or state law (including COBRA). If the employee elects to do so, the employee and the employee's dependents shall continue to be covered by the Board's health and dental insurance at no more than 102% of cost of said benefit. All other benefits shall be administered according to "no pay status". In addition, the Board shall reactivate an employee's health, dental, 401k and life benefits at the termination of active duty upon written notice to the Board of the employee's intention to claim restoration to the employee's former position.

An employee shall not accrue vacation time and/or disability leave benefits for the period on active duty and without pay, unless required by law.

An employee shall be responsible for any voluntary deductions and shall make payment arrangements with payroll prior to beginning the no pay status.

No employee shall suffer any loss in service credit to the Board while on full time active duty, provided that the employee returns to the Board employment within the days allowed by law depending on length of absence for active military duty.

Should this policy conflict with federal or state statutes regarding military leave, such federal or state statutes shall take precedence.

6.6. JURY LEAVE

An employee summoned to jury duty will be excused from the employee's normal work schedule for the period necessary to perform such duty. If the jury is excused from duty during working hours, the employee shall immediately report for work. It is expected that an employee shall disclose that their employer provides compensation for jury leave as described herein. Unless a jury duty benefit is specified in an employment contract, offer letter or collective bargaining agreement, an employee required to serve on a jury, and thus be absent from regular duty, shall be paid 100% of base pay by the Board for the first five days. In the event that a jury duty benefit is specified in an employment contract, offer letter or collective bargaining agreement, the terms of such agreement shall control.

In order to be excused from work for jury duty, an employee must present to their manager a copy of the letter from the court requiring the employee's appearance for jury duty and must attach it to their day sheet, and the letter from the court(s) requiring their presence.

6.7. BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

The purpose of bereavement leave is to enable an employee to take care of personal arrangements and needs caused by the death of a member of the immediate family [as defined in this section] and to relieve the employee of the concern over loss of earnings on the regularly scheduled workdays immediately following the death.

Death of Spouse, Child, Parent, Immediate Family Member

Upon the death of an employee's spouse, domestic partner, child, step-child, sibling, parent in law, and/or grandparent, the employee may request and the manager/administrator or designee may grant bereavement leave of up to three (3) working days immediately following such death without loss of pay.

In the event that a bereavement leave benefit is specified in an employment contract, offer letter or collective bargaining agreement, the terms of such agreement shall control.

6.8. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Unless otherwise covered in an employment contract, offer letter or collective bargaining agreement, upon the affirmative recommendation of the employee's manager/administrator and the Human Resources Manager and with final approval from the Superintendent (or designee), an employee may be granted a leave of absence for up to thirty (30) days and, under rare circumstances, more than thirty (30) days. Once the employee has requested and has had approved a leave of absence, the employee may be required to use any or all accrued sick or vacation time during their leave of absence.

At the expiration of a leave of absence, the employee shall return to the same or similar position within employee's capabilities and qualifications and the needs of the Board. Failure of the employee to report promptly at the expiration of such leave shall be considered a resignation. Leaves of absence of up to thirty (30) days taken under this section shall not constitute a break in service.

An employee's medical and dental benefits will terminate on the first day of the month following the thirtieth day of leave, unless the employee elects to purchase coverage under COBRA guidelines through the Board's plans. The employee will thus be responsible for any appropriate health insurance contributions during their unpaid leave in excess of thirty (30) days.

Leaves of absence under this policy are generally not allowed in conjunction with or to add time to other leaves for which the employee is eligible and has been granted, such as leave taken pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act ("FMLA") or absence due to a work-related injury.

6.9. FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

Consistent with the provisions of Connecticut and federal Family and Medical Leave Act(s) ("FMLA"), the Board provides eligible employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period relating to the birth or adoption of a child or relating to the serious health condition of the employee, or the care of a seriously family member.

In order to be eligible for leave under this policy, an employee must be an eligible employee. For purposes of this section, the 12-month period during which an eligible employee is entitled to 12 weeks' unpaid leave shall mean a rolling twelve-month period that begins on the first day of an approved Parental, Medical and/or Family leave. In order to be eligible, an employee must meet the eligibility requirements of either the Connecticut and federal Family and Medical Leave Act.

For additional information regarding FMLA leave, please review *Board Policy 4152.6 (Family and Medical Leave)*.

6.10 UNPAID LEAVE

No employee shall use unpaid leave without the written permission from the Superintendent of Superintendent's designee. Failure to comply with this policy shall be subject disciplinary action, including and up to termination of employment.

Section 7.

Benefits

7.1. PHILOSOPHY

The Board recognizes the importance of providing a comprehensive benefit package for its eligible employees and their dependents. Components of the benefit package typically include: health insurance, dental insurance, and life insurance, as well as the services of an Employee Assistance (counseling) Program and dependent and child care assistance options.

7.2. ELIGIBILITY

Unless otherwise specifically stated herein, the benefits described in this section are provided only to regular full and part-time employees. Part-time employees approved to work at least 20 hours in an average workweek shall be entitled to such benefits on a prorated basis.

Employees on a leave of absence shall not be entitled to benefits under this section during the period of absence unless entitled by policy or law or unless they are eligible to purchase benefits through the Board under COBRA guidelines.

For the purposes of employee benefits, the Board defines dependents as a spouse or a dependent child. The individuals who are considered spouses and/or dependents are determined according to applicable federal and state laws, and benefit policy. In addition, certain insurance contracts may include dependent children riders.

In the event that benefits are specified in an employment contract, offer letter or collective bargaining agreement, the terms of such agreement shall control.

7.3. MEDICAL AND HOSPITAL INSURANCE

The Board maintains medical insurance policies for all eligible employees and their dependents. All employees are required to contribute to the cost of coverage. An eligible employee will be covered on the first day of work. The benefits shall be provided as a full plan or under a group insurance policy or policies issued by an insurance company (or companies) and/or administered by third parties selected by the Board. All benefits are subject to the provisions of the policies between the Board and the insurance company and/or third party administrator. An employee's medical coverage will expire on the first day of the next month following an employee's last day of employment. An employee whose employment with the Board ends may be eligible for continued health insurance in accord with COBRA's guidelines and regulations for a period not to exceed eighteen (18) months.

7.4. DENTAL INSURANCE

The Board maintains a group dental plan for eligible employees and their dependents. Employees are required to contribute to the cost of such plan. An eligible employee will be covered on the first day of work, and their dental coverage will expire on the last day of the next month following an employee's last day of employment. An employee whose employment with the Board ends may be eligible for continued health insurance in accord with COBRA's guidelines and regulations for a period not to exceed eighteen (18) months.

7.5. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Board provides eligible employees with the services of an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The program is designed to provide personal and/or family counseling in areas such as marital or dependent relationship difficulties, alcohol and drug abuse, stress, legal or financial concerns, problems with children, and emotional problems, at no cost to the employee or the employee's immediate family

members. Participation in the EAP is confidential. Participation in or a request for EAP cannot be used to avoid discipline or termination from employment.

7.6. HEALTH CARE FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT

Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) (and Limited Flexible Spending Accounts) or Health Care Reimbursement Accounts (HCRA) allow an employee to anticipate out-of-pocket medical expenses by depositing pre-tax earnings into a flexible spending account from which the employee is reimbursed for qualified health expenses not covered by insurance. Therefore, those expenses are exempt from federal, state, and FICA taxation.

The HCRA year runs from January 1 through December 31. The enrollment period for the following plan year is December of each year. Employees who wish to continue to participate must re-enroll each year. In accordance with federal IRS guidelines, the Board will set the maximum number of dollars per plan year/per family that may be deposited in the flexible spending account, on an annual basis.

The money in this account may be used only for un-reimbursed medical and dental expenses as outlined in the IRS Code. An employee is solely responsible for their FSA, including money not used for eligible expenses during a plan year that must be forfeited under IRS guidelines.

AN EMPLOYEE IS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR FSA, INCLUDING MONEY NOT USED FOR ELIGIBLE EXPENSES DURING A PLAN YEAR THAT MUST BE FORFEITED UNDER IRS GUIDELINES.

7.7. CHILD / DEPENDENT CARE ASSISTANCE PLAN (DCAP)

a. Purpose

The Board recognizes the difficulty many parents face in locating and affording quality child/dependent care. To aid employees in this respect, the Board offers a child/dependent care benefits program. The program includes several options that coordinate with and complement each other. An employee will need to determine which option or combination of options best suits the employee's needs. It should be noted that these benefits may also be used for certain expenses incurred for the care of any incapacitated dependent of the employee.

b. Dependent Care Assistance Plan (DCAP)

The Dependent Care Assistance Plan commences on January 1st of every year. The DCAP is a salary reduction/reimbursement plan which allows employees to use tax-free dollars to pay their dependent care expenses. Dependent care includes childcare expenses as well as expenses incurred for the care of an employee's dependent (as defined by IRS regulations) who is mentally or physically incapable of self-care.

The DCAP establishes a tax-sheltered account for funds that reimburse employees for child or dependent care expenses. Employees must sign up for the plan by December, prior to the January beginning that plan year. At the start of each plan year, the employee determines how much the employee wants deducted from weekly wages (and thus, not taxed). This amount is taken out of the employee's paycheck and deposited in a DCAP account each week.

The employee must then submit receipts from the dependent care provider to the Human Resources Department no later than 9:00 A.M. the Friday of the week prior to pay dates, and the Board will reimburse the employee for their dependent care expenses through the employee's weekly payroll check. Employees may reduce their taxable income by as much as their total cost for dependent care, or the total of their earnings, but no more than the limit established by the Internal Revenue Service on an annual basis.

7.8. TRANSPORTATION

All employees who are required by the administration to drive during the course of their workday are entitled to mileage reimbursement as outlined below. Employees who drive during the workday are required to maintain adequate automobile and liability insurance coverage meeting state requirements. The District does not provide automobile insurance coverage for accidents or injuries that occur while employees are driving their own vehicles.

Mileage reimbursement will be paid at rates recommended annually by the Superintendent as part of the budget process. In general, the Board will reimburse at the IRS mileage reimbursement rate when fiscally feasible. No mileage or travel time is paid to your first official stop (office), or from an employee's last official stop (office) as these are considered an employee's commute.

Mileage and travel time will be paid to meetings when scheduled on a workday if the meeting is further away than travel to Board offices.

If an employee chooses to travel during their lunch break, which is the employee's choice, travel during that lunch break is not reimbursable.

7.9. TRANSPORTING STUDENTS

Employees are not permitted to transport students unless they have specifically received authorization to do so as part of their job duties and have appropriate licensure to do so. Students will be transported only in vehicles that have been specifically approved for student transport.

7.10. PERSONAL LIFE AND ACCIDENTAL DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT INSURANCE

a. Eligibility

Benefited employees are eligible to opt-in for Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD & D) insurance effective on date of hire. The terms of the Life and AD & D insurance policy govern eligibility and benefits. Union members, refer to your respective collective bargaining agreement.

Section 8. Employee Conduct

8.1. PHILOSOPHY

It is the expectation of the Board that all employees conduct themselves in a manner that brings credit to the organization. As a public school system, the Board's employees are expected to exemplify the highest levels of ethical behavior with each other and with our students, parents and other stakeholders in the community.

Employees are expected, at all times, to conduct themselves in a professional manner to promote the best interests of the Board.

8.2 CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR STAFF

The Board requires all Board employees to follow any applicable Board policy concerning employee conduct, maintain high ethical and professional standards, adhere to the requirements of law, and exhibit professional conduct and responsibility. Board employees shall comply with the following standards:

1. Maintain a just and courteous professional relationship with students, parents, staff members, Board members, and others.
2. Make the well-being of students the fundamental value of all decision-making and actions.
3. Fulfill professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity.
4. Support the principle of due process and protect the civil and human rights of all individuals.
5. Obey local, state, and national laws.
6. Adhere to, implement, and (as applicable) enforce the Board's policies and administrative rules and regulations.
7. Avoid using positions for personal gain through political, social, economic, or other influence.
8. Accept academic degrees or professional certification only from duly accredited institutions.
9. Maintain the standards and seek to improve the effectiveness of the profession through research and continuing professional development.
10. Honor all contracts until fulfillment, release, or dissolution mutually agreed upon by all parties to the contract.
11. Refrain from engaging or participating in any activity and/or conduct, whether on duty or off duty, that is incompatible with the proper discharge of the employee's official duties, that would tend to impair the employee's independent judgment or actions in the performance of the employee's professional duties, and/or that would erode the public's trust in the employee's ability to fulfill their professional duties.
12. Exhibit candor with supervisors and report to a supervisor any arrest or conviction of the employee that could erode the public's trust in the employee's ability to fulfill the employee's professional duties.
13. Refrain from soliciting, accepting, or receiving, directly or indirectly, from any person, by rebate, gifts, or otherwise, any money, or anything of value whatsoever, or any promise, obligation, or contract for future reward or compensation in exchange for the performance of duties as a Board employee. It is recognized that instructional personnel may receive unsolicited

gifts from time to time from students and their families, typically associated with holidays, the end of the year or other special occasions. This policy is not intended to prevent school personnel from accepting typical and customary gifts from students and their families in such circumstances.

14. Refrain from offering or providing any special consideration, treatment, favor, or advantage to any person, beyond that which is generally available to students and their families.
15. Teachers must adhere to the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers (Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies Section 10-145d-400a), which Code is incorporated herein by reference.
16. Administrators must adhere to the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for School Administrators (Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies Section 10-145d-400b), which Code is incorporated herein by reference. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Violation of any of the conditions listed in this section may be the basis for disciplinary action including, and up to recommendation for termination of employment.

8.2. BEHAVIOR OF EMPLOYEES

The belief of the Board is that certain personal conduct rules are necessary to ensure efficient operation. For purposes of examples only, this may include conduct that interferes with Board operations, discredits the Board, or is offensive to members of the public, or co-workers shall not be tolerated. Employees are, at all times, expected to act in a manner that does not cause a disruption to the educational system and that serves the best interests of the Board.

In circumstances when a claim is brought against an employee involving theft, embezzlement, violence, drug or alcohol impairment, abuse and/or neglect of a student, violations of any Board policy or expectation, or other inappropriate or unlawful behavior, the matter may [but not always] be reviewed internally by the employee's manager in coordination with the Human Resources Manager in a timely manner, and in cooperation with any local, state and federal authorities to whom the matter was reported.

In circumstance when the Human Resources Manager is not available, the Assistant Superintendent of Administration or other administrative designee shall carry out the investigation. Unless required by contract, the Board does not have any specific or required disciplinary process or any policy of "progressive discipline" regardless of conduct, behavior, performance, attendance or policy violation involved.

The District administration in its sole discretion may remove an employee from work and/or place an employee on administrative leave with or without pay pending any review of a circumstance or claim, and/or recommend termination of an employee's employment based on the nature of the conduct in question. The scope of such action varies case-by-case depending on the nature of the behavior and the information received at the time of the action taken against the employee, and rests entirely in the discretion of the District administration.

8.3. PERSONAL APPEARANCE

a. Dress Code

The District administration has established guidelines for dress and hygiene to promote the safety and comfort of students and staff, while projecting a positive, professional image to the public we serve. Each employee and volunteer should be dressed in a professional manner that is appropriate for their work environment. Staff scheduled to work on-call and weekend hours, as well as to attend professional development and educational meetings, are expected to adhere to the dress code as they would during regular work hours.

Staff (generally) is expected to dress in a business casual manner. In the spirit of this policy, staff shall not wear shorts or other non-business attire while working at any time. Staff working in certain departments, (e.g. Facilities, Maintenance, Physical Education, etc.) may be required to wear specific uniforms, and/or clothing specific to the work being performed. On designated “dress-down days” or other special clothing days, jeans or other specified clothing will be permitted for staff. Athletic staff may wear shorts or other athletic wear at athletic events and practices. It is the responsibility of all administrators/managers to address staff attire issues in a timely manner as the need arises. Employees may be required to leave work and change clothes. Staff will not be allowed to use paid time off to cover work time missed as a result of being sent home to change.

While a non-exhaustive list, employees should adhere to the following standards, unless non-compliance is otherwise required to execute an employee’s duties and responsibilities while at work and/or on school property:

1. Personal hygiene includes coming to work clean, free from body odor.
2. Hats are not permitted in the workplace, unless required for safety purposes.
3. Hair shall be clean, neat and worn in a style that prevents it from interfering with work or coming in contact with students or coworkers.
4. Facial hair (moustaches and beards) must not interfere with work or personal protective equipment.
5. Employees, on their person or their clothing, shall not display political slogans, vulgarity, overly offensive or disruptive writing or pictures, profanity, or slogans/messages that are considered discriminatory on the basis of protected class status (including but not limited to racial epithets), all of which are likely to disrupt the work and/or educational environment.
6. Employees, on their person or their clothing, shall not display any message that denotes, suggests, displays or references alcohol, drugs or related paraphernalia or other illegal conduct or activities.
7. Employees, on their person or their clothing, shall not display any message that depicts or suggests violence so as to disrupt the educational and/or working environment or that provokes others to act violently or causes others to be intimidated by fear of violence or that constitute “*fighting words*,” including but not limited to attire or accessories depicting the Confederate flag, nooses and/or the Nazi swastika.
8. Fingernails shall be clean and must be maintained a length that does not interfere with an employee’s work duties.

9. Staff footwear shall be clean, in good repair and appropriate for your job. Footwear is required at all times. It is the responsibility of all staff who work in the field, in the cafeteria, and/or other such locales to wear safe footwear so as to minimize the risk of injury.
10. Flip-flops or sandals that resemble flip-flops are not permitted.
11. Clothing shall be clean, neat and in good repair. Clothing shall fit appropriately and be professional in appearance. Denim bottoms are restricted to designated "Dress down" days.
12. Nothing in this Manual shall be construed to prohibit protective hairstyles. "Protective hairstyles" includes, but is not limited to, wigs, head wraps and hairstyles such as individual braids, cornrows, locs, twists, Bantu knots, afros and afro puffs.

b. Waiver

The Board recognizes that there may be special circumstances that prohibit staff adherence to the dress code, including for instance religious reasons. It is the employee's responsibility to discuss these circumstances with their immediate manager prior to a written waiver being issued. A copy of the waiver will be kept in Human Resources. It is the responsibility of the manager to inform new/float staff when a waiver will be necessary for environmental reasons.

c. Spirit/Special Clothing Days

Schools and/or Departments may, from time to time, designate a day/week, to be a Spirit or Special Clothing Day. In circumstances such as these, clothing requirements may be modified to adjust to the day/week theme.

8.4. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

a. Prohibited Conduct

All employees, students, visitors, volunteers and third parties present on school property, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay" or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. Conduct or communications that threaten, intimidate or coerce another employee, a student, a visitor, a volunteer and/or a third party present on school property or using school equipment will not be tolerated. This includes actions taken while using the Board's resources like email or internet. Violence can be physical and non-physical and includes the possession of firearms or dangerous weapons. For more information on the possession of firearms and deadly weapons, individuals should review *Board Policy 1600 (Possession of Deadly Weapons and Firearms)*.

Indirect or direct threats of violence, incidents of violence and suspicious activities should be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor, Human Resources, an Assistant Superintendent or the Superintendent. When reporting a threat or incident of violence, the individual should be as specific and detailed as possible. Employees and volunteers are required to document the event or incident. Employees and/or volunteers should not place themselves in peril, nor should they attempt to intercede during an incident. Employees should also consider reporting an incident to police if the employee wishes.

Investigations and Enforcement

The Board will promptly investigate all reports of threats of violence or incidents of actual violence. The identity of the individual making the report will be protected as much as possible. Retaliation against employees making good-faith reports of violence, threats or suspicious individuals or activities is prohibited and could lead to discipline including immediate termination from employment. To maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, the Board may suspend employees suspected of workplace violence or threats of violence, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Anyone found to be responsible for violence, threats of violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination of employment.

8.5. ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUG FREE WORKPLACE/CONVICTION OF CRIMES

a. Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Free Workplace

The Board seeks to promote a safe, healthy working environment for all employees and to reduce absenteeism, tardiness, and other job performance problems that may be caused by alcohol and/or drug abuse. Employees and/or volunteers shall not be involved with the unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of an illegal drug, controlled substance, or alcohol and shall not be under the influence of such substances while on school property or while conducting Board business on or off school property. Any employee or volunteer who discovers illegal drugs or alcohol on school property shall notify the Superintendent or designee who shall investigate the matter or caused it to be investigated. For more information relating to this, employees should review *Board Policy 1311 (Tobacco Free Environment)*.

The Board prohibits smoking, including smoking using an electronic nicotine delivery system (e.g. e-cigarettes) or vapor product, and the use of tobacco products on school property, including property owned, leased, contracted for, or utilized by the Board, or at any school-sponsored activity. Violations of this Section may result in disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment and/or volunteer opportunities.

b. Conviction of Crimes

An employee must report any conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on or off school property while on Board business to the Superintendent or designee within five (5) days after the conviction. The Board will notify any agency awarding a grant to the Board of such conviction within ten (10) days thereafter.

Employees and volunteers shall only use prescription drugs on school property, or during the conduct of Board business, that have been prescribed to them by a licensed medical practitioner, and such drugs shall be used only as prescribed. However, in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. § 21a-408a through 408q, the Board specifically prohibits the palliative use of marijuana on school property, at a school-sponsored activity, or during the conduct of Board business, and specifically prohibits employees from being under the influence of intoxicating substances, including marijuana used for palliative purposes, during work hours.

c. Employee Assistance

In appropriate circumstances, the Board shall provide an employee with an opportunity for rehabilitation in overcoming addiction to, dependence upon or other problem with alcohol or drugs. An employee who feels he or she has developed an addiction to, dependence upon, or other problem with alcohol or drugs is encouraged to seek assistance. Certain benefits for alcoholism or drug addiction are provided under the Board's group medical insurance plan.

An employee may be given an opportunity to participate in a rehabilitation program which requires absence from work for bona fide treatment. Such absence may be charged to the employee's accrued and unused sick leave, subject to the provisions of the employee's collective bargaining agreement and/or any applicable Board policies and regulations. Any request for assistance with a drug or alcohol problem will be treated as confidential and only disclosed to those persons who have a legitimate employment purpose in learning the information.

8.6. EMPLOYEE AND BOARD IDENTIFICATION BADGE

All Board employees are required, while on duty, to wear their Board issued employee I.D. Badge. For safety and security purposes, it is expected that all employees will immediately report the loss of their badge to their supervisor human resources and the Director of IT.

Employees are expressly forbidden from loaning, or otherwise allowing anyone other than themselves to use their ID badge for any reason.

Volunteers will comply with applicable procedures established to identify them as authorized to be on campus and/or participating in a district activity as a volunteer (such as nametags, etc.).

8.7. ATTENDANCE POLICY

a. Members of collective bargaining units shall follow the CBA where applicable in relation to attendance.

b. Approved Time Off

Requests for vacation and/or personal time off should be made one month prior to the date to allow for coverage. In the case of an emergency situation, advanced approval may be waived on a case-by-case basis. Notification to one's manager is expected in all circumstances.

c. Unapproved Time Off

Time off that does not receive prior approval from a staff member's manager, is seen as unapproved time off and may be unpaid, and/or the basis for disciplinary action.

d. Call outs/Pattern absenteeism

Calling out of work is disruptive to the daily operations of the program. If an employee has more than three call outs within a six-month period, it will be seen as a violation of this policy and may be grounds for disciplinary action including and up to termination of employment.

Scheduling, especially before and after holidays, and vacations, is difficult; pattern absenteeism, particularly around weekends and holidays, creates an undue burden on co-worker workloads. Because of this, if there are patterns of absenteeism before or after the holidays and weekends, or if an employee displays a pattern of absenteeism related to any specific aspect of their work

schedule, they should expect a dialogue with their manager to address these patterns of absenteeism with a goal of eliminating the patterns.

e. No call/No show

With the exception of an emergency situation noted above, an employee who neither contacts their manager, nor shows up for work will be seen as a no call/no show and in violation of this policy. A no call/no show violation may result in disciplinary action. If an employee has two no call/no show episodes in any six-month period, it may result in disciplinary action including but not limited to loss of pay and/or termination of employment.

8.12 WORKPLACE EQUITY

The Board is committed to the success of every employee and to achieving its mission of ensuring that all students graduate ready for college, career, and life. The Board believes that the responsibility for student success is broadly shared by district staff, administrators, instructors, volunteers, communities, and families. The Middletown Public Schools is committed to using the Disruptive Equity Framework within the District. This framework will drive the District's work in closing gaps in opportunity, belief, quality, and preparation. It will create learning communities that provide support and professional academic enrichment programs for all students by disrupting and dismantling racism and other systems of oppression that prevent marginalized groups from achieving.

Additionally, the Board is committed to creating inclusive, responsive, and respectful learning environments for all students. These environments will provide all students access, opportunity, and support for high academic achievement and socioemotional wellbeing. It is the right of every student to have an equitable educational experience within the District. The Board is committed to empowering and building the capacity of all staff by providing them with equitable access to professional learning opportunities, resources, and support. This learning will help teachers and staff maximize students' physical, psychological, and socioemotional well-being and academic success.

Discrimination in any form will not be tolerated. The Board and District adopt proactive policies and practices that are designed to create a safe environment that provides students full access to all opportunities. This requires all MPS staff and volunteers to examine and redress implicit biases embedded within the intrapersonal and interpersonal relations and institutional and societal structures.

8.13 CIVILITY/RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATIONS AND ACTIONS

a. Purpose

The Board expects civility and respectful communications among district employees, students, parents, volunteers and the public. In the interest of presenting all adults as positive role models for students, the Board encourages positive communication and discourages harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening communication or actions, some of which may be against the law. The intent of this policy is to maintain a civil, respectful environment for teachers, students, administrators, staff, parents, volunteers and other members of the school community. The following describes expected standards for staff, students, parents, volunteers and members of the public while at school, on school property or at a school function.

b. Standards for Communications

The Board expects staff, students, parents, volunteers and members of the public while at school, on school property or at a school function to communicate and act in a manner that promotes respect for the dignity and worth of all individuals, regardless of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, socio-economic status, veteran status or role within the school community. All adults participating in the school community are expected to communicate and act in a manner that consistently provides positive role models for students. The Board will regulate communications and actions by staff, students, parents, volunteers and members of the public while at school, on school property or at a school function, when such communications or actions are contrary to these fundamental principles.

Specifically, the Board will regulate disruptive communications and/or actions by members of the school community that:

- 1) interfere, disrupt or undermine the effective operation of the school district;
- 2) are used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications;
- 3) create a hostile environment;
- 4) breach confidentiality obligations of school district employees or volunteers; or
- 5) violate the law, board policies and/or other school rules and regulation.

Examples of Disruptive Communications/Actions

Disruptive Communications/Actions include, but are not limited to:

- Using loud and/or offensive language (for example, swearing or display of temper).
- Invading another person's space by moving close to the individual in an aggressive manner.
- Threatening to do physical harm to a teacher, school administrator, school employee, student, volunteer or member of the community.
- Damaging, destroying or threatening to destroy or damage school property.
- Harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening verbal, written or electronic communications.
- Any other behavior which disrupts the orderly operation of the school, a school activity, or any other activity sponsored by the school district.

Notwithstanding the provisions of this policy, the Board acknowledges that individuals on school property and attending school events have rights under the First Amendment to engage in protected speech. Nothing in this policy is intended to abridge such rights. The Board will resolve any conflict between this policy and applicable law in favor of the law.

c. Student, Parent, Member of the Public Reports

Any member of the school community who believes they have been subject to communications and/or actions on the part of a staff member or volunteer in violation of this policy should bring such behavior to the attention of the building principal and/or the Superintendent's office. Any member of the school community who believes they have been subject to communications and/or actions on the part of a student in violation of this policy should bring such behavior to the attention of the building principal. Reports regarding other

individuals present on school property may be made to either the building principal and/or the Superintendent's office.

d. Disciplinary Consequences

Employees found to be in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action. Students found to be in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Board's policy concerning Student Discipline. Employees found to be in violation of this policy may be subjected to disciplinary action, including and up to recommendation for termination of employment. Other members of the school community may be asked to refrain from such communications and/or asked to leave school property or a school function. Repeat violations may result in a long-term denial of access to school property, school buildings, or activities sponsored by the school district.

Section 9.

Separation

9.1. PHILOSOPHY

Non-union employees are “At-Will” employees, and the Board or the employee may end the employment at any time, for any reason.

9.2. VOLUNTARY TERMINATION

Employees are requested to give the Board written notice of their intent to resign. This should take the form of a letter/email written to an employee’s administrator/manager, the Human Resources Department, and/or the Superintendent. Unless otherwise addressed in a collective bargaining agreement, benefited employees who have completed three months of work are entitled to be paid for 100% of their unused vacation leave when they voluntarily resign. For the purposes of calculating vacation time accruals, and any other employee benefits, the employee's last day of actual work shall be considered the last day of employment and at that time the employee's active status ends. Vacation leave may not be used during the resignation notice period. The Board has the right in its sole discretion to pay an employee for any notice period in lieu of having the employee work.

Employees who are absent from work for three consecutive days without being excused or giving proper notice will be considered as having voluntarily resigned without giving proper notice and their employment will be terminated at that time.

9.3. INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION

In the event that standards and/or procedures for termination are specified in an employment contract, offer letter or collective bargaining agreement, the terms of such agreement shall control. For all other employees:

a. Discharge/Dismissal

1. An employee may be discharged (dismissed) for reasons including but not limited to misconduct, insubordination, performance, behavior and/or policy violation. All employees shall comply with the Board’s standards of behavior and performance and any noncompliance with these standards must be remedied. The Board determines in its discretion whether employee misconduct, performance, behavior or other reason exists for ending employment.

The Board does not have any specific or required disciplinary process or any policy of “progressive discipline” regardless of conduct, behavior, performance, attendance or policy violation involved. The Board reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to offer coaching and/or counseling to attempt to provide employees with notice of deficiencies and an opportunity to improve however, each circumstance is handled on a case-by-case basis. The Board, at its sole discretion, may place an employee on administrative leave (paid or unpaid) if it feels that such leave is warranted.

A recommendation for dismissal, even without prior coaching or notice, may occur in certain circumstances. An employee dismissed under such circumstances will not be

eligible for wages in lieu of notice. A reason justifying this kind of circumstance, is determined solely by the Board on a case-by-case basis but for illustrative purposes only may include the following:

1. The commission of any act or omission that would constitute a felony or a misdemeanor involving: illegal possession, use, or distribution of a regulated drug; larceny; assault; fraud; theft or miss-use of other's property; lewd or lascivious conduct whether work related or not; involving minors; or any other conduct whether work related or not that impacts the effectiveness of the employee, disrupts the work/educational environment and/or undermines the school district's effectiveness.
2. The use or possession of firearms or other weapons on Board property, school-sponsored activity or work function.
3. The possession (external or internal) or consumption of alcohol, narcotics, or other regulated drugs (without express written permission) on Board property, school-sponsored activity or work function, or any other violation of the Board's drug and alcohol policy.
4. Theft, destruction, defacement, or misuse of property belonging to the Board, another employee of the Board, or any individual affiliated with the school community.
5. Falsifying or improperly altering a Board record or report, including but not limited to applications for employment, state or professionally issued licenses (or correspondence related to same), insurance documentation, medical reports, production records, time records, expense accounts, absentee reports, fund raising reports, parent correspondence, student records, grant documentation, shipping and receiving records or any other records required to be maintained as part of employment or your job.
6. Insubordination, the refusal to follow, or the disregard of management's instructions concerning job related matters or the failure to follow work related instructions or duties.
7. Threatening, intimidating or abusive conduct or speech directed at management, managers, coworkers, parents, students, volunteers, vendors, or other third parties affiliated with the school community.
8. Sexual harassment or other protected class harassment.
9. Willful misrepresentation or improper disclosure of documentation or information.
10. Use of Board time for personal use without specific permission from management.
11. Absence without prior notification.
12. Conduct that involves a conflict of interest.
13. Any other conduct or violation of the Board policy or protocol that, in the Board's sole discretion, is detrimental to management, managers, coworkers, parents, students, volunteers, vendors, or other third parties affiliated with the school community, or the policy[ies], mission or reputation of the Board.

b. General Provision

An administrator/manager may recommend immediate suspension of an employee, with or without pay, and/or recommend termination of the employee's employment. Employees suspended from work will not receive pay or accrue any employee benefits during the suspension, unless the Superintendent (or designee) grants an exception at their sole discretion.

The Human Resources Manager and/or the Assistant Superintendent of Administration shall review and approve all recommendations for termination from employment before any final action is taken.

All final wages will be paid in accordance with the applicable state and federal laws. It will be the responsibility of the employee's immediate manager for securing the return of identification badges, keys, Board equipment, access codes and passwords for electronic data and district records in the possession of the employee. If the employee owes the Board any money or is responsible for any lost or damaged property, such accounts are to be settled as originally agreed or by deduction from final wages, unless prohibited by law.

The Human Resource department is responsible for notifying employees whose employment has been terminated who are covered by the Board's group health plan of their right to continue coverage under that plan in accordance with COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act).

In accordance with applicable law, the Board may report the circumstances of termination from employment to an appropriate licensing authority and/or state agency.

Section 10. Miscellaneous Policies

10.1. RECEIPT OF GIFTS AND / OR GRATUITIES

Board employees shall not accept any gift or gratuity from any person, client, company or organization with whom the Board transacts any business, or from any person within or outside the Board employment whose interests may be affected by an employee's performance or non-performance of Board duties. A “*gift or gratuity*” is defined as an item over twenty dollars (\$20) in value that would not be considered a business expense by the Board. An employee who receives an unsolicited gratuitous gift is encouraged to donate the item to a non-profit organization on behalf of the employees of the Board.

10.2. OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

- a. An employee's primary employment responsibility shall be to the Board. No employee shall engage in any outside business activities during normal working hours other than their regular duties.
- b. Outside employment that occurs during an employee's non-working hours for the Board which interferes with the employee's job performance with or results in a conflict of interest for the Board or the employee is prohibited and shall be grounds for action. If a manager or designee deems that such outside employment interferes with an employee's job performance, affects the Board's business operations or is a conflict of interest, the manager will notify the employee in writing stating the reasons for the conflict of interest and a date by which either the outside or the Board employment must cease. Outside activities covered by this policy may also include non-profit or volunteer matters.
- c. Board employees who work or provide services for individuals who presently are, or become, students of the Board or immediate family members of such students are required to notify the Board of this immediately. While an employee may be able to continue to provide services to a student or an immediate family member of a student outside of work hours, disclosure is required. This requirement and policy provision apply regardless if the employee is providing such services through another organization, privately or on a volunteer basis. Any work done for a student or an immediate family member of a student privately (unassigned by the Board), will be seen as non-work related, and the Board will not be responsible for work, acts or omissions done while engaged in the private work including but not limited to tracking time, for pay or benefits, or any aspect of the care being provided including liability, worker's compensation, or other legal obligation.

10.3. ANTI-NEPOTISM

Purpose

It is the policy of the Board to recruit and hire qualified applicants for employment within the District while avoiding both nepotism and the appearance of nepotism.

No relative or immediate family member of the Superintendent of Schools (“Superintendent”) shall be hired to any position of employment. No immediate family member of a Board member or any other district-level administrator shall be hired to any position of employment. No individuals shall be hired in a position of employment that would result in a supervisory or evaluative relationship between a current

employee and a relative. No employee may be involved in the process of screening for advancement in the application process, interviewing or hiring of relatives.

Employees will not be hired, promoted, transferred or assigned to work in positions in the same school or work unit or department in which a relative is already employed, unless the Superintendent approves such an assignment in writing. No administrator or supervisor shall supervise any of relatives. Employees will not be hired, promoted, transferred or assigned to work in positions in which they will have access to confidential information regarding a relative, such as, but not limited to, information regarding benefits selections, confidential medical information or personnel records that are not subject to public disclosure. No individuals shall be hired in a position of employment that would result in a supervisory or evaluative relationship between a current employee and a relative.

For additional information regarding restrictions, disclosure and recusal requirements relating to the employment of Board employee's immediate family and relatives, please review *Board Policy 4112.8 (Nepotism)*.

10.4. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

It is the policy of the Board to promote an ethical work environment. It is an expectation that staff and volunteers will avoid engaging in any activity, practice or conduct that conflicts with, or could be perceived to conflict with, the interests of the Board and/or the interests and education of our students.

No employee shall participate to any extent in any matter on behalf of the District if the employee, a business with which the employee is associated, an individual with whom the employee is associated, or a member of the employee's immediate family, has a financial interest in the transaction or contract, including but not limited to the sale of material, supplies or services to the District. If such participation is within the scope of the official responsibility of the employee, as soon as possible after the employee becomes aware of such conflict of interest, the employee shall submit written disclosure which sets forth in detail the nature and extent of such interest to the employee's supervisor.

No employee or volunteer shall disclose confidential information concerning District affairs, nor shall such employee or volunteer use such information for their own financial interests or the financial interests of others.

No employee or volunteer shall request or permit the use of District funds, services, District owned vehicles, equipment, facilities, materials or property for personal use, except when such are available to the public generally or are provided by written official Board policy or contract for the use of the District.

No employee or volunteer may use their position or office for their own financial interests, the financial interests of a business with which the employee associated, the financial interests of an individual with whom the employee is associated, or the financial interests of a member of the employee's immediate family.

10.5. USE OF BOARD PROPERTY

a. In General

As Board employees and volunteers, we are all entrusted with the care of any Board property that we may use in the course of our duties. For purposes of this policy, the term “*property*” is intended as an all-inclusive term to cover all items owned, rented, leased or otherwise under the control of the Board and to include all office and computer equipment and software, telephones, supplies, machinery, vehicles or any other items.

The defacement, vandalism, damage, loss, destruction or reckless use of Board property by an employee or volunteer is expressly prohibited. Violation of any provision of this policy, intentional or unintentional, may result in action up to and including recommendation of dismissal from employment, denial of further volunteer opportunities, denial of future access to the use of the equipment, restitution for any costs to the Board, and other civil liability.

b. Operation of Board Vehicle(s)

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for Board vehicles (assignments of use, maintenance and repairs). Employees must possess a valid driver’s license in order to operate a Board vehicle. Smoking is prohibited in Board vehicles. All employees are required to use seat belts when using Board vehicles and comply with all motor vehicle regulations while operating the vehicle. Use of wireless devices, phones or music is prohibited unless such use is hands free and does not distract the employee from safe operation of the vehicle. Employees who violate motor vehicle regulations while operating the Board vehicle are solely responsible for the outcome and, depending on the circumstances of the violation, may be ineligible for future use.

c. Computer System and Electronic Communications

Computers, computer networks, electronic devices, Internet access, and electronic messaging systems are effective and important technological resources. The Board has installed computers and a computer network(s), including Internet access and electronic messaging systems, on Board premises and may provide other electronic devices that can access the network(s) and/or have the ability to send and receive messages with an operating system or network communication framework. Devices include but are not limited to personal computing devices, cellular phones, Smartphones, Smartwatches, network access devices, radios, personal cassette players, CD players, tablets, walkie-talkies, personal gaming systems, Bluetooth speakers, personal data assistants, and other electronic signaling devices. Electronic messaging systems include mobile, chat, and instant message; cloud collaboration platforms, including internal chat, peer-to-peer messaging systems, and draft email message transfer; and products that have the ability to create duration-based or subjective removal of content, such as Snapchat, and security focused platforms, such as Signal. The Board’s computers, computer networks, electronic devices, Internet access, and electronic messaging systems are referred to collectively as “the computer systems” and are provided in order to enhance both the educational opportunities for our students and the business operations of the District.

These computer systems are business and educational tools. As such, they are made available to Board employees and volunteers for business and education-related uses. The District administration has developed regulations setting forth procedures designed to ensure that such computer systems are used for appropriate business and education-related purposes. These regulations can be accessed here: <https://sites.google.com/mpsct.org/middletownboe/4000-series-personnel-certifiednon-certified?authuser=0>.

In accordance with applicable laws and the regulations associated with this policy, the system administrator and others managing the computer systems may access electronic messaging systems (including email) or monitor activity on the computer system or electronic devices accessing the computer systems at any time and for any reason or no reason. Typical examples include when there is reason to suspect inappropriate conduct or there is a problem with the computer systems needing correction. Further, the system administrator and others managing the computer systems can access or monitor activity on the systems despite the use of passwords by individual users and can bypass such passwords. In addition, review of electronic messaging systems (including email), messages or information stored on the computer systems, which can be forensically retrieved, includes those messages and/or electronic data sent, posted and/or retrieved using social networking sites, including but not limited to, Twitter/X, Facebook (Meta), LinkedIn, Instagram (Meta), YouTube and TikTok.

Incidental personal use of the computer systems may be permitted solely for the purpose of email transmissions and access to the Internet on a limited, occasional basis. Such incidental personal use of the computer systems, however, is subject to all rules, including monitoring of all such use, as the Superintendent may establish through regulation. Moreover, any such incidental personal use shall not interfere in any manner with work responsibilities.

Users should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of the computer system or other electronic devices that access the computer system. Use of the computer system represents an individual's acknowledgement that the individual has read and understands this policy and any applicable regulations in their entirety, including the provisions regarding monitoring and review of computer activity.

10.6. SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

The Board recognizes the importance and utility of social media and networks for its employees. The laws regarding social media continue to evolve and change. Nothing in this policy is intended to limit an employee's right to use social media or personal online accounts under applicable law, as it may evolve. The Board acknowledges, for example, that its employees have the right under the First Amendment, in certain circumstances, to speak out on matters of public concern. The Board will resolve any conflict between this policy and applicable law in favor of the law.

Ordinarily, the use of social media by employees, including employees' use of personal online accounts, will not be a legal or policy issue. While a policy cannot address every instance of inappropriate social media use, employees must refrain from personal social media use that:

- 1) interferes, disrupts or undermines the effective operation of the school district or is used to engage in harassing, defamatory, obscene, abusive, discriminatory or threatening or similarly inappropriate communications (e.g., when such speech relates to a matter of public concern and its disruptive impact outweighs the importance of the speech);
- 2) creates a hostile work environment;
- 3) breaches confidentiality obligations of school district employees; or

- 4) violates the law, Board policies and/or other school rules and regulations.

Employees' official social media use will be addressed as speech pursuant to duty under applicable First Amendment principles.

The Superintendent has adopted administrative regulations to implement this policy. These regulations can be accessed here: <https://sites.google.com/mpsct.org/middletownboe/4000-series-personnel-certifiednon-certified?authuser=0>.

10.7. BUSINESS-RELATED TRAVEL

a. Travel Authorization

1. Prior to traveling on Board business requiring an overnight stay or expenditure of training funds, a Board Conference Workshop Request Form must be filled out and approval must be obtained from the Manager, Human Resources Department. All travel must be approved in advance by the employee's administrator/manager, their respective Assistant Superintendent, and, in some cases, the Superintendent. All approvals must be received prior to committing Board to any financial obligations including, but not limited to, airline tickets, hotel rooms, meal costs, and registration fees.
2. The Board will base its reimbursement limitations on the calculations set by the Federal GSA Per Diem Calculator. In order to better plan for out of town, business related travel, please visit the Federal GSA Per Diem website at <https://perdiemcalc.net/gsa/>. This will give employees a general frame of reference for reimbursement limits while traveling. Employees who spend more than outlined at this website, may only be reimbursed for the costs listed for the respective city/town visited. With the approval of the Superintendent or designee, exceptions may be granted from time to time based on the nature of the travel.

b. Travel Arrangements

1. All travel arrangements must be coordinated through an employee's department manager. In general, travel arrangements must result in the most economical use of Board resources. The Department Supervisor, in collaboration with the employee, shall coordinate all necessary arrangements, including registration fees, lodging, air travel, vehicle rental and any other travel arrangements prior to the departure date.
2. Employees requesting reimbursement for mileage while traveling for official business in their own vehicle will be reimbursed for that travel according to current Board mileage reimbursement rates.
3. Employees are welcome to work with the Superintendent's Office for unique arrangements. While the District will make significant effort to address all requests, special accommodations that result in an economic disadvantage to the Board may ultimately be denied.

c. Transportation

1. Airfare

The Board has the right to choose the most cost effective airlines and may require an employee to travel on a Saturday to take advantage of reduced airfare. If Saturday travel is necessary, the Board will pay the associated hotel and meal costs. Arrangements should be made early enough to take advantage of advance purchase discounts when possible. Coach/economy air fares are permitted. Upgrades (such as to first class or business class) will not be reimbursed.

Participation in a frequent flyer program is not ground for an employee to select a more expensive flight. Airport parking fees for vehicles arriving and departing will be reimbursed.

2. Ground Transportation

A rental vehicle may be considered if the type of trip or location of meeting is such that use of local transportation (taxis, airport shuttle, and buses) is not practical or is more expensive. Rental vehicles shall be reserved and rented at the lowest applicable rate available.

The Board will only reimburse for the use of compact or mid-size rental vehicles. The cost of a full size car will only be allowed if there are more than 3 passengers or a larger size vehicle is provided at no extra charge above the compact or mid-size rate.

d. Receipts

Original receipts must accompany all expenses.

Travelers wishing to be reimbursed for their expenses after the travel event will be reimbursed within thirty (30) business days of returning from their travel event provided required documentation is timely provided. Employees are to submit all receipts to the accounting office in a timely manner.

Employees are encouraged to take advantage of meals and other expenses that are included in the price of the event (e.g. conference registration fees) in order to avoid incurring additional expenses.

e. Two or More Employees

1. When two or more employees travel together, each employee must complete a Conference Workshop Request Form.
2. The Board may limit the number of employees attending the same conference, seminar, etc.

f. Compensation

Compensation for non-exempt employees for time spent on business related travel shall be in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act as it applies to the following situations:

1. Travel time during the work day. Time spent in travel as part of the department's business will be counted as time worked (including weekends).
2. One day out of town travel. Travel time that is at the Board's request (except for meal periods), occurring outside of an employee's normal working hours will be counted as time worked. This policy covers employees who are required to attend orientation or training at a location other than their regularly assigned work location. Travel time

between the employee's home and the point of departure is excluded from the time worked.

3. Overnight travel. If travel occurs during normal working hours on working or non-working days (i.e., Saturday or Sunday for an employee who works Monday to Friday) then the travel time will be counted as hours worked.

g. Lodging

1. Reasonable and necessary accommodations will be reimbursed (as noted above). Employees traveling with a spouse or other non-employee will be responsible for all expenses incurred above the single room rate.
2. If there is a significant financial advantage to the department for an employee to extend a business trip (stay an extra day) it is requested that an employee do so, unless such a situation would cause undue hardship to the employee.
3. The Board will not reimburse the employee for non-conventional lodging (staying with a friend or relative).
4. Corporate discount rates will be obtained by the Human Resources Department, whenever possible.

10.8. EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL RECORDS

- a. Personnel actions may be documented to ensure accurate maintenance of personnel records relative to an employee's employment history, personal status, and leave information.
- b. Personnel files shall be maintained for each Board employee and shall be considered confidential, to the extent provided by law. A current employee or the employee's designated representative (designation shall be in writing and signed by the employee) shall have access to all information contained within the employee's personnel file during normal business hours and by appointment. Additional access to an employee's personnel file may be provided by district officials in accordance with law. Normally, access is restricted to the following personnel: the employee's manager(s), the employee's department head, the Board's legal counsel, Superintendent and the Human Resources staff.
- c. Personnel files will be stored securely by the Human Resources Department. Access to the files must be through a member of the Human Resources Staff. Personnel records shall be kept by the Human Resources Department, which shall be responsible for designating the official version of such documents. As an aid in the performance planning and review process, copies of and/or access to such records may be retained by supervisors (in a secure location) as appropriate. Such records are subject to all of the same confidential access regulations contained in this section.
- d. All official records concerning former employees shall be sent to and stored by the Human Resources Department until disposition under the document retention policy. In the event that an employee changes jobs resulting in a change in the employee's manager, the initial manager shall forward all personnel and personnel related files to the Human Resources Department.
- e. Written record of any disciplinary action should generally not be placed in an employee's file without notification to the employee.
- f. No information shall be maintained in a personnel file or altered, removed or destroyed without the knowledge and permission of the Human Resources Manager.

- g. Information that is not relevant to the employee's job performance or otherwise not work-related should not be retained in any personnel file.
- h. Other employee information, including but not limited to medical files, grievances, DCF related information and records of employee investigations shall be stored separately by the Human Resources department and shall be considered confidential in compliance with applicable federal, state and local law.
- i. All personnel records are solely the property of the Board. Former employees have no right to copy or access personnel records of any kind except as permitted by law and Board policy, as administered by Human Resources staff under the direction of the Human Resource Manager.

10.9. POSTING OF NOTICES/ SOLICITATION

Board employees wishing to post notices, (for example, non-District events, sales, rentals, etc.) must submit the notice to the Superintendent's Office for approval prior to posting. Notices posted without proper approval will be removed. Notices will be posted designated locations only. No employee shall engage in any solicitation for any reason not work related with any person, co-worker, vendor, manager or client in/on Board property or during work hours unless approved in advance by the Superintendent or designee.

10.10. MEDIA CONTACT

The only personnel authorized to interact with the media and/or local, state and federal authorities are the Director of Communications, the Board Chair, the Superintendent or designee. When a Board employee is contacted by the media and/or local, state or federal authorities, the employee shall take the person's name and telephone number and report the contact to the Director of Communications and/or the Superintendent's office immediately.

10.11. WORKPLACE LACTATION POLICY

Choosing to breastfeed a child is an important personal decision a new mother makes. The Board supports employees' who choose to care for their child's nutrition in this manner.

Employees who are breastfeeding shall be allowed a flexible schedule for nursing or pumping. The time allowed will not exceed the normal time allowed for lunch and breaks. If additional time is needed (above and beyond the normal breaks/meal time allowed,) the manager and employee will collaborate to agree upon a plan that may an alternative schedule during the period of in which the employee is breastfeeding a child.

In addition, the Board has designated private spaces that are available for employees to breastfeed their children or express milk using a breast pump. These spaces have electrical outlets for the breast pumps as well as a table and chair. Breastfeeding employees may, in their discretion, also use any restroom. Board refrigerators located in kitchen areas may be used for temporary storage of the expressed breast milk. Breastfeeding employees shall provide their own containers and milk will be clearly labeled with name and date.

10.12. MEDIA CONSENT POLICY

In order to assist the Board in the areas of education, teaching, recruitment, public information, etc., it is necessary for the Board to occasionally use its employees, volunteers or agents (actual or likeness), to interview and/or record in any format (written, audio, video, still photography, web, multimedia and all future forms), the person named and/or their original work described below.

Employees and volunteers understand that by signing the Media consent form they are granting the Board exclusive rights in perpetuity to own and use, and to authorize others to use in any print and electronic media (present and future formats) its choice of interviews and images, voice and likeness and to use the individual's name in connection with these activities. Any such media in which the employee or volunteer is depicted will be and remain the exclusive property of the Board. Photos may be taken as needed.

Employees/volunteers have the right to withdraw their authorization, but that withdrawal must be submitted in writing to the Human Resources Department and the specific request must be outlined in the letter prior to any action being taken. If the letter is not written, the Board cannot control possible re-disclosure by others after original distribution.

Refusal to sign the agreement will not prevent an employee from employment with the Board or a volunteer from serving. Employees and volunteers hereby waive any rights to compensation in connection with the use of any information pursuant to this authorization.

This authorization is granted to the Board as well as its agents and employees.

The copy of this authorization form is provided to the person signing the authorization. The original is retained electronically.