



Welcome

Welcome to Blue Ridge CUSD #18. We are pleased that you have joined our District and welcome you to help continue the successful education of our students.

We are fortunate enough to have outstanding employees who work as a team and provide for a successful District. You have been carefully chosen as a team member because you exhibited those characteristics, which will allow us to continue to provide quality education to our students. Welcome to our team.

Sincerely,

| ~~Susan Wilson~~ [Dr. Hillary Stanifer](#), Superintendent
Blue Ridge CUSD #18

History

Overview:

Since 1985 the Blue Ridge School District has provided for the educational needs of the Farmer City, Mansfield, and Bellflower communities. Following is an outline of important dates in the history of the school district.

Blue Ridge High School and District Dates:

05/24/84 - "Committee of Ten" formed and proposed a merger of the Bellflower dual districts and the Farmer City – Mansfield district. The group was composed of board members past and present from the communities. Dr. Elfers, Gary Fugh, Darwin Built, Bob Zimmerman, and Don Savage represented Bellflower. The FCM district members were David Vance, Maurice Howe, Phil Richards, Gene Houser, and Stan Huffstutler.

06/26/84 - Thirty-seven people displayed strong emotions for and against the merger at an REO meeting.

Pro statements included:

1. Saving of \$375000
2. Better tax rate
3. Expanded course offerings
4. Expanded extracurricular activities
5. State incentives for merger

Negative statements included:

1. Loss of community identity
2. Busing of students
3. Close of buildings
4. Offers from other districts for Bellflower

09/20/84 - Gentlemen's agreement on the number of board members from each community stated as Farmer City – 3, Mansfield – 2, and Bellflower – 2

11/01/84 - **Farmer City Journal** supports the merger in the editorial.

11/06/84 – The merger passes 1013 "yes" to 754 "no" with 90% of the vote counted. The merger was defeated in Mansfield and Bellflower but was passed by a wide majority in Farmer City.

11/22/84 - A meeting of the combined boards, teacher group officers, and state officials discuss the mechanics of the merger. Teacher lay-offs and choice of administrators were part of the topics.

02/13/85 - Blue Ridge was chosen as the new school district name. Student and community groups helped choose the name.

02/28/85 - The new board is voted in with three members from Farmer City (David Vance, Jimmy Froman, and Tom Yeagle), three from Bellflower (Royal

Springer, John Leonard, and Bob Zimmerman), and one from Mansfield (Charles Campbell).

- 3/14/85 – A final RIF list of 15 is presented to the teachers.
- 4/4/85 – Dr. Allan Hall was selected as the first Blue Ridge superintendent.
- 5/9/85 – Ken Reed was hired as the Blue Ridge High School principal.
- 6/1/85 – The first official day of the Blue Ridge unit district.
- 8/12/85 – Teaching and coaching assignments completed
- 8/22/85 – First day of student attendance at Blue Ridge.
- 8/30/85 – The Blue Ridge Knights defeated Illiopolis 19 – 12 in their first football game.
- 10/25/85 – Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers filed their notice of intent to strike
- 11/1/85 – First contract settled in 11th hour negotiations
- 5/22/86 – The first graduation held with Bev Thomas as valedictorian.
- 7/17/86 – Don Albracht becomes the new superintendent after the resignation of Dr. Allan Hall.
- 2/28/88 – The Boys and Girls basketball teams both win the McLean county tournament (a first for both squads to do so in the same year).
- 8/15/88 – Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers filed a notice of intent to strike after talks break down.
- 8/22/88 – The Federation Teachers walk out. The strike lasts for 14 school days. Community, board, and teacher relations are strained. Sub teachers are brought in the last two days of the strike at increased rates. 62% attendance was reported at the high school. Media was on site each day. Parents and students were divided on which side to support.
- 9/9/88 – Strike settled! The agreement ended the 3rd longest strike in Illinois (up to that date). The settlement included 4 days to be made up. All of the administrators and 6 of the 7 board members were gone by the next contract year or election. The staff lost 12% of their members during this period after this strike (retirement and general attrition). Settlements have been made before the beginning of each school year since. Hard feelings still exist in some areas.

- 12/31/88 – The Marching Blue Ridge Knights perform at the Gator Bowl in Jacksonville, Florida. 92 members and 16 chaperones collect the \$32000 for the trip.
- 6/15/89 – Len Harrington was assigned as the third Blue Ridge superintendent and Ron Conner as the second principal of Blue Ridge.
- 6/30/91 – Bellflower Grade School and Franklin School in Farmer City are closed.
- 7/1/93 – Dr. Rich Leahy hired as superintendent after the retirement of Len Harrington.
- 7/25/94 – Allison White was assigned the principal position at Blue Ridge High School as Ron Conner moves to a similar position at Clinton High School.
- August 1997 – A 10.5 Million dollar proposal to build a new high school was presented. Life safety codes and American Disabilities Act problems were considered in the proposal.
- November 1997 – The vote on the proposal was defeated 1058 – 659. The board will consider other proposals.
- January, 1998 – Allison White was named Interim Superintendent and Richard Kelley was named Interim Principal at BRHS. Later that year they were made permanent in their positions.
- August 1998 – A new proposal of 9.1 million was considered by the board and administration. The State would help with 1.4 million in funds. The amount was later corrected to 8.87 million dollars.
- 11/3/98 – The new building proposal for Blue Ridge High School vote passed 1314- 735.
- Late 1998 and early 1999 – BLDD of Decatur was selected as the architects for the project and Felmley-Dickerson of Bloomington as the main construction contractor. Problems that emerged and that were solved during this and the early building process included the “berm” to the west of the school for flood control, a new transformer for electricity, and parking during the project.
- Early 1999 – A three step project was accepted for the project:
1. Build the major classroom section in the existing parking lot.
 2. Modernize the band, T and I and Ag wing.
 3. Tear down the old class room section and build the new gym.

The first two parts were to be completed by August of 2000 and the gym in the spring of 2001.

- 6/21/1999 – Building of the new high school begins.
- March 2000 – The old Bellflower School was torn down.
- Spring 2000 - Eric Runck hired as principal at BRHS to replace Richard Kelley on his retirement. Susan Wilson hired as principal at Schneider School to replace Karen Bradd on her retirement.
- May, 2000 – High School teachers have from May 26 to June 2 to pack materials for the new building.
- June 19, 2000 – The 1911 High School section is torn down.
- Aug. 22, 2000 – The new building and revitalized wing are set for the opening of school.
- March, 2001 – The High School quiz bowl team becomes the first Blue Ridge High school team to qualify for the sweet “16” in an IHSA event. All Staters Matt Plunk and Scott Gercken were the top scorers on the 49 and 15 team.
- May 2001 – The Blue Ridge High School class of 2001 graduation was held in the newly completed gym. Valedictorian Matt Plunk and Salutatorian Brant Hendricks led the class into the new gym.
- Summer 2001 – Dr. Nancy Gibson hired to replace Allison White as Superintendent when Mrs. White took a position as Assistant Superintendent for Champaign Schools
- Summer 2002 – Dr. Todd Koehl hired as principal at BRHS to replace Mr. Runck who took a position as principal in the Chicago suburbs.
- Spring 2003 – Schneider School received the ISBE Academic Improvement Award.
- Spring 2004 – The district passed a referendum to raise the Education Fund tax rate.
- Summer 2004 – Dr. Gibson took a position as Superintendent in O’Fallon, IL. For the 2004-2005 school year the district was served by two Interim Superintendents, Jerry Overby and Guy Parr. In September 2004, Schneider School was awarded the US Dept. of Education Blue Ribbon Award.
- 2005 – Jay Harnack was hired as Superintendent. John Lawrence hired as principal at BRHS when Dr. Koehl took a position as Assistant Superintendent at O’Fallon with Dr. Gibson.

Schneider School and Blue Ridge Junior High received the ISBE Academic Improvement Awards in 2006 and 2007, respectively.

- 2009-2010 – BRHS was named one of the top 8% of high schools in US News and World Report.
- June, 2010 – Susan Wilson was named Interim Superintendent when Jay Harnack took a position as Superintendent in Pinedale, Wyoming. Paige Trimble, Social Studies teacher at BRJHS, was named Interim Principal at Schneider to fill Mrs. Wilson's position. Both were made permanent in their position in December, 2010.
- 2011-2013 – The Board conducted several public meetings to gain feedback on proceeding with a construction project which would replace Mansfield Elementary School with an addition onto Blue Ridge Jr. High. Feedback was positive and the Board hired Gorski-Reifsteck and DLR architects, and Felmley-Dickerson construction managers. A team of 50 school and community people were assembled to develop a vision for the project. The Board set the process to issue funding bonds in motion. A community group secured enough signatures on a petition to send the bond issue to the March 20, 2012 election ballot. The Board opted to continue the design process while awaiting the referendum results. The referendum passed by 38 votes and the building process continued on schedule. A groundbreaking ceremony was held on May 14, 2012. Construction began in Mid-June 2012.
- 2013-2014 – Upon retirement of Mr. John Weaver, Mr. Rob Wilkinson became principal of the Mansfield Campus.
- Construction in Mansfield was completed in August 2013 and the building was renamed Blue Ridge Intermediate and Junior High School. A dedication ceremony was held on December 3, 2013. The old Mansfield Elementary was demolished and replaced with a parking lot. The western third of the property was sold to Gary and Paula Flannell.
- 2014-2015 – Blue Ridge and Ridgeview formed a cooperative football team called The Ridge. Math curriculum began the transition from tradition subjects of Algebra I & II, Geometry, and Calculus, to an integrated model. Year one of the 1-to-1 Technology initiative began.
- 2015-2016 – The District revised its strategic plan to go through 2019. Year two of the 1 to 1 Technology Initiative was completed. The District celebrated its 30th anniversary by inviting alumni and former faculty and staff to the January 8, 2016 Home basketball game. The boys won the HOIC Traveling Trophy in double overtime against #1 seed Flanagan Cornell. The BRFT settled a 3-year contract in May 2016. Blue Ridge High School earned a

bronze rating as one of the Best High Schools by US News & World Report. Upon the resignation of Mr. Rob Wilkinson, Mrs. Katie Nichols became principal of BRIJHS.

2016-2017 – Mr. Ryan Peyton became principal of Schneider School after Mrs. Paige Trimble opted to return to teaching. The full implementation of the 1-to-1 Technology initiative was completed and all students in grades 3-12 had individual Chromebooks. The District was ranked 8th in the nation for small schools on the 2016-2017 Digital School Districts Survey, conducted by the Center for Digital Education and National School Boards Association. Blue Ridge formed a football cooperative with Deland-Weldon and played independent of a conference. Retired Principal, Mr. John Weaver, was inducted into the Blue Ridge Hall of Fame.

2017-2018 – The Blue Ridge Board of Education earned IASB School Board Governance Recognition. Retired teacher, Diana Williams, was inducted into the Blue Ridge Wall of Fame. The district completed the AdvancED Accreditation readiness process and will go through full accreditation in fall 2019. Schneider School entry and offices were remodeled to provide controlled access.

2018-2019—Dewey Gronau and Don Judd were inducted into the BR Wall of Fame. BRHS changed from HOLC to LOVC for athletics. Ryan Albin's football and basketball jerseys were retired in memory of his service in the Illinois State Police. The "Alb's Award" was established in Trooper Albin's memory to honor a senior with exemplary character.

2019-2020 – The Blue Ridge Board of Education earned the IASB School Board Governance Recognition. AdvancED/ Cognia completed the District's accreditation visit. Retired BR secretaries Joyce Wells and Mary West were inducted to the BR Wall of Fame. The District Unit Office was renovated. The BRHS HVAC underwent updates to create energy efficiencies. The City of Farmer City renovated John Street in front of the schools and installed a small circle drive in front of Schneider. BRIJHS old gym was flooded due to a HVAC malfunction, so the 1-year old floor had to be replaced. Numerous HVAC repairs were needed at BRIJHS over the year. BRIJHS also underwent radon mitigation on the north side of the building.

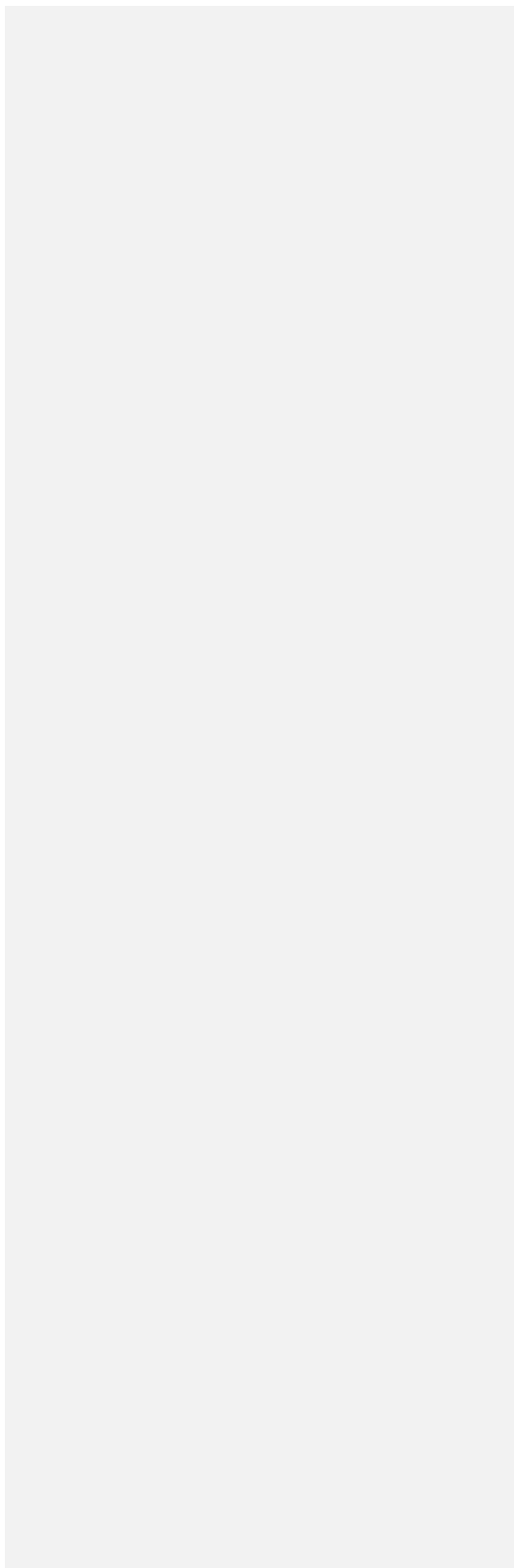
The BRFT and BOE had protracted contract negotiations, beginning 2/11/2019 and settling 10/21/2019. BRFT filed intent to strike 10/10/2019, and both sides met with the federal mediator 4 times.

Susan Wilson retired after 10 years as BR Superintendent. Dr. Hillary Stanifer, District Curriculum Coordinator, was hired as her successor.

The governor closed all Illinois schools for several weeks, beginning in mid-March 2020 to assist with the COVID-19 pandemic mitigation.

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Philosophy and Objectives

The primary function of the Blue Ridge Community Unit School District #18 is twofold:

1. To provide all students the educational opportunities which are essential preparation for active participation in our democratic society.
2. To impact the understanding that learning is a lifelong process for which formal schooling provides the foundation.

To achieve these goals requires the schools to give attention to 12 basic objectives:


1. **Mental Growth** – To encourage and stimulate the continuous growth of each student's ability to think clearly, logically, and independently. To know and use his/her own powers and potential and to exercise these powers with due regard for the rights of others.
2. **Character Growth** – To develop a moral and ethical sense so that each student will act toward others with fairness, justice, tolerance, courtesy and kindness and will achieve an appreciation of personal worth as a human being.
3. **Citizenship** – To develop in each student an understanding and appreciation of the forces and ideals of democracy that has made America great and to foster a sense of the personal opportunities available and responsibilities incumbent upon a citizen of this community, state, country, and world. Each student should be inspired to realize the potential to make a positive contribution to the advancement of society and particularly one's own community.
4. **Social Adjustment** – To prepare each student psychologically for a well-balanced and happy personal, social and family life. To help students learn to work with others cooperatively and effectively and to use leisure time wisely. To develop competent leadership in democratic living.
5. **Community Relations** – To make the school an essential part of community life serving all the people, where possible, in various ways according to their need.
6. **Tool Subjects** – To give to each student, insofar as individual abilities permit, a mastery of the tools of learning and communication such as writing, reading, arithmetic and use of the written and spoken word.
7. **Individual Difference** – To provide such modifications in the educational program for each student as are required by each student's particular capacities so that all have an opportunity to achieve their best behavior, work and play.
8. **Understanding Environment** – To develop in each student, consistent with maturity levels, an understanding of the physical and economical environment and to assist students in adjusting effectively to their surroundings.
9. **Aesthetic Development** – To foster in each student an understanding of cultural subjects (music, literature and art) in order to develop an aesthetic appreciation of the world and thus reveal the beauty, significance and implications involved.
10. **Earning a Living** – To help each student find the most personally productive role in life and develop, through work experience, good work habits. To give those who do not go to college enough fundamental science and vocational training so that they will be able to qualify for work at their highest skills and can be properly prepared to earn a living.

11. **Health** – To provide physical education, health and necessary health services so that each student will have, as far as possible, good health and the knowledge and desire to safeguard the degree of physical fitness each possesses.
12. **Recreation** – To encourage wholesome and creative forms of recreation and play.

To these ideals, Blue Ridge faculty and staff are committed.

DISTRICT POLICIES

District Policies



Contract Language

There is an agreement between **Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350**. The Association distributes copies of the agreement. Members are responsible to become familiar with the information in the contract. Nothing in this employee handbook shall supersede Federal or State law and/or collective bargaining agreements.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment

The School District shall provide equal employment opportunities to all persons regardless of their race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, marital status, arrest record, military status order of protection status, unfavorable military discharge, citizenship status, provided the individual is authorized to work in the United States, use of lawful products while not at work, being a victim of domestic or sexual violence, genetic information, physical or mental handicap or disability, if otherwise able to perform the essential functions of the job with reasonable accommodation, pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; credit history, unless a satisfactory credit history is an established bona fide occupational requirement of a particular position, or other legally protected categories. No one will be penalized solely for his or her status as a registered qualifying patient or a registered designated caregiver for purposes of the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Pilot Program Act, 410 ILCS 130/.

Persons who believe they have not received equal employment opportunities should report their claims to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and/or a Complaint Manager for the Uniform Grievance Policy. These individuals are listed below. No employee or applicant will be discriminated or retaliated against because he or she (1) requested, attempted to request, used, or attempted to use a reasonable accommodation as allowed by the Illinois Human Rights Act, or (2) initiated a complaint, was a witness, supplied information, or otherwise participated in an investigation or proceeding involving an alleged violation of this policy or State or federal laws, rules or regulations, provided the employee or applicant did not make a knowingly false accusation nor provide knowingly false information.

Administrative Implementation

The Superintendent shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator for personnel who shall be responsible for coordinating the District's nondiscrimination efforts. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator may be the Superintendent or a Complaint Manager for the Uniform Grievance Procedure. The Superintendent shall insert into this policy the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the District's current Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Superintendent
Name

411 N. John Street, Farmer City, IL 61842
Address

309-928-9141
Telephone

Complaint Managers:

Schneider Elementary Principal
Name

309 N. John Street, Farmer City, IL 61842
Address

309-928-2611
Telephone

BRIJHS Principal
Name

107 S. McKinley Street, Farmer City, IL 61854
Address

217-489-5201
Telephone

Minority Recruitment

The District will attempt to recruit and hire minority employees. The implementation of this policy may include advertising openings in minority publications, participating in minority job fairs, and recruiting at colleges and universities with significant minority enrollments. This policy, however, does not require or permit the District to give preferential treatment or special rights based on a protected status without evidence of past discrimination.

Employment at Will

Please refer to the “Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350.”

For employees not covered by this agreement:

Unless otherwise specifically provided, District employment is at-will, meaning that employment may be terminated by the District or employee at any time for any reason, other than a reason prohibited by law, or no reason at all. Nothing in School Board policy is intended or should be construed as altering the employment at-will relationship.

Exceptions to employment at-will may include employees who are employed annually, have an employment contract, or are otherwise granted a legitimate interest in continued employment. The Superintendent is authorized to make exceptions to employing non-certificated employees at-will but shall maintain a record of positions or employees who are not at-will and the reason for the exception.

Open Door Policy

It is our intent to administer all benefits and conditions of employment, such as those outlined in this handbook, in a fair and consistent manner. If at any time an employee does not feel this is being done, or has a suggestion or complaint, he/she is encouraged to review the issue with administration. We believe it is important that employees be able to discuss their concerns, suggestions, and opinions with administration.

Pregnancy Rights Policy

In accordance with the Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1 et seq.), the District will provide reasonable accommodations to employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or medical or common conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth.

No employee will be discriminated or retaliated against because of pregnancy or because she requested, attempted to request, used, or attempted to use a reasonable accommodation as allowed by the Illinois Human Rights Act.

Employees affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or medical or common conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth have the following rights:

- Ask your employer for a reasonable accommodation for your pregnancy, such as more frequent bathroom breaks, assistance with heavy work, a private space for expressing milk, or time off to recover from your pregnancy.
- Reject an accommodation offered by your employer for your pregnancy that you do not desire.
- Continue working during your pregnancy if a reasonable accommodation is available which would allow you to continue performing your job.
- Paid breaks to mothers who breastfeed or express milk at work. These breaks may run concurrently with other breaks.

It is the employee's responsibility to make the request for an accommodation. If the requested accommodation imposes an undue hardship on the ordinary operation of the District, the District has the right to deny the requested accommodation. As part of this review process, the District may ask the employee to provide the following documentation from the employee's healthcare provider:

- (i) The need or medical justification for the requested accommodation;
- (ii) A description of the reasonable accommodation medically advisable;
- (iii) The date the reasonable accommodation became medically advisable; and
- (iv) The probable duration of the reasonable accommodation.

It is the employee's responsibility to submit to the employer any documentation that is requested in accordance with this section.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact the Unit Office.

Workplace Harassment Prohibited

The School District expects the workplace environment to be productive, respectful, and free of unlawful harassment. District employees shall not engage in harassment or abusive conduct on the basis of an individual's race, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, citizenship status, disability, or other protected status identified in Board policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*. Harassment of students, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, is prohibited by Board policy 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*.

Sexual Harassment Prohibited

The School District shall provide a workplace environment free of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct, or communications constituting harassment on the basis of sex as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and federal law.

District employees shall not make unwelcome sexual advances or request sexual favors or engage in any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) 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. Sexual harassment prohibited by this policy includes verbal or physical conduct. The terms intimidating, hostile, or offensive include, but are not limited to, conduct which has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment or discomfort. Sexual harassment will be evaluated in light of all the circumstances.

Making a Complaint: Enforcement

A violation of this policy may result in discipline, up to and including discharge. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. An employee's employment, compensation, or work assignment shall not be adversely affected by complaining or providing information about harassment. Retaliation against employees for bringing bona fide complaints or providing information about harassment is prohibited (see Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*).

Aggrieved persons, who feel comfortable doing so, should directly inform the person engaging in harassing conduct or communication that such conduct or communication is offensive and must stop.

Employees should report claims of harassment to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and/or use the Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. Employees may choose to report to a person of the employee's same sex. There are no express time limits for initiating complaints and grievances under this policy; however, every effort should be made to file such complaints as soon as possible, while facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

Whom to Contact with a Report or Complaint

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Superintendent _____
Name

411 N. John Street, Farmer City, IL 61842 _____
Address

309-928-9141 _____
Telephone

Complaint Managers:

<u>Schneider Elementary Principal</u> Name	<u>BRIJHS Principal</u> Name
<u>309 N. John Street, Farmer City, IL 61842</u> Address	<u>107 S. McKinley Street, Farmer City, IL 61854</u> Address
<u>309-928-2611</u> Telephone	<u>217-489-5201</u> Telephone

Abused and Neglected Child Reporting

Any District employee who suspects or receives knowledge that a student may be an abused or neglected child shall immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. The employee shall also promptly notify the Superintendent or Building Principal that a report has been made. All District employees shall sign the "Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status" form provided by the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services and the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the signed forms are retained.

Any District employee who discovers child pornography on electronic and information technology equipment shall immediately report it to local law enforcement, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's CyberTipline 800/843-5678, or online at www.cybertipline.com. The Superintendent or Building Principal shall also be promptly notified of the discovery and that a report has been made.

The Superintendent shall execute the requirements in Board policy 5:150, *Personnel Records*, whenever another school district requests a reference concerning an applicant who is or was a District employee and was the subject of a report made by a District employee to DCFS.

The Superintendent shall notify the State Superintendent and the regional superintendent in writing when he or she has reasonable cause to believe that a certificate holder was dismissed or resigned from the District as a result of an act that made a child an abused or neglected child. The Superintendent must make the report within 30 days of the dismissal or resignation and mail a copy of the notification to the certificate holder.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide staff development opportunities for school personnel working with students in grades kindergarten through 8, in the detection, reporting, and prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Each individual School Board member must, if an allegation is raised to the member during an open or closed School Board meeting that a student is an abused child as defined in the Act, direct or cause the School Board to direct the Superintendent or other equivalent school administrator to comply with the requirements of the Act concerning the reporting of child abuse.

Education of Homeless Children

Each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths, including a public pre-school education. A *homeless child* is defined as provided in the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and the Ill. Education for Homeless Children Act. The Superintendent or

designee shall act as or appoint a Liaison for Homeless Children to coordinate this policy's implementation.

The Superintendent or designee shall review and revise rules or procedures that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children and youths. In reviewing and revising such procedures, consideration shall be given to issues concerning transportation, immunization, residency, birth certificates, school records and other documentation, and guardianship. Transportation shall be provided in accordance with the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act and State law. The Superintendent or designee shall give special attention to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless children and youths who are not currently attending school. The Superintendent shall appoint a Liaison for Homeless Children. If a child is denied enrollment or transportation under this policy, the Liaison for Homeless Children shall immediately refer the child or his or her parent/guardian to the ombudsperson appointed by the Regional Superintendent and provide the child or his or her parent/guardian with a written explanation for the denial. Whenever a child and his or her parent/guardian who initially share the housing of another person due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar hardship continue to share the housing, the Liaison for Homeless Children may, after the passage of 18 months and annually thereafter, conduct a review as to whether such hardship continues to exist in accordance with State law.

A "homeless child" is defined as provided in the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act.

Release during School Hours

For safety and security reasons, a prior written or oral consent of a student's custodial parent/guardian is required before a student is released during school hours: (1) at any time before the regular dismissal time or at any time before school is otherwise officially closed, and/or (2) to any person other than a custodial parent/guardian.

Early Dismissal Announcement

The Superintendent or designee shall make reasonable efforts to issue an announcement whenever it is necessary to close school early due to inclement weather or other reason.

Student Records

School student records are confidential and information from them shall not be released other than as provided by law. Any record that contains personally identifiable information or other information that would link the document to an individual student is a school student record if maintained by the District, except: (1) records that are kept in the sole possession of a school staff member, are destroyed not later than the student's graduation or permanent withdrawal, and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute teacher, and (2) records kept by law enforcement officials working in the school.

State and federal law grant students and parent(s)/guardian(s) certain rights, including the right to inspect, copy, and challenge school records. The information contained in school student records shall be kept current, accurate, clear and relevant. All information maintained concerning a student receiving special education services shall be directly related to the provision of services to that child. The District may release directory information as permitted by law, but parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have the right to object to the release of information regarding their child. However, the District will comply with an *ex parte* court order requiring it to permit the U.S. Attorney General or designee to have access to a student's school records without notice to, or the consent of, the students' parent(s)/guardian(s).

The Superintendent shall implement this policy with administrative procedures. The Superintendent shall also designate a *records custodian* who shall maintain student records. The Superintendent or designee shall inform staff members of this policy, and shall inform students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) of it, as well as their rights regarding student school records.

Student Biometric Information Collection

The Superintendent or designee may recommend a student biometric information collection system solely for the purposes of identification and fraud prevention. Such recommendation shall be consistent with budget requirements and in compliance with State law. Biometric information means any information that is collected through an identification process for individuals based on their unique behavioral or physiological characteristics, including fingerprint, hand geometry, voice, or facial recognition or iris or retinal scans.

Before collecting student biometric information, the District shall obtain written permission from the person having legal custody of the student (if over the age of 18). Upon a student's 18th birthday, the District shall obtain written permission from the student to collect student biometric information. Failure to provide written consent to collect biometric information shall not be the basis for refusal of any services otherwise available to a student.

All collected biometric information shall be stored and transmitted in a manner that protects it from disclosure. Sale, lease, or other disclosure of biometric information to another person or entity is strictly prohibited.

The District will discontinue use of a student's biometric information and destroy all collected biometric information within 30 days after: (1) the student graduates or withdraws from the School District, or (2) the District receives a written request to discontinue use of biometric information from the person having legal custody of the student or the student (if over the age of 18). Requests to discontinue using a student's biometric information shall be forwarded to the Superintendent or designee.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop procedures to implement this policy consistent with State and federal law.

Maintaining Student Discipline

Maintaining an orderly learning environment is an essential part of each teacher's instructional responsibilities. A teacher's ability to foster appropriate student behavior is an important factor in the teacher's educational effectiveness.

When a student's behavior is unacceptable, the teacher should first discuss the matter with the student. If the unacceptable behavior continues, the teacher should consult with the Building Principal and/or discuss the problem with the parent(s)/guardian(s). A teacher may remove any student from the learning setting whose behavior interferes with the lessons or participation of fellow students; a student's removal must be in accordance with Board policy and administrative procedures.

Teachers shall not use disciplinary methods which may be damaging to students, such as ridicule, sarcasm, or excessive temper displays. Corporal punishment (including slapping, paddling or prolonged maintenance of a student in physically painful positions, and intentional infliction of bodily harm) may not be used. Teachers may use reasonable force as needed to keep students, school personnel, and others safe, or for self-defense or defense of property.

Fingerprinting And Criminal Background Checking Policy

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a fingerprint-based criminal history records check and a check of the Statewide Sex Offender Database and Statewide Child Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Database is performed on each employee as required by School Code. A copy of the record of convictions obtained from the Illinois State Police may be provided by the District to the applicant and the Superintendent or designee shall notify the applicant if the applicant is identified in either database. Any information concerning the record of convictions obtained by the District shall be confidential and may only be transmitted or shared with the President of the School Board, Superintendent or his designee, Regional Superintendent, State Superintendent, State Teacher Certification Board, or any other person necessary to the hiring decision.

The District retains the right to not employ or to discharge any employee who makes any false or misleading statement on, or omits facts from, his or her employment application or documents, if there is any criminal history records check, Statewide Sex Offender Database check, Statewide Child Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Database check, or background investigation, or if the District is prohibited from employing the employee under Section 10-21.9 of the Illinois School Code.

Accident Reporting And Investigation

Employees must report any accident or injury to their building administrator immediately following the accident or injury. Employees will assist in completing an accident/injury report and update administration regarding recovery from accidents or injuries following doctor visits. The Administration will investigate all accidents and injuries and report to the Superintendent efforts to prevent any further accidents and injuries.

Drug And Alcohol Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition

All District workplaces are drug- and alcohol-free workplaces. All employees are prohibited from engaging in any of the following activities while on District premises or while performing work or being on call for the District:

1. Unlawful manufacture, dispensing, distribution, possession, or use of an illegal or controlled substance, or being impaired by or under the influence of any illegal substance or any detectible use of any illegal substance regardless of when or where the use occurred.
2. Distribution, consumption, use, possession, or being impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage; being present on District premises or while performing work for the District when alcohol consumption is detectible, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
3. Possession or use of medical cannabis. Distribution, consumption, possession, use, or being impaired by or under the influence of cannabis; being present on District premises or while performing work for the District when impaired by or under the influence of cannabis, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred, unless distribution, possession, and/or use is by a school nurse or school administrator pursuant to Ashley's Law 105 ILCS 5/22-33. The District considers employees impaired by or under the influence of cannabis where there is a good faith belief that an employee manifests the specific articulable symptoms listed in the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act (CRTA).

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For purposes of this policy a controlled substance means a substance that is:

1. Not legally obtainable;
2. Being used in a manner different than prescribed;

Amended: ~~April 17, 2019~~

- 3. Legally obtainable, but has not been legally obtained; or
- 4. Referenced in federal or State controlled substance acts.

For purposes of this policy, District premises means workplace as defined in the CRTA in addition to District and school buildings, grounds, and parking areas; vehicles used for school purposes; and any location used for a School Board meeting, school athletic event, or other school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities. School grounds means the real property comprising any school, any conveyance used to transport students to school or a school-related activity, and any public way within 1,000 feet of any school ground, designated school bus stops where students are waiting for the school bus, and school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities. "Vehicles used for school purposes" means school buses or other school vehicles.

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As a condition of employment, each employee shall:

- 1. Abide by the terms of the Board policy respecting a drug- and alcohol-free workplace; and
- 2. Notify his or her supervisor of his or her conviction under any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring on the District premises or while performing work for the District, no later than five calendar days after such a conviction.

Unless otherwise prohibited by this policy, prescription and over-the-counter medications are not prohibited when taken in standard dosages and/or according to prescriptions from the employee's licensed health care provider, provided that an employee's work performance is not impaired.

To make employees aware of dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, the Superintendent or designee shall perform each of the following:

- 1. Provide each employee with a copy of the District Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace policy;
- 2. Post notice of the District Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace policy in a place where other information for employees is posted;
- 3. Make available materials from local, State, and national anti-drug and alcohol-abuse organizations;
- 4. Enlist the aid of community and State agencies with drug and alcohol informational and rehabilitation programs to provide information to District employees;
- 5. Establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about:
 - a. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace,
 - b. Available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, re-entry, and any employee assistance programs, and
 - c. The penalties that the District may impose upon employees for violations of this policy.

Drug and Alcohol Testing for Bus Drivers

To support the policy of a drug and alcohol free workplace, testing for alcohol, drugs & chemical substances may be required under the following circumstances:

- (1) Pre-Employment

As part of the application process. No applicant testing positive will be employed. This includes all applicants for employment and re-employment, whether for temporary, part-time or full-time positions.

- (2) Post-Accident
After a work-related accident where judgment, coordination or physical or mental ability may have been impaired.
- (3) Reasonable Suspicion
Whenever the District has reasonable suspicion to believe an employee has consumed or used or is under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, a controlled substance, or cannabis during the course of the work day. Supervisory personnel shall ascertain whether reasonable suspicion exists and document the basis for any reasonable suspicion prior to testing. The employee shall be provided a copy of the basis for any reasonable suspicion.
- (4) Periodic or Random
On an unannounced and random basis for those working in a safety sensitive position.

E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition

All employees are covered by the conduct prohibitions contained in policy 8:30, Visitors to and Conduct on School Property. The prohibition on the use of e-cigarettes, tobacco, and cannabis products applies both (1) when an employee is on school property, and (2) while an employee is performing work for the District at a school event regardless of the event's location.

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Tobacco shall have the meaning provided in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5b.

Cannabis shall have the meaning provided in the CRTA, 410 ILCS 705/1-10.

E-Cigarette is short for electronic cigarette and includes, but is not limited to, any electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS), electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, electronic hookah, vape pen, or similar product or device, and any components or parts that can be used to build the product or device.

District Action Upon Violation of Policy

An employee who violates this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination. ~~Alternatively, In addition or alternatively,~~ the ~~School~~ Board may require an employee to successfully complete an appropriate drug- or alcohol-abuse rehabilitation program.

The School Board shall take disciplinary action with respect to an employee convicted of a drug offense in the workplace within 30 days after receiving notice of the conviction.

Should District employees be engaged in the performance of work under a federal contract or grant, or under a State contract or grant of \$5,000 or more, the Superintendent shall notify the appropriate State or federal agency from which the District receives contract or grant monies of the employee's conviction within 10 days after receiving notice of the conviction.

Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus and Commercial Vehicle Drivers

The District shall adhere to State and federal law and regulations requiring a drug and alcohol testing program for school bus and commercial vehicle drivers. The Superintendent or designee manage a program to implement federal and State law defining the circumstances and procedures for the testing.

Public Information Process

The Principal and Superintendent are the public relations officers of the school. Contacts with the media should be routed through the Principal first and then the Superintendent. If a member of the media contacts an employee about a school related issue, the Principal and/or Superintendent should be informed.

Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information

District employees are responsible for maintaining: (1) the integrity and security of all internal information, and (2) the privacy of confidential records, including but not limited to: student school records, personnel records, and the minutes of, and material disclosed in, a closed School Board meeting. Internal information is any information, oral or recorded in electronic or paper format, maintained by the District or used by the District or its employees. The Superintendent or designee shall manage procedures for safeguarding the integrity, security, and, as appropriate, confidentiality of internal information.

Solicitations By or From Staff

District employees shall not solicit donations or sales, nor shall they be solicited for donations or sales, on school grounds without prior approval from the Superintendent.

Ethics

All District employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships, to demonstrate integrity and honesty, to be considerate and cooperative, and to maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students, parents, staff members, and others.

The following employees must file a "Statement of Economic Interests" as required by the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act:

1. Superintendent;
2. Building Principal;
3. Head of any department;
4. Any employee responsible for negotiating contracts, including collective bargaining agreement, in the amount of \$1,000 or greater;
5. Hearing officer;
6. Any employee having supervisory authority for 20 or more employees; and
7. Any employee in a position that requires an administrative or a chief school business official endorsement.

Ethics and Gift Ban

Board policy 2:105, *Ethics and Gift Ban*, applies to all District employees. Students shall not be used in any manner for promoting a political candidate or issue.

Outside Employment and Conflict of Interest

No District employee shall be directly or indirectly interested in any contract, work, or business of the District, or in the sale of any article by or to the District, except when the employee is the author or developer of instructional materials listed with the State Board of Education and

adopted for use by the Board. An employee having an interest in instructional materials must file an annual statement with the Board Secretary.

For the purpose of acquiring profit or personal gain, no employee shall act as an agent of the District nor shall an employee act as an agent of any business in any transaction with the District.

Employees shall not engage in any other employment or in any private business during regular working hours or at such other times as are necessary to fulfill appropriate assigned duties.

Tobacco

In keeping with Blue Ridge CUSD #18's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment and in compliance with the Illinois School Code and Smoke-Free Illinois Act, smoking and vaping is **prohibited** in all school buildings, vehicles used for school purposes, and school property. Further, the use of tobacco is prohibited on school property by any employee, student, or other person when such property is being used for any school purposes. "School purposes" include but are not limited to all events or activities or other use of school property that the Board or school officials authorize or permit on school property, including without limitation all interscholastic or extracurricular athletic, academic, or other events sponsored by the Board or in which pupils of the District participate. "Tobacco" shall mean cigarette, cigar, electronic cigarette, or tobacco in any other form, including smokeless tobacco which is any loose, cut, shredded, ground, powdered, compressed or leaf tobacco that is intended to be placed in the mouth without being smoked.

This policy applies equally to all employees and visitors.

Access to Electronic Networks

Electronic networks, including the Internet, are a part of the District's instructional program in order to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. The Superintendent or designee shall develop an implementation plan for this policy and appoint a system administrator.

The School District is not responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable when using the network, or for any information that is retrieved or transmitted via the Internet. Furthermore, the District will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.

Curriculum

The use of the District's electronic networks shall: (1) be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the District as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students, and (2) comply with the selection criteria for instructional materials and library-media center materials. Staff members may, consistent with the Superintendent's implementation plan, use the Internet throughout the curriculum.

The District's electronic network is part of the curriculum and is not a public forum for general use.

Acceptable Use

All use of the District's electronic network must be: (1) in support of education and/or research, and be in furtherance of the School Board's stated goal, or (2) for a legitimate school business purpose. Use is a privilege, not a right. Students and staff members have no expectation of privacy in any material that is stored, transmitted, or received via the District's electronic

network or District computers. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using electronic networks. The District's *Authorization for Electronic Network Access* contains the appropriate uses, ethics, and protocol. Electronic communications and downloaded material, including files deleted from a user's account but not erased, may be monitored or read by school officials.

Internet Safety

Each District computer with Internet access shall have a filtering device that blocks entry to visual depictions that are: (1) obscene, (2) pornographic, or (3) harmful or inappropriate for students, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall enforce the use of such filtering devices. An administrator, supervisor, or other authorized person may disable the filtering device for bona fide research or other lawful purpose, provided the person receives prior permission from the systems administrator.

The Superintendent or designee shall include measures in this policy's implementation plan to address the following:

1. Ensure staff supervision of student access to online electronic networks,
2. Restrict student access to inappropriate matter as well as restricting access to harmful materials,
3. Ensure student and staff privacy, safety, and security when using electronic communications,
4. Restrict unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities, and
5. Restrict unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information, such as, names and addresses.

Authorization for Electronic Network Access

Each staff member must sign the District's *Authorization for Electronic Network Access* as a condition for using the District's electronic network. Each student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign the *Authorization* before being granted unsupervised use.

All users of the District's computers to access the Internet shall maintain the confidentiality of student records. Reasonable measures to protect against unreasonable access shall be taken before confidential student information is loaded onto the network.

The failure of any student or staff member to follow the terms of the *Authorization for Electronic Network Access*, or this policy, will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

Personal Technology and Social Media; Usage and Conduct

Definitions

Includes - Means "includes without limitation" or "includes, but is not limited to."

Social media - Media for social interaction, using highly accessible communication techniques through the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue. This includes, but is not limited to, services such as *Facebook*, *LinkedIn*, *Instagram*, *Snapchat*, *Twitter*, and *YouTube*.

Personal technology - Any device that is not owned or leased by the District or otherwise authorized for District use and: (1) transmits sounds, images, text, messages, videos, or electronic information, (2) electronically records, plays, or stores information, or (3) accesses the Internet, or private communication or information networks. This includes laptop computers

(e.g., laptops, ultrabooks, and chromebooks), tablets (e.g., iPads®, Kindle®, Microsoft Surface®, and other Android® platform or Windows® devices), smartphones (e.g., iPhone®, BlackBerry®, Android® platform phones, and Windows Phone®), and other devices (e.g., iPod®).

Usage and Conduct

1. All District employees who use personal technology and social media shall: Adhere to the high standards for appropriate school relationships in policy 5:120, *Ethics and Conduct* at all times, regardless of the ever-changing social media and personal technology platforms available. This includes District employees posting images or private information about themselves or others in a manner readily accessible to students and other employees that is inappropriate as defined by policy 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*; 5:100, *Staff Development Program*; 5:120, *Ethics and Conduct*; 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*; 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; and the Ill. Code of Educator Ethics, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §22.20.
2. Choose a District-provided or supported method whenever possible to communicate with students and their parents/guardians.
3. Refrain from “friending” students who are currently enrolled in Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18, and accepting friend requests on social media.
4. Not interfere with or disrupt the educational or working environment, or the delivery of education or educational support services.
5. Comply with policy 5:130, *Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information*. This means that personal technology and social media may not be used to share, publish, or transmit information about or images of students and/or District employees without proper approval. For District employees, proper approval may include implied consent under the circumstances.
6. Refrain from using the District’s logos without permission and follow Board policy 5:170, *Copyright*, and all District copyright compliance procedures.
7. Use personal technology and social media for personal purposes only during non-work times or hours. Any duty-free use must occur during times and places that the use will not interfere with job duties or otherwise be disruptive to the school environment or its operation.
8. Assume all risks associated with the use of personal technology and social media at school or school-sponsored activities, including students’ viewing of inappropriate Internet materials through the District employee’s personal technology or social media. The Board expressly disclaims any responsibility for imposing content filters, blocking lists, or monitoring of its employees’ personal technology and social media.
9. Be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action for violations of this policy ranging from prohibiting the employee from possessing or using any personal technology or social media at school to dismissal and/or indemnification of the District for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the District relating to, or arising out of, any violation of this policy.

The Superintendent shall:

1. Inform District employees about this policy during the in-service on educator ethics, teacher-student conduct, and school employee-student conduct required by Board policy 5:120, *Ethics and Conduct*.
2. Direct Building Principals to annually:
 - a. Provide their building staff with a copy of this policy.

- b. Inform their building staff about the importance of maintaining high standards in their school relationships.
- c. Remind their building staff that those who violate this policy will be subject to remedial and any other appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
3. Build awareness of this policy with students, parents, and the community.
4. Ensure that no one for the District, or on its behalf, requests of an employee or applicant access in any manner to his or her social networking website or requests passwords to such sites.
5. Periodically review this policy and any procedures with District employee representatives and electronic network system administrator(s) and present proposed changes to the Board.

Use Of Technical Resources

Blue Ridge CUSD #18 maintains photocopiers, facsimile machines, and printers. Utilization of these technical resources is not to be conducted in any way that may be disruptive to Blue Ridge CUSD #18 operations or in violation of Blue Ridge CUSD #18 policy or law.

Blue Ridge CUSD #18 technical resources are provided exclusively to assist in the conduct of the District's business; however, occasional use of technical resources for personal purposes is permissible so long as it does not interfere with business or the employee's assigned duties, is not related to outside school business activities, does not conflict the District's policy or law, and is approved by the building principal.

Information sent and stored on facsimile machines is the property of Blue Ridge CUSD #18. By using the District's technical resources, all individuals knowingly and voluntarily consent to their usage being monitored and acknowledge the District's right to conduct such monitoring. Individuals should not expect that facsimile transmissions are confidential or private, and should be aware that all types of business records are subject to inspection, review, or disclosure without prior notice for any business purpose or as required by law. In general, these communications are treated no differently than any other business record or correspondence, and may be used in administrative, judicial, or other proceedings.

Schedules & Employment Year

Please refer to the "Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350."

For employees not covered by this agreement:

The Superintendent shall supervise a process for setting work schedules and an employment year for educational support employees in accordance with State and federal law, Board policy, and applicable agreements and shall:

1. Assign each employee one supervisor who will establish a work schedule, including breaks, as required by building or District needs, work load, and the efficient management of human resources;
2. Allow for the ability to respond to changing circumstances by altering work schedules as needed; and
3. Consider the well-being of the employee. The Superintendent's approval is required to establish a flexible work schedule or job-sharing.

Public Relations And Telephone Calls

It is important that District phones be kept clear for District business. Personal calls are acceptable; however, proper discretion is advised. First impressions are very important and when answering the phone employees shall greet the caller with "Good Morning or Good Afternoon, **Blue Ridge CUSD #18**, John/Jane Doe speaking." Employees who answer the phone should do so promptly and in a businesslike manner. Employees will be held responsible for paying for all non-business-related long distance phone calls.

Cellular Phone Policy

This policy outlines the use of personal cell phones at work, the personal use of District cell phones and the safe use of cell phones by employees. This policy applies to phone calls, text messaging, pictures, etc.

Personal Cellular Phones

While at work employees are expected to exercise the same discretion in using personal cellular phones as is expected for the use of District phones. Excessive personal calls during the workday, regardless of the phone used, can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others. Employees are therefore encouraged to make personal calls on non-work time where possible and to ensure that friends and family members are aware of the District's policy. Flexibility will be provided in circumstances demanding immediate attention.

The District will not be liable for the loss of personal cellular phones brought into the workplace.

Personal Use of District-Provided Cellular Phones

Where job responsibilities or District needs demand immediate access to an employee the District may issue a District cell phone to an employee for District-related communications. In order to protect the employee from incurring a tax liability for the personal use of this equipment, employees will be required to reimburse the District for any personal calls on a District issued cell phone. Phone logs will be audited regularly to ensure compliance with this policy.

Safety Issues for Cellular Phone Use

Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who are issued a cell phone for District use are expected to use good judgment in using their cell phone. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees are required to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call. Special care should be taken in situations where there is traffic, inclement weather, or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area.

Employees whose job responsibilities do not specifically include driving as an essential function, but who are issued a cell phone for District use, are also expected to abide by the provisions above. Under no circumstances are employees allowed to place themselves at risk to fulfill District needs.

Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their phone while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such actions.

District Tools And Equipment

The District may supply all equipment, tools, or other items to assist in the performance of duties. All items shall be collected at the end of the workday and returned to their proper location.

District Vehicles

All employees must get authorization to use District vehicles. When using District vehicles, employees must follow all State and Federal laws. Employees shall pay any tickets in violation of the law. An employee must agree to pre-employment and regular checks of MVR and are required to maintain a good driving record in order to drive District vehicles.

Parking

All employees shall park on District premises in the designated area. Employees will refrain from parking in designated visitor parking and handicap parking spaces.

Dress Standards

The District's image is reflected in employees' dress and appearance which must not disrupt the educational process, interfere with the maintenance of a positive teaching/learning climate, or compromise reasonable standards of health, safety, or decency. Good grooming and tasteful attire is essential.

Please see specific department's uniform and personal appearance guidelines.

Communicable And Chronic Infectious Disease

The Superintendent shall develop and implement procedures for dealing with known or suspected cases of a communicable and chronic infectious disease involving a District employee consistent with state and federal law, rules of the Illinois Department of Public Health, and School Board policies.

An employee with a communicable or chronic infectious disease is encouraged to inform the Superintendent immediately and grant consent to being monitored by the District's Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease Review Team. The Review Team, if used, provides information and recommendations to the Superintendent concerning the employee's conditions of employment and necessary accommodations. The Review Team shall hold the employee's medical condition and records in strictest confidence, except to the extent allowed by law.

Employees with a communicable or chronic infectious disease will be permitted to retain their positions whenever, after reasonable accommodations and without undue hardship, there is no substantial risk of transmission of the disease to others, provided an employee is able to continue to perform the position's essential functions. An employee with a communicable and chronic infectious disease remains subject to the Board's employment policies including sick and/or other leave, physical examinations, temporary and permanent disability, and termination.

Bloodborne Pathogens

The District recognizes the potential risk its staff has to accidental occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens and desires to educate and protect employees to minimize the possibility of exposure. The Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan contains specific information regarding the District's policies and procedures.

All employees of the District are instructed as to the correct handling of body fluids and tissue. All positions in the District have been categorized into classifications to determine the likelihood of occupational exposure to blood, body fluids or tissue from other people. Classification I employees hold positions in which required tasks routinely involve a potential for that exposure. These employees and all others who are involved in an exposure incident are entitled to receive

vaccinations for Hepatitis B at the District's expense. Classification I employees receive a handbook and appropriate cleanup materials to properly handle incidents.

Administration of Medication to Students

Please refer to the "Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350."

For employees not covered by this agreement:

Students should not take medication during school hours or during school-related activities unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent(s)/guardian(s) believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child and otherwise follow the District's procedures on dispensing medication.

No School District employee shall administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed "School Medication Authorization Form" is submitted by the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). No student shall possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this policy and its implementing procedures.

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students, including administering medication.

The Building Principal shall include this policy in the Student Handbook and shall provide a copy to the parents/guardians of students.

Self-Administration of Medication

A student may possess an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen®) and/or medication prescribed for asthma for immediate use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) have completed and signed a "School Medication Authorization Form."

The School District shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication or epinephrine auto-injector or the storage of any medication by school personnel. A student's parent/guardian must indemnify and hold harmless the School District and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine auto-injector and/or medication, or the storage of any medication by school personnel.

Field Trips and Recreational Class Trips

Field trips are permissible when the experiences are an integral part of the school curriculum and/or contribute to the District's educational goals.

All field trips must have the Superintendent or designee's prior approval, except that field trips beyond a 200-mile radius of the school or extending overnight must have the prior approval of the Board. The following factors are analyzed when determining whether to approve a field trip: educational value, student safety, parent concerns, heightened security alerts, and liability concerns. On all field trips, a bus fee set by the Superintendent or designee may be charged to help defray the transportation costs.

Parents/guardians of students: (1) shall be given the opportunity to consent to their child's participation in any field trip, and (2) are responsible for all entrance fees, food, lodging, or other costs, except that the District will pay such costs for students who qualify for free or reduced school lunches. All non-participating students shall be provided an alternative experience. Any field trip may be cancelled without notice due to danger to students, staff, or chaperons. Monies deposited may be forfeited.

Recreational Class Trips

Recreational class trips are permissible provided they do not interfere with the District's educational goals. The provisions in this policy concerning field trips are also applicable to recreational class trips, except those regarding educational value.

Visitors To and Conduct On School Property

The following definitions apply to this policy:

School property - District and school buildings, grounds, and parking areas; vehicles used for school purposes; and any location used for a School Board meeting, school athletic event, or other school-sponsored event.

Visitor - Any person other than an enrolled student or District employee.

All visitors to school property are required to report to the Building Principal's office and receive permission to remain on school property. All visitors must sign a visitors' log, show identification, and wear a visitor's badge. When leaving the school, visitors must return their badge. On those occasions when large groups of parents and friends are invited onto school property, visitors are not required to sign in but must follow school officials' instructions. Persons on school property without permission will be directed to leave and may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Conferences with teachers are held outside school hours or during the teacher's conference/preparation period.

Requests to access a school building, facility, and/or educational program, or to interview personnel or a student for purposes of assessing the student's special education needs, should be made at the appropriate building. Access shall be facilitated according to guidelines from the Superintendent or designee.

The School District expects mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among all people on school property or at a school event. No person on school property or at a school event (including visitors, students, and employees) shall perform any of the following acts:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, a Board member, sports official or coach, or any other person.
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner, or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law, possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device. An individual licensed to carry a concealed firearm under the Illinois Firearm Concealed Carry Act is permitted to: (a) carry a concealed firearm within a vehicle into a parking area controlled by a school or the District and may store a firearm or ammunition concealed in a case within a locked vehicle or locked container out of plain view within the vehicle in the parking area, and/or (b) carry a concealed firearm in the immediate

area surrounding his or her vehicle in a parking area controlled by a school or the District for the limited purpose of storing or retrieving a firearm within the vehicle's trunk.

4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
5. Damage or deface School District property.
6. Violate any Illinois law, or town or county ordinance.
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be under the influence of an alcoholic beverage or illegal drug; be present when the person's alcohol or illegal drug consumption is detectible, regardless of when and/ or where the use occurred.
9. Use or possess medical cannabis.
10. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner).
11. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the School Board.
12. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized District employee's directive.
13. Engage in any risky behavior, including roller-blading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.
14. Violate other District policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or District employee or host school employee.
15. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the District or a School function.
16. Repeated violations of the Sportsmanship Code of Conduct.

Exclusive Bargaining Representative Agent

Authorized agents of an exclusive bargaining representative, upon notifying the Building Principal's office, may meet with a school employee (or group of employees) in the school building during duty-free times of such employees.

Convicted Child Sex Offender

State law prohibits a child sex offender from being present on school property or loitering within 500 feet of school property when persons under the age of 18 are present, unless the offender meets either of the following two exceptions:

3. The offender is a parent/guardian of a student attending the school and has notified the Building Principal of his or her presence at the school for the purpose of: (i) attending a conference with school personnel to discuss the progress of his or her child academically or socially, (ii) participating in child review conferences in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to his or her child regarding special education services, or (iii) attending conferences to discuss other student issues concerning his or her child such as retention and promotion; or
4. The offender received permission to be present from the Board, Superintendent, or Superintendent's designee. If permission is granted, the Superintendent or Board President shall provide the details of the offender's upcoming visit to the Building Principal.

In all cases, the Superintendent, or designee who is a certified employee, shall supervise a child sex offender whenever the offender is in a child's vicinity.

Enforcement

Any staff member may request identification from any person on school grounds or in any school building; refusal to provide such information is a criminal act. The Building Principal or

designee shall seek the immediate removal of any person who refuses to provide requested identification.

Any person who engages in conduct prohibited by this policy may be ejected from school property. The person is also subject to being denied admission to school events or meetings for up to one calendar year.

Procedures to Deny Future Admission to School Events or Meetings

An individual who is ejected from an interscholastic contest at home or away (including visitors, students, and employees) shall be denied admission to the next interscholastic contest at that level, and all other interscholastic contests for the district at any level in the interim. This applies to ejections occurring prior to, during, and following an interscholastic contest. This penalty is not subject to the appeal process.

It is understood that any inappropriate action which endangers students, spectators, coaches and/or officials, or significantly damages the reputation of the Blue Ridge Schools may result in additional consequences to those listed above. Except for the events described in the preceding paragraph, before any person may be denied admission to school events or meetings as provided in this policy, the person has a right to a hearing before the Board. The Superintendent may refuse the person admission pending such hearing. The Superintendent or designee must provide the person with a hearing notice, delivered or sent by certified mail with return receipt requested, at least 10 days before the Board hearing date. The hearing notice must contain:

1. The date, time, and place of the Board hearing,
2. A description of the prohibited conduct,
3. The proposed time period that admission to school events will be denied, and
4. Instructions on how to waive a hearing.

The Board reserves the right to assess penalties that are more or less severe than those recommended by school personnel.

Managing Activity Accounts, Classroom Purchasing, and Field Trip Funds

We have discussed the need to ensure that all of our accounts are being managed in a manner that ensures proper checks and balances. Following are the practices to follow when managing any purchasing, activity accounts, field trip funds, or any other financial matters in your building.

If anyone has a question or special circumstance, he or she should call the district bookkeeper to discuss the best way to proceed. This will alleviate misunderstandings or last minute surprises.

Information on managing activity and other district accounts can be found in the following locations:

- Board policy 4-50
- Board policy 4-80 and the corresponding Administrative Procedure
- Board policy 4-90 and the corresponding Administrative Procedure

General Principles for Managing District Funds:

- All transactions by any school personnel must be properly authorized and documented. For example, the teacher/coach/sponsor writes a purchase order and submits to the principal for approval. The district office then approves and submits the order. Once the order is received, the teacher/coach/sponsor checks off the items received on the

packing slip and sends it to the bookkeeper. The bookkeeper then pays the bill when it arrives.

- Financial records and data must be accurate and complete
- Accounts payable must be accurate and punctual – all bills owed must be correct and paid within 30 days of receipt
- District assets must be protected from loss or misuse
- Incompatible duties should be segregated, if possible
- Accounting records must be periodically reconciled
- Equipment and supplies must be safeguarded
- Staff members with financial or business responsibilities must be properly trained and supervised, and must perform their responsibilities with utmost care and competence.
- Any unnecessary weaknesses or financial risks must be promptly corrected.

General Finance and Cash Handling:

- Records of all transactions for all building and activity accounts are maintained for each activity by the building office.
- Principals must sign off on all items relating to money.
- Teachers, coaches, and sponsors are responsible for the collection and safe handling of funds received on behalf of the organization.
- Teachers, coaches, and sponsors are responsible for the supervision of students having contact with cash or checks. Do not leave funds unattended.
- Teachers, coaches, and sponsors must not store money or checks. All funds collected must be counted by the teacher, coach, or sponsor, prior to turning over receipts to the designated person in the school office who will verify the amount with a second count and give them to the district bookkeeper for deposit and formal recordkeeping.
- Clubs/organizations/sports/activities must not maintain their own accounts at a bank. ALL funds collected shall be deposited with the designated person in the office.
- All contracts entered into on behalf of Blue Ridge CUSD 18 or individual schools must be submitted to the district office or school office for approval.
- Invoices for purchases must be submitted to the building or district office within 2 business days of receipt.
- The district bookkeeper will provide monthly statements for activity and building accounts to principals and department heads. Building records must be reconciled with district records and any discrepancies corrected.

Making Purchases/Expenditures:

- All purchases must go through the standard approval procedure for the building, including pre-approval by the principal and anyone else who should be notified.
- Purchases must be made using the tax exempt form. The district will not reimburse any taxes paid.
- No payment for expenses of the activity may be made directly from the cash or receipts of the activity. Expenses must be paid by check and supported with proper detailed substantiation.
- Any purchases greater than \$25,000 are subject to the public bidding requirements of the Illinois School Code. Please contact the Superintendent's office with questions regarding bidding.

Making Reimbursement Requests from the District:

- Expenditure reimbursement requests must be sent to a designated person in the school office who collects and records transactions. Principals must sign off on all items relating to money. Expenditure reimbursement requests must be submitted by the end of the

month in which expenditures were incurred, with receipts attached to verify expenditures.

- Receipts must include a description and purchase price for each item.
- A maximum of \$25 per day per person will be reimbursed for meal costs. Receipts are required for reimbursement. Costs for alcohol purchases will not be reimbursed.

Managing Cash Advances/Issuing Checks:

- Cash advances can be made on rare occasion, but receipts for actual expenditures must be provided to document the actual total funds used. If the full amount of the cash advance was not used for the intended purpose, then any remaining funds must be returned to the district immediately.
- Submit requests for cash advances or any checks that need to be issued at least 2 days before you need it (for example, for entrance fees for a field trip). Earlier is better!
- Activity checks are issued on Thursday. Payment requests must be submitted to the bookkeeper by noon on Thursday for payment.

Additional Notes for Fundraising Activities:

- All money-making activities must be pre-approved by the building principal through a Fundraising Request Form.
- Any activity or school group that intends to solicit gifts, donations, or subsidies from businesses or foundations outside of the school must have prior approval from the principal.

Funds raised for a specific purpose must be used for the stated purpose only. If the funds are not needed for the purpose they were raised, then the teacher, coach or sponsor will need to either return the funds to the donor or ask for the donor's permission to use the funds for other items.

Use of Drones in the Educational Program

The Blue Ridge CUSD #18's Board of Education recognizes the study and utilization of drones for instructional programming. The following guidelines must be adhered to when using a drone on school property:

1. The drone must not be taken home and/or used on a personal basis.
2. The drone is to be operated for school-approved purposes only.
3. The drone is to be operated by the Blue Ridge CUSD #18 school district only.
4. The drone is to be operated by staff that is appropriately licensed only.
5. Students may be involved while drone is being operated, but only under the supervision of appropriately licensed teachers who have been trained on FAA regulations and any State or local laws related to the operation of the drone.
6. The drone must not be operated over crowds, adjoining neighborhoods, or commercial properties.
7. The drone must not be operated indoors (Examples: gymnasiums, cafeterias, auditoriums).
8. The drone must not be operated above 200 feet.
9. The drone must not fly more than 100 miles per hour.
10. The approved operator should maintain visual contact with the drone at all times.

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*Employment
Status*

Employment Status



Compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act

Job Classifications

The Superintendent will ensure that all job positions are identified as either “exempt” or “non-exempt” according to State law and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and that employees are informed whether they are “exempt” or “non-exempt.” “Exempt” and “non-exempt” employee categories may include certificated and non-certificated job positions. All non-exempt employees, whether paid on a salary or hourly basis, are covered by minimum wage and overtime provisions.

Exempt Employee

The following positions are defined as “Exempt” from minimum wage and overtime regulations. All “Exempt” positions are paid on a salary basis.

- Superintendent
- Assistant Superintendent/ Principal/ Athletic Director/ Curriculum Coordinator
- Building Principal
- Transportation Supervisor
- Food Service Director
- Operations & Maintenance Supervisor
- Certified Teacher
- Substitute Teacher
- Non-Teaching Coaches

Non-Exempt Employee (May include 12-month, school year or part-time.)

The following positions are described as “Non-Exempt” and are therefore eligible for minimum wage and overtime when applicable.

<u>12-Month</u>	<u>School Year or Part-time</u>
Bookkeeper	Aide
Custodian	Building Secretary
Maintenance	Bus Driver
Technology Specialist	Cook
Unit Secretary	Library Aid
Student Worker	Summer Worker

Full-Time Employee

All support staff “actively employed” in the following positions are considered full-time employees. Positions include maintenance, custodian, and administrative office staff (unit secretary, bookkeeper, technology specialist).

School Year/Part-Time Employee

All support staff “actively employed” in the following positions are considered part-time employees. Positions include bus drivers, building secretary, aides, cooks, student workers, crossing guards, and summer workers.

Workweek and Compensation

The workweek for District employees will be 12:00 a.m. Sunday until 11:59 p.m. Saturday. Non-exempt employees will be compensated for all hours worked in a workweek including overtime. For non-exempt employees paid a salary, the salary is paid for a 40-hour workweek even if an employee is scheduled for less than 40 hours. "Overtime" is time worked in excess of 40 hours in a single workweek.

Overtime

The School Board discourages overtime work by non-exempt employees. A non-exempt employee shall not work overtime without his or her supervisor's express approval. All supervisors of non-exempt employees shall: (1) monitor overtime use on a weekly basis and report such use to the business office, (2) seek the Superintendent or designee's written pre-approval for any long term or repeated use of overtime that can be reasonably anticipated, (3) ensure that overtime provisions of this policy and the FLSA are followed, and (4) ensure that employees are compensated for any overtime worked. Accurate and complete time sheets of actual hours worked during the workweek shall be signed by each employee and submitted to the business office. The business office will review work records of employees on a regular basis, make an assessment of overtime use, and provide the assessment to the Superintendent. In lieu of overtime compensation, non-exempt employees may receive compensatory time-off, according to Board policy 5:310, *Compensatory Time-Off*.

Suspension Without Pay

No exempt employee shall have his or her salary docked, such as by an unpaid suspension, if the deduction would cause a loss of the exempt status. Certificated employees may be suspended without pay in accordance with Board policy 5:240, *Professional Personnel - Suspension*. Non-certificated employees may be suspended without pay in accordance with Board policy 5:290, *Educational Support Personnel - Employment Termination and Suspensions*.

Implementation

The Superintendent or designee shall implement the policy in accordance with the FLSA, including its required notices to employees. In the event of a conflict between the policy and state or federal law, the latter shall control.

Reporting Absences & Attendance

To maintain a productive work environment, the District expects employees to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and on the District. In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, they are required to notify their supervisor as soon as possible before they are scheduled to work.

Poor attendance and excessive tardiness are disruptive. Either may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Absence of three working days without reporting will be considered a voluntary resignation.

Employment Record/Employee Status Changes

Any changes in name, address, phone numbers, marital status, and persons to be contacted in case of an emergency must to be turned into the Unit Office as soon as possible in order to keep your records current.

*COMPENSATION
POLICIES*

Compensation Policies



Payroll Period/Time Cards/Pay Day

All employees are paid on the 10th and 25th of each month by 8:00 a.m. The payroll period is two weeks from Sunday through the following Saturday. Each pay summary will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period.

We provide direct deposit for all administrators, certified, and non-certified employees to simplify payroll processing. Employee's payroll earnings will be deposited directly into their checking or savings account as designated on the payroll deduction authorization form and acknowledged on the payroll record. Please note that the District deposits payroll earnings to our main bank, which is subsequently deposited to employees individual banks based on the schedule for posting at each local banking facility.

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every non-exempt employee. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties. Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Both the administrator/supervisor and the employee can be held responsible for any of these dishonest actions, which may result in criminal prosecution. All non-exempt employees shall ensure accurate reporting of hours worked and shall sign completed time record.

The building administrator/supervisor will review and then sign the time record before submitting it to payroll for processing. In addition, if the employee makes corrections or modifications to the time record, the administrator/supervisor must verify the accuracy of the changes by signing the time record. Time is calculated by using a fifteen-minute interval for determining "hours worked" and recording of time worked by all non-exempt employees.

Breaks

Please refer to the "Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350."

For employees not covered by this agreement:

An employee who works at least 7.5 continuous hours shall receive a 30-minute duty-free meal break that begins within the first 5 hours of the employee's workday. The District accommodates employees who are nursing mothers according to state and federal law.

Expenses

Please refer to the "Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350."

For employees not covered by this agreement:

The School Board shall reimburse employees for expenses necessary for the performance of their duties which have been approved by the Superintendent. If the anticipated expense amount exceeds budgeted amounts, prior Board approval is required.

Employees must submit to the Superintendent an itemized, signed voucher showing the amount

of actual expenses, attaching receipts to the voucher if possible. Expense vouchers shall be presented to the School Board in its regular bill process.

Benefits

BENEFITS

Holidays

Please refer to the “Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350.”

For employees not covered by this agreement:

Unless the District receives a waiver or modification of The School Code pursuant to Section 2-3.25g, or 24-2(b) allowing it to schedule school on a school holiday, District employees will not be required to work on the holidays listed on the annual Memo to the educational support personnel.

A holiday will not cause a deduction from an employee’s time or compensation. The District may require educational support personnel to work on a school holiday during an emergency or for the continued operation and maintenance of facilities or property.

Religious Holidays

Please refer to the “Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350.”

For employees not covered by this agreement:

Supervisors shall grant an employee’s request for time off to observe a religious holiday if the employee gives at least 5 days prior notice and the absence does not cause an undue hardship.

Employees may use earned vacation time, or personal leave to make up the absence, provided such time is consistent with the District’s operational needs. A per diem deduction may also be requested by the employee.

Sick Days

Please refer to the “Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350.”

For those employees not covered by this agreement:

Full or part-time educational support personnel who work at least 600 hours per year receive the same number of sick days as PSRP’s covered by the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Part-time employees will receive sick leave pay equivalent to their regular workday. Unused sick leave shall accumulate to a maximum of 180 days, including the leave of the current year. This policy is the District’s written plan allowing eligible employees to convert eligible accumulated sick leave to service credit upon a District employee’s retirement under the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund.

Sick leave is defined in State law as personal illness, quarantine at home, serious illness or death in the immediate family or household, or birth, adoption, or placement for adoption. The Superintendent and/or designee shall monitor the use of sick leave.

After 3 days absence for personal illness, or as it may be deemed necessary in other cases, the employee may be required to furnish a physician’s or a spiritual adviser’s certificate of illness as a basis for pay. If such a certificate is required, the District shall pay any expenses incurred in securing it.

Personal Leave

Please refer to the “Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350.”

For employees not covered by this agreement:

Full-time educational support personnel have two paid personal leave days per year. The use of a personal day is subject to the following conditions:

1. Except in cases of emergency or unavoidable situations, a personal leave request should be submitted to the Superintendent twenty-four (24) hours before the requested date.
2. No personal leave day may be used immediately before or immediately after a holiday, or during the first and/or last 5 days of the school year, unless the Superintendent grants prior approval.
3. Personal leave may not be used in increments of less than one-quarter day.
4. Personal leave is subject to any necessary replacement's availability.
5. Personal leave may not be used when the employee's absence would create an undue hardship.

Vacation

Please refer to the “Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350.”

Compensatory Time-Off

Please refer to the “Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350.”

Health Insurance

The District provides a group health insurance plan for all eligible full-time employees. The District may pay a portion of health insurance premiums for each eligible full-time employee. Employees may purchase dependent coverage at an additional cost. **See official plan documents for complete details.**

Life Insurance

The District may provide Life Insurance for eligible full-time employees. **See official plan documents for complete details.**

Retirement

We provide a retirement plan for all eligible full-time employees. **Please see Summary Plan Description for details.**

Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund

Employees who are expected to work 600 or more hours per year must contribute to the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (“IMRF”). These employees are considered participating members of the IMRF and will have the appropriate deductions made from their salary. The District will contribute the amount designated by the IMRF in the name of the employee. Employees who are expected to work less than 600 hours per year are considered nonparticipating members of the Fund.

Ancillary Insurance Coverage

Employees interested in disability, cancer, vision, dental, whole life, or intensive care insurance may purchase this on their own running the premiums through our payroll deduction program. The District offers this as an administrative service only to the employee. Inquiries relating to any ancillary

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insurance should be directed to the insurance agent. The District makes no representations with respect to any ancillary insurance coverage and any administrative assistance provided shall not be construed as endorsing such insurance coverage. For more information, please contact the office.

COBRA Insurance

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their dependents (qualified beneficiaries) the opportunity to continue health insurance coverage under our health plan when a “qualifying event” would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Some common qualifying events are resignation, termination of employment, or death of an employee; a reduction in an employee’s hours or a leave of absence; an employee’s divorce or legal separation; or a dependent child who no longer meets eligibility requirements.

Under COBRA, the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage of the group rates plus administration fee.

We provide each eligible employee with a written notice describing rights granted under COBRA when the employee becomes eligible for coverage under the health insurance plan. The notice contains important information about the employee’s rights and obligations.

It is the employee’s responsibility to inform the Plan Administrator of the following events for eligibility purposes:

- The participant becomes entitled to Medicare benefits
- The participant and spouse become divorced
- The participant and spouse become legally separated
- A participant’s child ceases to be a dependant under the plan

Flexible Spending Accounts (Section 125)

Employees can save tax dollars by enrolling in this multi-option plan. This account allows employees to withhold pre-tax dollars from their paycheck to pay:

1. Group Health Insurance Premiums
2. Medical Reimbursement, including dental and optical expenses, out-of-pocket expenses such as meeting deductibles, etc.
3. Child or dependent care expenses
4. Premiums for any qualified individual ancillary insurance (disability coverage may not be deducted pretax) you may have purchased.

The benefits eligibility date must have been reached for this benefit to become effective. Elections may only be changed during the annual election period, which is from November to December of each year. Allowable expenses include only those that were incurred during the plan year. Expenses may be submitted up to 60 days following the end of the plan year. Contributions not used will be forfeited in accordance with federal law.

Court Duty

Please refer to the “Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350.”

For employees not covered by this agreement:

The District will pay full salary during the time an employee is on court duty or, pursuant to a subpoena, serves as a witness or has a deposition taken in any school-related matter pending in court.

The District will deduct the court duty remuneration, less mileage and meal expenses, from the employee’s compensation.

An employee should give at least 5 days' prior notice of pending court duty to the District.

Bereavement Leave

Please refer to the "Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350."

For employees not covered by this agreement:

Educational support personnel receive bereavement leave on the same terms and conditions granted professional staff.

Child Bereavement Leave Act

State law allows a maximum of 10 unpaid work days for eligible employees (Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, 20 U.S.C. §2601 et seq.) to take child bereavement leave. The purpose, requirements, scheduling, and all other terms of the leave are governed by the Child Bereavement Leave Act. Child bereavement leave allows for: (1) attendance by the bereaved staff member at the funeral or alternative to a funeral of his or her child, (2) making arrangements necessitated by the death of the staff member's child, or (3) grieving the death of the staff member's child, without any adverse employment action.

The leave must be completed within 60 days after the date on which the employee received notice of the death of his or her child. However, in the event of the death of more than one child in a 12-month period, an employee is entitled to up to a total of six weeks of bereavement leave during the 12-month period, subject to certain restrictions under State and federal law. Other existing forms of leave may be substituted for the leave provided in the Child Bereavement Leave Act. This policy does not create any right for an employee to take child bereavement leave that is inconsistent with the Child Bereavement Leave Act.

Leave Of Absence

Please refer to the "Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350."

Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)

Any employee whose absence from employment is necessitated by reason of service in the uniformed services will be granted an unpaid leave of absence and will have the right to be reemployed if he or she:

- Ensures that the District receives advance written or verbal notice of his or her service;
- Has five years or less of cumulative service in the uniformed services while with the District;
- Returns to work or applies for reemployment in a timely manner after conclusion of service; and
- Has not been separated from service with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions.

Upon the expiration of such leave of absence, each employee will be restored to his/her former job classification or to a position of like seniority, status and pay; unless, circumstances of the District have so changed as to make it impossible or unreasonable to do so.

Performance Evaluation

Please refer to the "Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350."

For employees not covered by this agreement:

The Superintendent is responsible for designing and implementing a program for evaluating the job performance of each educational support staff member according to standards contained in Board policies as well as in compliance with State law and any applicable collective bargaining agreement. The standards for the evaluation program shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Each employee shall be evaluated annually, preferably before the annual salary review.
2. The direct supervisor shall provide input.
3. The employee's work quality, promptness, attendance, reliability, conduct, judgment, and cooperation shall be considered.
4. The employee shall receive a copy of the annual evaluation.
5. All evaluations shall comply with state and federal law and any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Family and Medical Leave**Leave Description**

An eligible employee may use unpaid family and medical leave (FMLA leave), guaranteed by the federal Family and Medical Leave Act. The U.S. Department of Labor's rules (federal rules) implementing, FMLA, as they may be amended from time to time, control FMLA leave. The District will grant family or medical leave of absence or both for eligible employees for up to 12 work weeks per rolling year, for the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee's child after birth, or placement or adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

During a single 12-month period, an eligible employee's FMLA leave entitlement may be extended to a total of 26 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a covered servicemember (defined herein) with a serious injury or illness. The "single 12-month period" is measured forward from the date the employee's first FMLA leave to care for the covered servicemember begins.

While FMLA leave is normally unpaid, the District will substitute an employee's accrued compensatory time-off and/or paid leave for unpaid FMLA leave. All policies and rules regarding the use of paid leave apply when paid leave is substituted for unpaid FMLA leave. Any substitution of paid leave for unpaid FMLA leave will count against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement. Use of FMLA leave shall not preclude the use of other applicable unpaid leave that will extend the employee's leave beyond 12 weeks, provided that the use of FMLA leave shall not serve to extend such other unpaid leave. Any full workweek period during which the employee would not have been required to work, including summer break, winter break and spring break, is not counted against the employee's FMLA leave entitlement.

FMLA leave is available in one or more of the following instances:

1. The birth and first-year care of a son or daughter.
2. The adoption or foster placement of a son or daughter, including absences from work that are necessary for the adoption or foster care to proceed and expiring at the end of the 12-month period beginning on the placement date.
3. The serious health condition of an employee's spouse, child, or parent.
4. The employee's own serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her job.

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5. The existence of a qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, child, or parent is a military member on covered active duty or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty, as provided in federal rules.
6. To care for the employee's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who is a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness, as provided in federal rules.

If spouses are employed by the District, they may together take only 12-weeks for FMLA leaves when the reason for the leave is 1 or 2, above, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition, or a combined total of 26 weeks for item 6 above.

An employee may be permitted to work on an intermittent or reduced-leave schedule in accordance with FMLA regulations.

Eligibility

To be eligible for FMLA leave, an employee must be employed at a worksite where at least 50 employees are employed within 75 miles. In addition, one of the following provisions must describe the employee:

1. The employee has been employed by the District for at least 12 months and has been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately before the beginning of the leave. The 12 months an employee must have been employed by the District need not be consecutive. However, the District will not consider any period of previous employment that occurred more than 7 years before the date of the most recent hiring, except when the service break is due to fulfillment of a covered service obligation under the employee's Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Right Act (USERRA), 38 U.S.C. 4301, et seq., or when a written agreement exists concerning the District's intention to rehire the employee.
2. The employee is a full-time classroom teacher.

Requesting Leave

If the need for the FMLA leave is foreseeable, an employee must provide the Superintendent or designee with at least 30 days' advance notice before the leave is to begin. If 30 days' advance notice is not practicable, the notice must be given as soon as practicable. The employee shall make a reasonable effort to schedule a planned medical treatment so as not to disrupt the District's operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider administering the treatment. The employee shall provide at least verbal notice sufficient to make the Superintendent or designee aware that he or she needs FMLA leave, and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Failure to give the required notice for a foreseeable leave may result in a delay in granting the requested leave until at least 30 days after the date the employee provides notice.

Certification

Within 15 calendar days after the Superintendent or designee makes a request for certification for a FMLA leave, an employee must provide one of the following:

1. When the leave is to care for the employee's covered family member with a serious health condition, the employee must provide a certificate completed by the family member's health care provider.
2. When the leave is due to the employee's own serious health condition, the employee must provide a certificate completed by the employee's health care provider.
3. When the leave is to care for a covered servicemember with a serious illness or injury, the employee must provide a certificate completed by an authorized health care provider for the covered servicemember.

4. When the leave is because of a qualified exigency, the employee must provide a copy of the covered military member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military indicating that the military member is on active duty or call to active duty status in support of a contingency operation, and the dates of the covered military member's active duty service.

The District may require an employee to obtain a second and third opinion at its expense when it has reason to doubt the validity of a medical certification.

The District may require recertification at reasonable intervals, but not more often than once every 30 days. Regardless of the length of time since the last request, the District may request recertification when the, (1) employee requests a leave extension, (2) circumstances described by the original certification change significantly, or (3) District receives information that casts doubt upon the continuing validity of the original certification. Recertification is at the employee's expense and must be provided to the District within 15 calendar days after the request. The District may request recertification every 6 months in connection with any absence by an employee needing an intermittent or reduced schedule leave for conditions with a duration in excess of 6 months.

Failure to furnish a complete and sufficient certification on forms provided by the District may result in a denial of the leave request.

Continuation of Health Benefits

During FMLA leave, employees are entitled to continuation of health benefits that would have been provided if they were working. Any share of health plan premiums being paid by the employee before taking the leave, must continue to be paid by the employee during the FMLA leave. A District's obligation to maintain health insurance coverage ceases if an employee's premium payment is more than 30 days late and the District notifies the employee at least 15 days before coverage will cease.

Changed Circumstances and Intent to Return

An employee must provide the Superintendent or designee reasonable notice of changed circumstances (i.e., within 2 business days if the changed circumstances are foreseeable) that will alter the duration of the FMLA leave. The Superintendent or designee, taking into consideration all of the relevant facts and circumstances related to an individual's leave situation, may ask an employee who has been on FMLA leave for 8 consecutive weeks whether he or she intends to return to work.

Return to Work

If returning from FMLA leave occasioned by the employee's own serious health condition, the employees required to obtain and present certification from the employee's health care provider that he or she is able to resume work.

An employee returning from FMLA leave will be given an equivalent position to his or her position before the leave, subject to: (1) permissible limitations the District may impose as provided in the FMLA or implementing regulations, and (2) the District's reassignment policies and practices.

Classroom teachers may be required to wait to return to work until the next semester in certain situations as provided by the FMLA regulations.

Implementation

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that: (1) all required notices and responses to leave requests are provided to employees in accordance with the FMLA; and (2) this policy is implemented in accordance with the FMLA. In the event of a conflict between the policy and the FMLA or its regulations, the latter shall control. The terms used in this policy shall be defined as in the FMLA regulations.

Leaves for Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence

Please refer to the “Agreement Between Blue Ridge Community Unit School District No. 18 and Blue Ridge Federation of Teachers AFT Local 3350.”

For employees not covered by this agreement:

An unpaid leave from work is available to any staff member who: (1) is a victim of domestic or sexual violence, or (2) has a family, or household member who is a victim of domestic or sexual violence whose interests are not adverse to the employee as it relates to the domestic or sexual violence. The unpaid leave allows the employee to seek medical help, legal assistance, counseling, safety planning, and other assistance without suffering adverse employment action.

The Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act governs the purpose, requirements, scheduling, and continuity of benefits, and all other terms of the leave. Accordingly, if the District employs at least 50 employees, an employee is entitled to a total of 12 work weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period. Neither the law nor this policy creates a right for an employee to take unpaid leave that exceeds the unpaid leave time allowed under, or is in addition to the unpaid leave time permitted by, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (29 U.S.C. §2601 et seq.).

General Rules Of Conduct

To assure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, we expect employees to follow rules of conduct, performance, and attendance. This will protect the interests of all employees and the District.

For the guidance of all employees, listed below are some rules of conduct, performance and attendance. Violation of any of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including discharge, at the District's discretion. This list is by way of illustration only and should not be deemed to limit the District's right to discipline or discharge for other reasons not specifically listed.

The following acts are prohibited and constitute violations of District Rules of Conduct.

1. Possession of any dangerous weapon or explosive device while on District property.
2. Reporting to work under the influence of, or introducing, possessing, or using on District property, any intoxicating or controlled substance (including drug paraphernalia) not prescribed by a licensed physician. Employees with prescription drugs, which could impair motor function, must advise their administrator when first reporting for work after receiving such a prescription.
3. Fighting with, threatening, intimidating, coercing, physically abusing or interfering with another employee or persons doing business with the District.
4. Taking or receiving, without authorization, goods, materials, equipment or property belonging to the District, employees, or persons doing business with the District.
5. Practicing or promoting discrimination against or harassment of another employee or group of employees on the basis or race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, or disability.
6. Willful destruction of property, including but not limited to falsification of report(s); employment application; tallies; data; time card(s); commission of deliberate error; concealment of such acts committed by employee or others.
7. Insubordination (refusal to carry out administrator's instructions). Using profane or abusive language or displaying the abusive conduct toward an employee or person.
8. Participation or instigation of horseplay, scuffling, pranks, and/or otherwise creating a disturbance in the workplace.
9. Committing any felony or misdemeanor crimes as prohibited by federal, state, or local laws or failure to report unlawful conduct.
10. Transaction of personal business, including telephone calls, during working hours (excluding lunch) without consent of an administrator.
11. Use of seatbelt is required while riding in or operating a District vehicle on public roads.
12. Negligent work performance, concealment or failure to report errors, which may result in economic damage or adverse conditions.
13. Sleeping during working time.
14. Failure to report an accident or injury to the appropriate administrator.
15. Excessive employee absenteeism or tardiness or failure to notify of absence or tardiness within an hour of the scheduled work time.
16. Leaving District premises during working hours without permission. Unauthorized entrance on District property during non-working hours.
17. Working in an unsafe manner or violating District safety policies and procedures.
18. Falsification of employee applications.
19. Improper use of sick leave or unpaid personal leave.
20. Unauthorized use of District equipment.
21. Making modifications in equipment or buildings including heating, cooling, electrical, water or sewer systems unless authorized by job descriptions or supervisors.
22. Unauthorized possession or use of District keys, keycards, or access fobs, including master keys.

23. Bringing personally owned equipment or furniture to school without advance written authorization from the building administration. If permission is granted, the District assumes no liability for lost, damaged, or stolen personal property.
24. Promoting the services, products, ideologies (political, religious, or organizational), or goals of non-school organizations, exclusive of educational goals.
25. Failing to be truthful to the Board of Education or the administration in regard to matters relating to employment or directly related to the employee's work duties.
26. Falsifying documents, or creating documents, which are substantially misleading.
27. Making false claims for insurance or any other benefit.
28. Misrepresenting to any other person the extent of her or his job authority, or purport to act on behalf of the District when not authorized to do so.
29. Incurring expenses or entering into contracts on behalf of the District without the authority to do so.
30. Failure to conduct oneself in a safe manner at all times. Failure to read, understand and apply all safety instructions related to procedures or equipment, or defeating or attempting to defeat any safety device.
31. Working under the influence of any intoxicating liquor or illegal drug; concealing or maintaining any intoxicating liquor or illegal drug in or on any school property or at any school sponsored event; working while bearing the odor of alcohol or illegal drugs.
32. Engaging in acts that are dangerous to property, health, safety, or welfare of the District, students, other employees, or the general public. This rule shall not be deemed violated by accidental acts that are not intended by the employee, but the employee shall act with prudence and ordinary caution at all times.
33. Engaging in activities during non-school hours that intentionally cause injury or harm or attempt to cause injury or harm to other employees, children, their property, or the District or its property. Any employee who has been convicted of any felony offense or who has committed any criminal acts involving substantial risk of harm to other persons or property may be unsuitable for school employment and is subject to discharge, at the discretion of the Board.
34. Bringing onto school property or to any school activity firearms, ammunition, explosives, fireworks, or other substances or devices likely or capable of causing harm to persons or property.
35. Failure to report to the direct supervisor any damaged or broken equipment or other school property in his or her assigned area of responsibility.
36. The loss of driving rights or privileges for any position requiring a current driver's license shall be cause for dismissal. The employee must advise the District of lost driving privileges.
37. Failure to maintain or the loss of any certificate, license, or other document issued by any governmental entity or office necessary or required for the employee's position shall be cause for dismissal.
38. Failure to promptly deposit, report or account for any funds, gate receipts, or other money or property of the District, students, or others coming into the employee's hands as a result of the employee's work, responsibilities, duties, or employment.
39. Unauthorized use, retaining without authorization, or stealing money or property of students, other employees, or others.
40. Release, disclosure, or granting access to information found in any student record except in the exercise of job responsibilities, or when such disclosure would constitute a violation of the Illinois School Student Records Act or the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Employees may seek clarification of their responsibilities under this rule from their immediate supervisor.
41. Release, disclosure, or granting access to information found in any employee file or disclosure of confidential information about other employees without advance authorization from a supervisor. Employees may seek clarification of their responsibilities under this rule from their immediate supervisor.

42. Educational support employees shall not discipline students except as authorized by job description.
43. Fighting and physical altercations of all kinds. Employees may take reasonable steps to protect themselves from physical violence and may reasonably restrain a student to protect the employee, another employee, other students, or District property.
44. Engaging in any behavior while at school, at its sponsored events, or during work hours, which constitutes gross disrespect for the property or rights of others including but not limited to insensitive remarks about another person's race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, age, ancestry, or marital status. Such remarks will result in employee discipline.
45. Using profanity when speaking to parents or students, or address other employees utilizing profanity.
46. Engaging in any sexual or romantic relationship with any student. Employees shall not make sexually suggestive remarks or engage in sexual conduct or acts on or towards students. Employees shall not illegally discriminate against students on the basis of the student's sex. Employees shall personally report evidence of any such activity to the Superintendent. No employee shall instruct or dissuade another employee from making such a report.
47. Making unwelcome sexual advances toward or request sexual favors from other employees. Engaging in verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature which constitutes sexual harassment or otherwise creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.
48. Aide, solicit or engage any student, or any employee in any activity that is illegal or immoral. Employees shall personally report evidence of illegal or immoral activity to the Superintendent.
49. Conviction of any felony offense involving dishonesty or violence, or that would have precluded an employee's initial employment as a matter of law irrespective of the jurisdiction, shall be cause for dismissal.
50. Willfully refusing to obey written or oral instructions of the immediate supervisor, a member of the administrative staff.
51. Willfully refusing to obey the policies, rules and regulations of the Board of Education or attempt to violate the Board of Education policy, rule or regulation.
52. Willful behavior that interrupts the orderly process of school affairs.
53. Repeated minor incidents of misbehavior may be cause for discharge, if other disciplinary measures have failed to deter misconduct.
54. To knowingly surrender or deliver a child to a person other than the child's parents (or in the case of divorce, the custodial parent) or other guardian, without the approval from the parent, legal guardian, or the building principal. No employee shall intentionally surrender or deliver a child to a person who is prohibited such contact by an Order of Protection, or other Order of Court
55. Failure to personally report evidence of child abuse to the DCFS Hotline. No employee shall instruct or dissuade another employee from making such a report. The employee shall notify the building principal that a report was made.
56. Outside employment that may interfere with the performance of job duties.
57. Accepting unauthorized rebates, gifts, gratuities, premiums or promotional materials from suppliers for personal use or gain.
58. Utilizing District computers, networks or Internet access to view, obtain, or download any pornographic or sexually explicit material.
59. Failing to maintain strict confidentiality of passwords or other security techniques or accessing any computer, network, server, or other information thereon that the employee is not authorized to access.
60. Violation of any copyright, including, but not limited to copyright in software, information, music, data or other material obtained over the Internet.

***ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, AGREEMENT
AND RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK***



The undersigned hereby acknowledges receipt of a copy of the Blue Ridge CUSD #18 Employee Handbook. The undersigned hereby acknowledges and agrees that nothing contained in the employee handbook including policies, practices, and benefits stated herein are intended to create any contractual right, express or implied, to employment or to any particular term or condition of employment. The District retains the right to revise, amend this handbook, or terminate any policy unilaterally without notice at any time, and the employee's continued employment will be deemed acceptance of such revisions and modifications. I understand I am required to read and apply all work rules. I understand that if I violate any work rule I may be disciplined. I further acknowledge that discipline, in some circumstances, may include my immediate discharge.

Employee Signature

Witness Signature

Date

(This acknowledgement and agreement will be retained in the employee's personnel file).