



CANNON VALLEY Special Education Cooperative

Employee Handbook

2021 - 2022

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**WELCOME TO
CANNON VALLEY SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE**

Welcome and we are happy to have you as a member of the Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative team! We value our staff members, students, families, and member Cooperative communities; striving to meet the individual needs of those we serve.

This handbook will briefly clarify some common issues regarding personnel procedures within the Cooperative. These procedures are based primarily on administrative directive rather than a Board approved policy. All are consistent with your individual Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative Agreements and/or Terms and Conditions of Employment. This handbook is not designed to include all of the details of a topic but is intended to be a starting point. You are also encouraged to contact your supervisor or other appropriate employee members if the information you are seeking is not sufficiently addressed in the handbook.

The information in this handbook is a reference. Federal/state/local law, Cooperative policy, and negotiated labor agreements are summarized. Refer to legal documents for specifics. This summary of Cooperative processes and procedures supersedes any earlier Cooperative handbook.

The term "Cooperative," as used in this handbook, refers to Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative and services provided by this organization.

Respectfully,

Sarah McGuire
Executive Director

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Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative

The Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative was organized in 2016 under Minnesota Statute (M.S.) 125A.15 to support the needs of the member Cooperatives and meet the individual needs of students who require a different level of service to make progress on their Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals and objectives.

The Cooperative Board is composed of one representative from each member Cooperative who is a member of and appointed by the member Cooperative board. The Board receives advice from committees through the Superintendent Council.

Mission Statement

The Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative prepares every student to successfully learn and engage in their community.

Vision Statement

The Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative is a model learning community with unique support for every student through collaboration with member districts.

School Board and Cooperative Commitments

Maintain high expectations for social and emotional growth, academic performance and individualized educational opportunities to ensure all students reach their goal.

Engage with community organizations to provide a collaborative and responsive community for all students and families.

Locate and design appropriate learning spaces to serve individual student needs and easily accessible to member districts.

Implement a program that attracts, retains and fosters highly effective and trained professionals; offering staff development opportunities and supporting staff wellness.

Maintain high quality programming to member districts while being fiscally responsible and transparent.

Expectations for Employees

1. **Be a team player.** Bring a positive attitude to work every day. Communicate effectively with students and the members of your team. Get to know the responsibilities of all your team members. Attempt to resolve problems closest to the source of the issue.
2. **Serve as a role model in your dress, speech, and actions.** Dress and act appropriately for your role and personal safety. Always use respectful language. Avoid jokes, off-color remarks or attempts at humor that could be considered rude, inappropriate, disruptive or unprofessional. Do not talk about students or employee in a disrespectful or discourteous way.
3. **All employees are responsible for the education and supervision of students at all times.**
4. **Set high expectations for behavior. Know and enforce the requirements of the Cooperative's *Student Handbook*.**
5. **Maintain confidentiality at all times.** Employees, students, and their families have a right to confidentiality and data privacy. You are accountable for what you say and for information you release. Do not speak about a student in front of another student or talk about a student to employee or others in or outside school except on a need to know basis. Respect other employee members' confidentiality.
6. **You are a mandatory reporter of suspected maltreatment of minors and vulnerable adults.**
7. **Maintain your personal and professional boundaries at all times.** Personal information about your life outside of school is not appropriate and may not be appreciated by students. You are part of the school program and your job is to provide education, support, and guidance to students. Establishing "friendships" with students may create unrealistic expectations and interfere with sustaining appropriate boundaries.
8. **Maintain a respectful and safe workplace.** Inappropriate comments about race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, or other tasteless or improper remarks will not be tolerated. The Cooperative also has a Harassment and Violence Policy that is on the Cooperative website. An important aspect of this policy is to report to your supervisor if you receive an unwelcome comment or feel threatened in any way. To the extent possible, we want you to feel safe and secure at all times.
9. **Be dependable.** You are responsible for maintaining good attendance. You are expected to report to work on time, adhere to the time periods established by the Cooperative for any breaks, and remain at the assigned work station throughout the scheduled work period or until properly relieved.
10. **In emergency situations, all employees are expected to follow the Crisis Plan.** Review the plan for your location and know your role and responsibilities in each situation. First and foremost, you are responsible for your student's and your personal safety.
11. **You are responsible for reading and following all Cooperative policies and procedures.**

If you are unclear about any of these expectations, contact your building supervisor as soon as possible for an explanation.

The Cooperative will develop, maintain and provide copies of an “Employee Handbook” for all employees upon initial hire and subsequently on the Cooperative website (cannonvalleyspeciald.org) which will include procedures and policies. In addition, program calendars, a copy of the current Master Agreement, Terms and Conditions of Employment, and other essential employee materials will be provided to new employees and subsequently will be maintained on the Cooperative website.

Employment

Collective Bargaining Agreements

Collective Bargaining Agreements, also known as employment contracts, established through the formal negotiation process, outline the terms and conditions of your employment. Familiarize yourself with your collective bargaining agreement. Collective bargaining agreement language has been crafted to provide clarification and eliminate misunderstandings. Direct your questions about your collective bargaining agreement to your supervisor, bargaining unit representative, or the Cooperative Office.

Job Classification

The Cooperative must systematically describe and group jobs to ensure consistent and fair treatment when assigning, compensating, and promoting employees. Consequently, it has established a classification plan for all jobs in the Cooperative in which individual positions are grouped into job classes, with each class composed of positions with similar duties, responsibilities and required qualifications.

Job Postings

The Cooperative posts Career Opportunities on the Cooperative website. The postings include job location, minimum experience, training requirements, and the closing date for applications. Some postings are labeled as “Internal Only”. Internal only positions are only open to non-probationary employees who are employed in a regular position. A regular position is a position that continues every year. Employees serving in positions as casual substitutes, temporary assignments, or casual instruction are not considered internal and are not eligible to apply for positions labeled, “Internal Only.”

Licenses and Certifications

Each employee who is required by law to be licensed or certified must maintain a current license or certificate with the Cooperative Office. Individuals are expected to know the date of expiration of their individual license and/or certification. Failure to maintain a current license or certification may result in an employee being placed on leave without pay or reduction in certification related compensation until license or certification is reactivated.

The Licensed Staff Union Group has a Continuing Education Committee which processes Continuing Education Units (CEUs), approves or denies, and uploads to the Minnesota Department of Education. It is the responsibility of the employee to comply with the CEU Committee procedures.

Background and Reference Checks

To ensure that individuals who join the Cooperative are well qualified and that the Cooperative maintains a safe and productive work environment, it is our practice to conduct pre-employment background checks on all applicants who accept an offer of employment. Background checks may include verification of any information on the applicant’s resume or application form, as well as a formal criminal background investigation. All offers of employment are conditioned on receipt of a background check report that is acceptable to the Cooperative. All background checks are conducted in conformity with the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and state and federal privacy and anti-discrimination laws. Reports are kept confidential and are only viewed by Cooperative Office staff involved in the hiring process. If information obtained in a background check would lead the Cooperative to deny employment, a copy of the report will be provided to the applicant, and the applicant will have the opportunity to dispute the report’s accuracy. A criminal conviction does not automatically bar an applicant from employment. All employees are expected to demonstrate exemplary behavior throughout their career with the Cooperative. We encourage employees to notify the

Cooperative Office or their supervisor if the employee experiences an event in their personal life that could potentially impact their job.

Separation of Employment and Unrequested Leave

Resignation/Retirement

If an employee resigns or retires from employment, the employee is expected to submit adequate notice in writing prior to the employee's anticipated last day of employment. The written notice must specify the effective date as the last day the employee will physically report for work. It must be submitted to their supervisor in accordance with the provisions of the employee's collective bargaining agreement. In some cases, the release of an employee from a licensed contract position may be delayed until the resulting vacancy is filled.

COBRA Benefits

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) requires that most employers sponsoring group health plans offer employees and their families the opportunity for a temporary extension of health coverage (called "Continuation Coverage") at group rates in certain instances where coverage under the plan would otherwise end (called "Qualifying Events").

Employees who lose insurance coverage as a result of a reduction in work hours, separation of employment, lay-off or unpaid leave have the right to choose continuation of coverage under COBRA. The employee will be required to pay the full premium cost plus a 2% administrative fee for coverage that is identical to the coverage being provided to similarly situated employees (or their family members).

If the employee does not choose continuation coverage within the required time period, group health insurance coverage under the plan will end. Once continuation coverage terminates for any reason, it cannot be reinstated. For further details concerning continuation of benefits under COBRA, contact the Cooperative Office.

Layoff or Unrequested Leave of Absence (ULA)

The Cooperative defines an unrequested leave of absence or layoff as an involuntary, non-disciplinary separation from Cooperative service resulting from a lack of available work, a program cutback or other economic necessity. Consult the Collective Bargaining Agreement for information about any benefits that may be available in the event of a layoff or unrequested leave of absence.

Exit Interviews for Employees Leaving the Cooperative

In the event an employee leaves employment, the Cooperative Office may contact the employee to offer the opportunity to complete an exit interview. The exit interview provides employees with an opportunity to offer suggestions as to how we can improve employee working conditions, engagement and satisfaction. Employees are also invited to request an exit interview by contacting the Cooperative Office.

Return of Cooperative Property

The separating employee must return all Cooperative property at the time of separation, including, but not limited to, name badges, access cards, cell phones, keys, Cooperative purchased curriculum materials, technology, and Cooperative purchased electronic devices (e.g. cell phone, iPad, or tablet).

Workplace Security

Cooperative Issued Name Badges

Employees are required to wear the name badge any time they are at work. It should be worn in a visible spot on the upper portion of the body at all times. It is the employee's responsibility to follow these rules and to maintain the name badge in good condition.

The Cooperative issued name badge is an important part of an employee's work attire. It allows students, parents/guardians, co-workers, vendors, and the general public to know the identity of an employee. An important part of providing a secure environment for our students is to ensure that everyone who enters our schools is identified.

The Cooperative will replace badges on a periodic cycle. If an employee needs a replacement name badge, the employee should contact the Cooperative Office to obtain a new name badge. The employee will be charged \$5 for a replacement badge outside of a reissue cycle.

Building Access

Keyless Entry (electronic keys and keycards)

All of our buildings have a keyless entry system. If an electronic key card is misplaced or lost, the employee is required to notify their supervisor immediately in order to assure that the key card can be deactivated and a new key card can be issued. Employees should check with their site supervisor to review the times that front doors are locked.

Keys (physical keys)

Some staff members may be issued a physical key for their classroom/office area. All staff members are expected to keep this key with them at all times. Additional expectations are as follows:

- Do not have keys duplicated
- Do not leave keys on/in desks or shelves
- Do not allow students to use any staff member's keys

Protocol for receiving visitors at the building

Visitors are required to check in with the main office/reception area at each site and sign the visitor log. Visitors may be other Cooperative employees or members of the public. Visitors are expected to wear a Cooperative issued name badge or visitor badge. In most cases, we ask that the building employee who is responsible for the visit escort the visitor to the meeting area. Following the appointment, employees are required to escort the visitor back to the main office/reception area.

Note: If an employee encounters an individual who has not checked in, escort the individual to the front office and check in with the site administrative assistant.

Protocol for securing building at the end of the day

The last office employee person leaving the program site each day will assure the following is accomplished:

1. All lights are turned off
2. Copy machines are turned off
3. All exits are secured

In addition, all doors at all program sites will be locked at all times. You should take your key fob with you to regain entrance to the building.

Student Teacher

The Cooperative supports the opportunity to have student teachers and we want to make the experience a positive one for all. All student teaching opportunities must be approved by the Executive Director.

Employee Lockers/Desks

Employees will be given a locker or desk that is able to be locked/secured during work hours to store personal items in. Please see the section on "Search of Employees' Desks and Offices" for additional information.

Workplace Health & Safety

Job Safety

The Cooperative is committed to developing and maintaining safe working environments. Help prevent injuries by observing general safety rules, removing hazards in the workplace, and immediately reporting unsafe conditions to the appropriate person. It is very important for all employees to follow safety guidelines to avoid injuries on the job. The following is a list of safety protocols all employees are required to follow:

- Know the locations of exits, fire extinguishers, alarms, Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), and first aid materials at the worksite.
- Seek information or training from the appropriate person when required to operate any equipment or handle any type of chemical.
- Not attempt to lift or carry an object that is too heavy to handle. Seek help from another employee so as to minimize the potential for injury.
- Report any safety hazards to a supervisor.
- Be aware of the surroundings and wear appropriate apparel for current weather conditions and work environment.
- Report to a supervisor any information received from others that could impact the health and safety of others.
- Report to a supervisor any information received regarding an individual who may be considering harming himself/herself or others.

Workers' Compensation/Reporting Accidents and Injuries

The Cooperative is covered under statutory state workers' compensation laws. Workers' compensation benefits are provided to protect employees in the event of a work-related injury or illness resulting in the need for an employee to receive medical care and/or to take time off from work due to the medical condition. In order to avoid possible delays in processing workers' compensation claims, employees should report all work-related injuries immediately.

Any employee sustaining an injury as part of fulfilling a job responsibility should immediately report the accident or injury to the building supervisor or Cooperative nurse. The call to the Worker's Comp Nurse's Line must be completed within the day of the injury. It is preferred that the call is made with the building supervisor and/or Cooperative nurse the day of the injury, but is not required. The Cooperative wants to ensure the injured employee is well and safe prior to returning to their job responsibilities.

Employees who need medical treatment will have an appointment scheduled with a provider by the Nurse's Line. Call 911 in an emergency. The employee must return a "workability report" filled out by the attending physician to the Cooperative Office as soon as possible and prior to returning to work.

Employees are encouraged to report unsafe conditions to the Cooperative Office before the unsafe condition results in an injury.

Fragrances

Fragrances can be triggers for individuals with asthma or sensitivity to chemicals (cologne, perfume, hair spray, nail polish, etc.). We encourage all staff to be mindful when wearing fragrances at work.

Employee Right to Know Act

The Employee Right to Know Act requires the Cooperative, as the employer, to evaluate workplaces for the presence of hazardous substances, harmful physical agents, and to provide training for those employees who may be exposed to any harmful substances in the workplace. Written information regarding harmful substances is available in each Cooperative building. If an employee is concerned about a hazard in the work area or would like additional information, they can contact the Cooperative Office.

Required Training

School Board Policies and procedures are in place for the purpose of assuring a safe working environment for employees. Depending on the training content, some training is required annually whereas other training may be required only once or on a different schedule.

All Staff Yearly Training:

- Blood borne Pathogens

- Bullying/Harassment
- Right-to-Know
- Mandated Reporting
- Non-violent verbal and physical intervention
- Food service training

All Staff Training Based on Schedule:

- CPR
- First Aid

Educational Assistants One Time Training:

- Department of Human Services Personal Care Assistant (PCA) Training

Communicable Diseases

The Cooperative will provide guidance for dealing with work situations involving employees who have life-threatening and communicable diseases including, but not limited to:

- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection
- HIV-related illness as defined by Minnesota statutes
- Any other life-threatening and communicable disease

The Cooperative does not discriminate against qualified individuals with life-threatening and communicable diseases in any terms or conditions of employment.

Indoor Air Quality

Our Cooperative's Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Management Plan includes procedures for maintaining good air quality in our buildings. If you have an air quality concern, contact the Cooperative Office for a form to complete. Upon receipt of the form, the Cooperative Office will conduct an initial investigation. If the problem cannot be resolved, the Cooperative Office will consult the building owners.

Integrated Pesticide Management

The Minnesota Parent's Right-to-Know Act (Minn. Stat. §121A.30) requires that schools inform parents/guardians and employees if they apply certain pesticides on school property. Specifically, the law requires schools that apply these pesticides to maintain a schedule of applications. The schedule of pesticide applications is available for review at each school office where pesticides are applied to school property. Employees should contact their site leader or their supervisor to find out how to view the application schedule or to be notified of any applications on days other than those specified (excluding emergency applications).

Student Injuries and Illness

If a student reports that he or she is ill, employees are required to ensure that the student is seen by the building supervisor and/or Cooperative nurse immediately. Only the building supervisor or Cooperative nurse can authorize a student to be sent home.

If a student reports that he or she has been injured, employees are required to ensure that the student is seen by the building supervisor and/or Cooperative nurse immediately. The Student Injury Form must be completed by the witness of the injury or person attending to the student. The form must be given to the building supervisor or Cooperative nurse as soon as possible, but before the end of the school day the injury occurred. The building supervisor will provide the Cooperative nurse with the completed form.

If the injury happens at the end of the school day and/or the end of the employee's duty time, the employee must notify their supervisor and stay with the student until additional help arrives. Do not send a student home

until the Cooperative nurse or building supervisor has screened the student and/or the student's parents/guardians have been contacted and provided authorization for the student to be transported home in accordance with School Board policy.

Animals at Work

The Cooperative is responsible for assuring the health and safety of all employees and students on Cooperative property. In keeping with this objective, the Cooperative does not permit employees to bring animals to work. Animals may pose a threat of infection and may cause allergic reactions in others. In addition, the Cooperative wishes to prevent pets from damaging Cooperative property.

Employees are not authorized to bring their pets to work; however, an employee who qualifies as disabled under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may request a workplace accommodation to allow that employee to bring a service animal to work. The ADA defines a service animal as an animal that is individually trained to do work or to perform tasks that are directly related to an employee's disability. If you require a service animal to do work or perform tasks for you in the workplace, contact the Cooperative Office for information about requesting a workplace accommodation under the ADA.

Children at Work

Employees are expected to make other arrangements for the care of their children during any time the employee is on duty during student days. Related national events such as "Take Our Daughters/Sons to Work Day" are not recognized by the Cooperative.

Response to Student Behavior

Employees are expected to use clear verbal and/or visual directives to manage student behavior and to follow building protocols for response to behavioral situations. Employees are prohibited from inflicting corporal punishment or causing corporal punishment to be inflicted upon a student to reform unacceptable conduct or as a penalty for unacceptable conduct. Corporal punishment is defined as hitting, spanking a person with or without an object or unreasonable physical force that causes bodily harm or emotional harm.

Any Cooperative employee or agent who witnesses or is involved in a potential corporal punishment incident will immediately notify their supervisor or executive director. (See School Board policy #414 – Mandated Reporting of children and Vulnerable Adults.)

At all times, employees are expected to avoid situations that may place them in danger and to call for help when, or if, a situation begins to escalate out of control. Any employee who is aware of a threat of violence must notify their supervisor immediately.

Emergency Procedures

Each building has emergency procedures detailing what to do in the event of a fire, severe weather, criminal threat, and other events requiring quick and decisive actions. Building administration will provide employees with emergency procedures, or employees can contact the Cooperative Office. In addition to complying with building emergency procedures, employees are expected to know where emergency medical equipment is located in the event of a life-threatening medical emergency. Employees should check with their supervisor if the employee is unsure of the location of emergency medical equipment.

Workplace Expectations

Job Responsibilities

The position an employee fills has specific responsibilities for which the employee is expected to perform. It is important that employees understand those responsibilities. All employees should make sure they are clear about the functions they are required to perform in their position.

Accessibility Notice: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), the Cooperative will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of their job unless doing so causes an undue hardship to the Cooperative. Contact the Cooperative Office with any questions or requests for accommodation.

Work Hours and Breaks

All employees are expected to be at their work location and ready to begin the day at their designated start time. A continued pattern of failure to be at work on time could result in employee discipline. The duration of hours and specific times of the employee's workday are determined by the Executive Director.

Employees who must leave the site during the scheduled work day are required to obtain approval from their supervisor, follow Cooperative protocols for absences, and check out in the building office on the check-out form. Employees are able to leave the building during their duty free lunch time by signing out of the building on the check-out form. If an employee is needing to leave during a prep period, approval from the building supervisor is required.

Cooperative Office Hours: 7:30 – 4:00

Building Hours: 7:30 – 4:00

Administration and Administrative Assistant: 7:30 – 4:00

Licensed Staff: 7:30 – 3:30

Educational Assistants: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 8:15 – 3:30; Tuesday, Thursday: 7:30 – 3:30

If any employee wishes to flex start and end times, they must complete a Flex Hours Form and gain approval from the building supervisor and executive director. Employees may only flex by fifteen (15) minutes and it must not affect student programming.

If an employee needs to flex start and end times for a one-time circumstance, they must gain approval from the building supervisor and complete an Absence Form documenting the flexed time.

Employees are able to leave directly after students have left the building on Fridays.

Problem Solving and Resolving Issues

Employees will not always agree on philosophy, teaching methods, or personality. Our differences make our program stronger. All employees are expected to conduct themselves professionally and treat each other with respect.

Employees must attempt to problem solve and resolve issues/concerns with individual staff members independently. Should an issue/concern continue, the employee must problem solve with the building supervisor. Should an issue/concern continue without a resolution, the employee must problem solve with the executive director.

Break and Rest Periods

Hourly Staff

Rules regarding work breaks are governed by state law as well as collective bargaining agreement language and School Board policies/practices. Minnesota law requires employers to provide sufficient time to use a restroom and eat meals. If the work break is less than twenty (20) minutes in duration, it must be counted as work time. Time to use a restroom (up to a maximum of a 15-minute break) must be provided within each four (4) consecutive hours of work. A meal break (usually a 30-minute break) must be given to employees who work eight (8) or more consecutive hours.

Following is an overview of Cooperative work break protocols:

- Full-time, eight (8) hour employees will receive two (2) paid 15-minute breaks and an unpaid 30-minute meal break. These shifts total 8.5 hours.
- Employees working six (6), but fewer than eight (8), consecutive hours receive (2) paid 15-minute breaks and an unpaid 30-minute meal break.
- Employees working fewer than four (4) consecutive hours are not entitled to a break, although supervisors often allow employees to take a short break if needed.

Supervisors and employees can mutually waive the 30-minute meal break depending on program or site needs, however the reason must be for the purposes of programming and/or coverage in the classroom and employees must be compensated anytime the lunch period is missed. This should not be a common or consistent practice.

The paid breaks (15-minute breaks) cannot be waived by the supervisor. The employee may not waive the scheduled time of the break. The employee and supervisor can mutually agree upon a new scheduled break.

Note: Impermissible Use of Meal Period and/or Rest Breaks: Neither the lunch period nor the rest break(s) may be used to account for an employee's late arrival or early departure or to cover time off for other purposes—for example, rest breaks may not be used to extend a meal period, and rest breaks may not be combined to allow one, half-hour long break. Employees are not allowed to skip the lunch period in order to leave work early.

Salaried (non-hourly) Administrative Staff

All salaried employees should work with the Executive Director in order to define the workday and break periods.

Teacher Preparation Time

Teachers are expected to remain on site during their prep time, but can be waived when approved by the building supervisor and the teacher signs out in the office.

Job Performance

Probationary Periods

The probationary period for a Cooperative employee serves as a working test or trial phase. An employee must complete this period satisfactorily to gain regular or continuing contract status following appointment. The probationary period is in accordance with the employee's Collective Bargaining Agreement, statute, and/or School Board policy.

Performance Appraisal

Regular status and/or continuing contract licensed staff members should receive one (1) or more performance evaluations each year depending on the employee's employee group. Employees may also receive a performance appraisal when an employee's job performance has changed significantly and warrants review. At a minimum, all employees can expect to engage in the performance appraisal process periodically throughout their employment. Questions about the performance appraisal process can be directed to the employee's supervisor or the Cooperative Office.

Professionalism

All employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner. The following employee groups each have a specific code of ethics:

- Teachers (Minnesota Rule 8710.2100)
- Administrators (Minnesota Rule 3512.5200)
- Educational Assistants (Minnesota Statute 120B.363)

Violations of standards of professional conduct could be grounds for discipline up to and including discharge of employment.

School Board Policies and Cooperative Procedures

An employee's work and activities in the Cooperative are governed by official School Board policies which have been developed and adopted by the School Board. Current School Board policies are available on the Cooperative website. In addition, Cooperative administration has developed procedures to implement these policies, and to provide more information concerning Cooperative expectations and practices. All employees are expected to familiarize themselves and comply with these School Board policies and procedures at all times. All employees are required to review the employee handbook annually.

Annual Requirements:

- All employees are required to confirm that they have reviewed and will abide by School Board policy and procedure #416 – Drug and Alcohol Testing. Employees will be asked at a later time during this module to confirm that they have reviewed policy #416.
- All employees are required to confirm that they have reviewed and will abide by School Board policy and procedure #524 – Internet Use. Employees will be asked at a later time during this module to confirm that they have reviewed policy #524.
- Key policies employees are required to know and abide by can be found in Appendix A of this handbook.

Collaboration

Providing a quality education for students and a positive work experience for employees requires collaboration between all employees in the Cooperative. Collaboration is demonstrated by showing respect, cooperation, and leadership at all times. Serving as an effective member of a collaborative team is critical to meeting performance expectations.

Representing our Cooperative

A Cooperative employee represents The Cannon Valley Special Education Cooperative. The impression and statements made by employees can influence people's perception of our Cooperative. Employees are placed in a position of trust by families and community members and are expected to conduct themselves in public and in social media in a manner that will not reflect negatively on the Cooperative or our employees.

Employees must be diligent about not sharing or posting in social media any information that may be protected by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. Similarly, employees should never (with the exception of a relative or close personal family acquaintance) engage with students via personal social media.

Attire and Grooming

It is important for all employees to display a professional image while at work by being appropriately attired. Employees are expected to present a well-groomed, modest, professional appearance, and to practice good personal hygiene, limit fragrances, and wear clothing that is suitable for the assignment.

The dress and appearance of Cooperative employees has a direct reflection on the professionalism of the Cooperative's services. Employees are required to exhibit a professional image to students, parents, and the community in order to support a positive educational environment. In addition, Cooperative employees must always consider that their employment places them in the position of role models for students. Accordingly, employees are expected to dress in a professional manner that is:

1. reflective of an employee's position as a role model within the Cooperative;
2. conducive to the employees' tasks and/or environment; and
3. clean, modest, and safe.

Guidelines for Professional Dress

The following guidelines serve to support employees and clarify the Cooperative's expectations regarding professional dress. The following guidelines are the Cooperative's minimum requirements and do not constitute an exhaustive list. Cooperatives may develop more restrictive guidelines for their campus, to which Cooperative employees are expected to adhere; however, Cooperative employees are not excused from compliance with this policy by any less restrictive guidelines imposed by individual Cooperatives.

Employees are expected to dress in a practical and professional manner. Clothing shall be neat (e.g., no holes or tears, not excessively wrinkled, etc.). All dresses, skirts, rompers, and jumpers must be an appropriate length to allow for standing and sitting and public.

Appropriate dress

- Suits, Pant Suits, Sport Coats
- Dress slacks, pants, khakis

- Denim jeans
- Dress shirt with or without a tie
- Dresses, skirts, rompers and jumpers (no more than 3 inches above the knee)
- Blouses, shirts, sweaters, or pullovers
- T-shirts or sweatshirts meeting the criteria for appropriate dress
- Any type of business shoe, tennis shoe, or sandal other than flip flops

Inappropriate Dress

Except as described herein, the following items are considered inappropriate for the office environment for all employees:

- Jerseys
- Garments revealing the shoulders, including halter tops, tank tops, tube tops, muscle shirts, strapless tops, tops with spaghetti straps, or tops with straps less than 2 inches wide (unless worn under a jacket, blouse, dress, or sweater). However, a sleeveless blouse that meets all of the other criteria for appropriate dress may be acceptable
- Flip flops or plastic shoes
- Athletic wear (sweatpants, sweat suits, workout clothes)
- Shorts, miniskirts, skorts
- Body-hugging clothes including leggings, yoga pants, stirrups, and spandex garments (unless worn under a skirt, dress, or other item that meets all of the other criteria for appropriate dress may be acceptable)
- Garments revealing the midriff or undergarments
- Dirty, ripped, wrinkled or stained clothing
- Transparent or tight garments
- Clothing with advertisements or logos larger than 2" (other than logos for the Cooperative or a member Cooperative to which the employee is providing service)
- Any clothing that is overly revealing or provocative
- Any clothing or visible tattoos with images or wording that are offensive or derogatory

Exceptions

- Employees are required to wear any appropriate safety equipment for their assigned tasks, including, but not limited to, safety glasses and steel toed shoes.
- Physical Education instructors may wear exercise pants, sweatpants, sweat shirts, shorts, tennis shoes, and other athletic clothing while teaching Physical Education or supervising specific physical education related activities.
- Certain duties may have other specific dress requirements (e.g., lab coats, smocks, coveralls).
- The Executive Director or designee may provide for casual dress on certain days, at his or her sole discretion.

Relationships with Students

Employees are expected to exercise good judgment and professionalism in all interpersonal relationships with students. Employees must understand that all employees of the Cooperative are considered educators of students, regardless of their position within the organization. As such, employees have an inherent position of authority and influence over students and should act accordingly. Employees are expected to maintain

professional ethics and boundaries in all interactions, including interactions on social media. Employees are expected to exercise good judgment and not exchange personal email or phone numbers with students.

Documentation

Intentional inaccuracies on official Cooperative documents or electronic reporting systems, such as work time entry, leave entry, job applications, and student records are prohibited.

Employees are prohibited from accessing or modifying their own children's records.

Confidentiality

Much of the information obtained as the result of employment with the Cooperative is considered private. Respect for the dignity of our students and staff requires that any discussion regarding student/staff issues is confined to only those staff members who have a job-related and need-to-know status. All employees are required to abide by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

Communications

Website

The Cooperative maintains a website at www.cannonvalleyspecialled.org. It contains a wide variety of information about the Cooperative, our programs, employment policies, telephone numbers, upcoming events, and staff forms. Employees should familiarize themselves with the Cooperative website and refer to it in order to obtain necessary information.

Staff information and forms are accessible on through the Staff Portal, found on the bottom of the website page. The password is the Cooperative number to gain access. It is expected that staff not share this with persons outside of the Cooperative.

Email

As an employee of the Cooperative, you may have access to the Cooperative email system. Please refer to the policies section of this handbook for related policies and procedures regarding use of the Cooperative network/Drive. Employees with email should review their messages as frequently during the day as their schedule allows and are expected to reply in a timely manner. A timely manner can be seen as 24 hours. It's a good practice to use the "out of office" feature in the email system when you will be gone for an extended period of time.

The Cooperative has defined the following protocols for employees to follow when sending a message from a Cooperative email account:

- Use a clear subject line that tells the reader if he or she needs to take action (e.g., "REQ: read and respond with edits") or if the email is for their information only (e.g., "FYI: conferences rescheduled to Monday").
- Start the message with the purpose so that the reader can quickly understand the essence of the message and whether or not s/he needs to do anything.
- When using the blind carbon copy (BCC) function to send an email to multiple individuals, start the message with a description of who is receiving the message.
- Be mindful when using the Reply All function. Is it something that the entire group needs to receive?
- Before sending an email to multiple sites or groups of employees, the sender may request a colleague to review the communication for clarity.
- Before sending an email to a Group, ensure the information contained is not confidential student or staff data
- Use headings and bullets to visually cue the reader to important elements.
- Choose the default clear/white background instead of using wallpaper. Use fonts such as Arial or Times New Roman to improve legibility.

- Use a standard signature including our mission statement, and refrain from adding other types of inspirational statements or quotes.
- Administration may provide additional guidance on email communication with parents/guardians.
- Individual staff members may create groups for their email (ex: middle school team). Contact Technology for assistance.
- Emails containing reference to drugs, alcohol, or sexual content are prohibited.
- Emails to promote products an employee is selling is prohibited. (Staff may place items, brochures, invitations, or ordering materials in the staff lounge.)

Calendar

It is the expectation that staff keep their Cooperative calendar updated and shared with the building administrative assistant. (The “show busy/free” time is the minimum requirement. Employees are not required to share the details on their Cooperative calendar nor are employees required to share their personal calendar.)

- Use student initials and/or purpose of meeting when using the Cooperative calendar
- Respond to a calendar invite in a timely manner to let the organizer know of the intention to accept or decline.
- All IEP or parent meetings are required to be on the building calendar and scheduled by the administrative assistant
- Contact the building administrative assistant to schedule other meetings requiring use of a conference room or large building space
- Team and small group meetings do not need to be reported on the building schedule

Voicemail

Voicemail is assigned to designated employees. Employees with voicemail should listen to their messages during the day as their schedule allows and return messages in a timely manner (within 24 hours).

Employees are required to update the message with their name, title, building, and building main office number.

Mailboxes

An individual mailbox may be assigned to employees at their work site. It is expected that employees check their mailbox daily.

Right to Monitor

All Cooperative-supplied technology and Cooperative-related work records belong to the Cooperative and not to the employee. The Cooperative routinely monitors use of Cooperative-supplied technology. Inappropriate or illegal use of communications may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Personal Cell Phones at Work

Employees are expected to exercise good judgment and professionalism in use of personal cell phones and other devices. Employees should not use their personal cell phones at work except in extenuating circumstances or when the use of the cell phone is required of the employee as a part of their normal duties. Employees will not use personal cell phones or any other device while supervising students (engaged or not).

Personal calls should be taken during breaks. Employees will not take a personal call or use their personal cell phone for other reasons while working with and/or supervising students. If it is necessary to address a personal issue while on duty, contact your supervisor to find coverage for yourself during that time.

Walkie-Talkies/Radios

The Cooperative recognizes the need for communication between staff during the school day. Staff will be provided a walkie-talkie/radio or a District-issued cell phone in the classroom in order to communicate with

other staff. The use of text or phone via personal cell phones between staff will not be used during the school day.

Employees will return all walkie-talkies/radios to the assigned charger at the end of each day. Employees should contact the building supervisor if there is a question on use or if there is a problem with the walkie-talkie/radio, charger, or other District-issued device.

Cooperative Cell Phones

The Cooperative recognizes the benefits of administrative and itinerant employees having access to cell phones for communication and safety reasons. Therefore, considerations have been defined to establish the need for cell phone supplemental compensation.

Consideration:

- *Serve more than two buildings
- *Communicate with the greatest number of people and agencies
- *Schedule is not fixed

Cooperative employees who meet eligibility requirements will be provided with a Cooperative owned cell phone.

The Cooperative will supply a cell phone to programs who travel off site for employee use in emergencies. The STEP program will utilize the Cooperative cell phones for going to work sites. Programs going out of town on field trips will utilize the Cooperative cell phone.

Conflicts of Interest

Employees must be careful to separate personal financial or other personal interests from their role as a public employee. Specifically, any circumstance where the employee's judgment could be in question as a result of a personal or financial interest must be avoided by the employee. This requirement is particularly important for any employee who makes purchasing decisions, management personnel, and anyone who has proprietary information concerning the Cooperative.

Possible conflict of interest situations includes, but not limited to:

- Using Cooperative time, personnel, equipment, supplies, or good will for an intent other than Cooperative-approved activities, programs, or purposes.
- Receiving personal gifts or loans from third parties doing business with the Cooperative.
- Using confidential information obtained as a result of Cooperative employment for personal gain.
- Selling anything at the employee's work site to students for personal gain.

Conflict of interest is addressed in the Cooperative Administrative Procedure manual located on The Cooperative website.

Gifts and Gratuities

As a representative of a public employer, it is essential that a public employee's work is perceived as being free from external influences. Employees must decline gifts, gratuities, or favors from any outside organizations or individuals doing business or seeking to do business with the Cooperative. Any gifts should be graciously declined or referred to the employee's supervisor. For detailed information related to employees and gift acceptance, review the School Board Policy.

Workplace Bullying

The Cooperative recognizes each employee's right to individual respect and dignity and is committed to establishing and maintaining a professional, respectful working environment for all employees. As a result, employees are prohibited from engaging in behavior that substantially interferes with a professional, productive, respectful working environment, including behavior that is disrespectful, obscene, inappropriate, offensive, or bullying.

The Cooperative defines bullying as repeated conduct that is intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harmful; is objectively offensive; and is conducted by one or more persons against another or others at the place of work or in the course of employment.

Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, it must be noted that where an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant and will not be given consideration when deciding upon discipline. As in sexual harassment, it is the effect of the behavior upon the individual(s) that is important. The following types of behavior are considered examples of bullying and will not be tolerated:

- Verbal bullying: Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his/her family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting, or humiliating; using a person as the target of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- Physical bullying: Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault (physical attack), or threat of physical assault; damage to a person's work area or property.
- Gesture bullying: Nonverbal threatening gestures or looks that convey threatening messages.
- Exclusion: Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work related activities.
- Social Media/Cyberbullying: Using technology or other electronic communication for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, abusing, or harming another in the workplace to the extent that it substantially and materially disrupts an employee's right to a professional and respectful working environment.

Any employee who feels he or she has been victimized by bullying will report the matter to his or her supervisor or to the Cooperative Office. Employees who witness prohibited conduct or possess reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a staff member or student is a target of bullying, will report the prohibited conduct to the employee's supervisor or to the Cooperative Office.

The Cooperative will not retaliate against employees making good-faith reports. The Cooperative will thoroughly investigate all reports or incidents. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as possible.

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

Employees are encouraged to bring their disputes to the attention of their supervisors or executive director before the situation escalates. The Cooperative will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

Violence is Prohibited in the Workplace

Employees are expected to refrain from conduct that may be dangerous to others. Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, student, or other stakeholder will not be tolerated. Cooperative resources may not be used to threaten, stalk, or harass anyone at or outside the workplace. Direct or indirect threats of violence, incidents of actual violence, and suspicious individuals or activities should be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor or the Cooperative Office. When reporting a threat or incident of violence, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible. Whenever possible, employees should not place themselves in peril, nor should they attempt to intercede during an incident. Employees should give verbal directions, remove any students or staff members who may be close to the incident, and contact their supervisor.

Employees should promptly inform the Cooperative Office of any protective or restraining order that they have obtained that lists the workplace as a protected area. The Cooperative will not retaliate against employees making good-faith reports. The Cooperative will thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of violence, or incidents of actual violence, and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as possible.

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

Employees are encouraged to bring their disputes to the attention of their supervisors or executive director before the situation escalates. The Cooperative will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

Severe Weather and School Closings

All emergency closings will be sent via the Cooperative notification system and email.

For the purpose of this Section an “emergency” shall include, but shall not be limited to, unusually severe weather in which the Executive Director closes the Cooperative, mechanical failure of essential equipment affecting the comfort and safety of pupils and teachers, epidemic or widespread illness, severe energy shortages, or damage to building by fire or water, etc., work stoppages by other employee groups.

The first two student days lost because of emergency closings are in good faith. The Cooperative may reschedule cancelled student days, with the approval of the School Board.

Teacher work days lost because of emergency closing will not be made up, but other teacher duty days may be made up upon recommendation by the Executive Director and approval by the School Board. All leaves scheduled for a day cancelled by the Cooperative will be returned to the employee’s corresponding leave account.

Licensed Staff

Please refer to the Collective Bargaining Agreement for requirements, expectations, and procedures.

Administrative Assistants/Educational Assistants

Please refer to the Collective Bargaining Agreement for requirements, expectations, and procedures.

Outside Employment

Employees who choose to engage in outside work or to hold other jobs are subject to certain restrictions as outlined below.

All employees are:

- Prohibited from using any Cooperative resources, facilities and/or information in order to fulfill employment obligations for another employer.
- Prohibited from sharing confidential and educational information about a student if working with the student/family outside of the Cooperative.
- Not to solicit or conduct any outside business during paid working time.
- Cautioned to carefully consider the demands that additional work activity will create before accepting outside employment or additional assignments. Outside employment and additional assignments will not be considered an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early, refusal to travel, or refusal to work different or additional hours.
- Prohibited from using any paid sick leave time or to report an absence due to illness in order to perform services for another outside employer. Fraudulent use of sick leave will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

In addition to the above, administrative employees are prohibited from working in any other Cooperative paid position. Exceptions will be considered for management employees who are scheduled to work less than a 225 duty day contract. An exception must be pre-approved by the Executive Director.

Parking and Driving for Work

Personal Vehicles/Mileage/Travel Expenses Reimbursement

If an employee is required to use their personal vehicle on Cooperative business, the employee may be eligible for mileage reimbursement at a rate approved by the School Board. The employee may also receive payment or reimbursement of travel expenses if any approved training, work or professional development requires the employee to travel outside the Cooperative. Employees can contact their supervisor to obtain information about submitting a request for reimbursement.

All mileage traveled will be logged to include the date, business purpose, and destination of each trip on the form found on the Cooperative website. Total mileage will be computed for that day and included on the

appropriate location of the form. Mileage claim forms will be submitted to the office the last workday of each month.

1. Employees will be reimbursed for all business travel.
2. Employees will not be reimbursed for the number of miles equal to the mileage to and from home to the base of operations each day.
3. The Executive Director will determine the office/base of operations for each employee at the beginning of the school year.

All reimbursements for mileage must be based on the mileage from the employee's normal place of work in the Cooperative. Employees are expected to verify their eligibility for reimbursement in advance with their supervisor. All expenses are subject to Cooperative approval procedures and audits.

Parking

There is no charge for Cooperative employees to park their vehicle during working hours. Most buildings and programs designate a staff parking area. Employees are expected to maintain a safe speed in Cooperative parking lots and to remove their vehicles from the premises at the end of the work day.

Employees are prohibited from allowing a student to start, operate, or ride in an employee's personal vehicle.

Transporting Students

School Board Policy #707 (Transportation of Students) provides clear parameters related to employees transporting students. Staff members do not provide transportation to students except in an emergency situation in accordance with authorization by the executive director. If emergency transportation must be provided, two staff members must accompany the student.

Employee Personnel Records

Personnel File

Personnel files are kept in a secured, central location to which only a select few employees have access. Employees who wish to review their personnel file, can contact the Cooperative Office to schedule an appointment to view the personnel file. Viewing of the personnel file must be done in front of a designated Cooperative representative. Employees may request copies of the information stored in their personnel file. Employees are generally not allowed to add to or subtract from, the contents of their personnel file. Some exceptions can be made pursuant to collective bargaining agreement language.

Change of Personal Data

Many changes in an employee's records such as address, telephone number, and emergency contact person can be updated via the form located on the Cooperative website. Updates to an employee's name, dependents and marital status require presentation of legal documents to the Cooperative Office.

Employee Emergency Contact Information and Medical Disclosure Information Maintained at the Worksite

Many sites/programs request that employees complete an emergency contact and medical disclosure information card. This card is used in the event of an emergency that requires access to employee contact information or medical condition(s). Although employees are encouraged to complete the information requested, it is not required. However, employees are required to maintain an emergency contact name and contact phone number on record with the Cooperative office. Employees can update their information via the form located on the Cooperative website.

Other

Religious Symbols and Decorations

The School Board recognizes and respects the right of all of its employees to engage in private and quiet religious activities, so long as that conduct is not disruptive and does not interfere with the rights of others who do not participate in those activities, or to have those activities imposed upon them, or result in the harassment of others. Employees whose religious beliefs require religious activity during the work day are to request of their

supervisor a non-disruptive place for such practices. Time for such practices may be during break periods or non-paid time. Direct any questions about specific issues to the executive director.

Political Activity

We encourage all employees to be civically engaged, but School Board policies prohibit certain activities of a political nature. During the duty day employees cannot actively campaign for or against a political candidate or issue. Employees may not use the Cooperative network to advocate for or against a candidate, or ballot question at any time, or use their position to influence subordinates or students to make contributions to or support any political campaign. There are also prohibitions against distributing campaign materials to students and using students to convey or distribute such materials.

When an Employee Receives a Work-Related Subpoena

Any employee who receives a subpoena for any purpose related to employment will inform the supervisor immediately upon receipt. The supervisor shall immediately inform the executive director that the employee has received a subpoena. No employee may release educational data, personnel data, or any other private data, as defined by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, of any kind without consultation with the executive director.

When an Employee Receives a Request for a Letter from a Parent

An employee who is requested to write a letter for a parent regarding a court proceeding, child support, child custody, etc., will inform the supervisor immediately upon receipt. The supervisor shall immediately inform the executive director that the employee has received a subpoena. No employee may release educational data, personnel data, or any other private data, as defined by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, of any kind without consultation with the executive director.

Use of Cooperative Equipment

Employees may not use, or facilitate the use of, Cooperative owned equipment for personal or private use.

Computer Equipment and Printers

The Cooperative furnishes employees with laptop and/or desktop computers as well as devices such as iPads or Chromebooks. All employees with technology furnished by the Cooperative shall keep in mind the following:

1. Do not leave the technology in an area where it can be exposed to extreme heat or cold, i.e. inside a car. If this should happen let the device warm up or cool down to room temperature before plugging it in and using it.
2. Keep liquids away from all components.
3. Take special care to avoid dropping the equipment.
4. The Cooperative provided protective case must remain on the device.
5. Back up files on a regular basis.
6. Cooperative furnished laptops, iPads, cell phones, and other like devices are considered "listed property" and as such they are subject to substantiation rules.
7. Ensure passwords to access the device and programs is secure. All devices have access to private student data.
8. Staff laptops are not to be used by students.

Purchasing of supplies or equipment with Cooperative funds

Any Cooperative employee who purchases items or intends to purchase an item(s) must comply with federal regulations, Minnesota Statutes, Board Policy, and the Cooperative's Administrative Procedures. Purchases made without the executive director's authority are unauthorized and payment may be the responsibility of the staff member who placed the order. Comprehensive purchasing procedures are in the Administrative Procedure manual located at the Cooperative website. Contact the supervisor or executive director for specific purchasing direction.

Budget Supplies and Materials

Funds for assessment, instructional materials and supplies budgeted within all program areas, are available for use by all students in the specific disability area.

Material or equipment needed for programs or students will be requisitioned through the Cooperative Office and the item will be coded either by the executive director or business manager. All requisitions and/or purchase orders will be reviewed by the executive director.

All supply and material orders must include:

- The requisition form with the appropriate information completed
- A print out of the item from the on-line catalog or copy from the physical catalog to ensure proper ordering
- If the item is for a specific student, a copy of the IEP goal page or accommodation/modification page related to the item

All orders will be delivered to the Cooperative Office, inventoried, and routed to the appropriate building/employee.

Furniture

You will be responsible for items on the inventory of your classroom during checkout in the spring. Should any furniture need repair, please inform the supervisor immediately. No personal furniture can be brought into the buildings without permission from the supervisor due to fire codes.

Inventory

All items on the inventory record will be inventoried annually by the executive director. All items that are the property of the Cooperative will be labeled with a number. Property of the Cooperative will not be thrown away, sold, or otherwise disposed of unless approved by the executive director.

Search of Employees' Desks and Offices

The Cooperative generally has wide latitude to search employee offices, desks, and files. A search warrant or probable cause determination is not required for the Cooperative to conduct a search. The Cooperative will only conduct a search of an employee's work area upon reasonable suspicion of a potential violation of school policy. Employees should be aware of this right to search workplace desks, offices, computers, internet access history, emails and files.

Compensation

Wage Disclosure Protection Under the Minnesota Wage Disclosure Protection Law (Minn. Stat. §181.172), employees have the right to tell any person the amount of their own wages. While the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minn. Stat. §13.43), specifically lists an employee's actual gross salary and salary range as public personnel data, Minnesota law also requires wage disclosure protection rights and remedies to be included in employer personnel handbooks. To that end, and in accordance with Minn. Stat. §181.172, employers may not:

- Require nondisclosure by an employee of his or her wages as a condition of employment.
- Require an employee to sign a waiver or other document which purports to deny an employee the right to disclose the employee's wages.
- Take any adverse employment action against an employee for disclosing the employee's own wages or discussing another employee's wages which have been disclosed voluntarily.
- Retaliate against an employee for asserting rights or remedies under Minn. Stat. §181.172. subd. 3.

Rates of pay are determined by collective bargaining agreement. For questions about pay rates, contact the Cooperative Office.

Employees are also able to access payroll and personal information on the SMART system. (There is a link on the Cooperative website.) Information shown in the portal includes, but is not limited to: paycheck history, leave account balances, year-to-date totals, and W-4 information. For information on accessing the employee self-service portal, contact the Cooperative Office.

Payment of Wages

The Cooperative issues salary payments through direct deposit on the 15th and 30th day of each month. If the normal payday falls on a non-duty day, payment of wages will be directly deposited on the duty day immediately prior to the normal payday. Information related to earnings and deductions may be viewed on SMART. The Cooperative Office is also available to assist employees with specific questions or concerns.

Information regarding pay periods and pay dates may be found on The Cooperative website, or employees can connect with the Cooperative Office. Employees wishing to change their withholding allowances should obtain a W-4 form from the Cooperative website or by contacting the Cooperative Office. Minn. Stat. §518.611, Subd. 8, requires employees to notify the Cooperative of any child support obligations to be withheld from paychecks.

Direct Deposit

Direct Deposit is required for all employees (except in the event of an extenuating circumstance) and allows employees to have their paycheck directly deposited into up to three (3) accounts of their choosing. For additional information, contact the Cooperative Office.

Payment for Overtime (hourly employees)

Any additional time worked beyond the employee's normal schedule must be approved by the supervisor prior to working the additional hours. Hourly employees are not authorized to work from home and are not expected to respond to emails and inquiries during their non-duty time.

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) governs when employees are entitled to overtime compensation, either as additional pay or compensatory time. Our collective bargaining/employment agreements provide additional clarity as to when employees are entitled to overtime compensation.

Time Off and Leaves of Absences

Depending on the terms and conditions of employment, employees may have provisions allowing for paid time off or unpaid time off. Please refer to your employee contract for your leave eligibility. Employees must use leave for the purpose for which it is intended. This time off shall be pre-approved except in the event of emergencies. Some state and federal laws provide for leaves when an employee needs time off from work due to a serious medical condition or to attend the special education, preschool or school conferences, or school-related activities of their children or foster children if those conferences or activities cannot be scheduled during non-work hours.

All employees are encouraged to maintain good personal health and attend to personal affairs during non-working hours whenever possible. It is an expectation that employees be at work and be on time to work. Regular attendance optimizes instruction for students and is essential to the operation of the Cooperative.

An Absence Request Form must be completed whenever an employee is absent from work. The Absence Request Form can be found on the Cooperative website. The employee will complete the form which will route to the building administrative assistant. The building administrative assistant will print and route to the building supervisor for approval or denial. When complete, the building administrative assistant will send a copy to the employee and finance coordinator. A copy will be kept in the building office.

Unexcused absences are not acceptable

Employees may be considered as absent without approved leave and can be subject to discipline. Employees must be sure to follow proper reporting procedures if they are unable to attend work. Frequent absences will be addressed by the employee's supervisor as necessary. Contact the Cooperative Office with questions about workplace absences.

Substitute Plans

All employees will maintain substitute plans and will include a current copy of their schedule along with these plans. These plans will be kept in the main office.

Reporting Absences

It is the Cooperative's policy that you are required to enter your absence request on the Absence Request Form for the following types of absences: sick leave, child care leave, surgeries, medical leaves, jury duty, vacation, non-duty days, personal leave, funeral leave, floating holidays, workshops, meetings, time off without pay or other special situations. Absence requests must be taken as described in the individual employee's contract or agreement. Any adjustment to this or custom absence must have the prior written approval from the executive director. When possible, we will utilize our licensed substitute employee for teachers.

Employees must report absences via the Absence Request Form by 6:00 AM of day of absence. If need for absence occurs after 6:00 AM on day of absence, employee must enter it in the Form and call their immediate supervisor.

Holiday Pay

Holiday pay eligibility is defined in collective bargaining agreement or individual employment agreement. For information about school calendars and holidays, review the calendar information posted on the Cooperative website.

Vacation and Personal Leave

Vacation leave can be earned by eligible employees to use for any reason. The amount earned varies by Collective Bargaining Agreement and by the number of hours worked. Advance requests for vacation leave are required and should be submitted to the employee's supervisor a minimum of three (3) days prior to the requested absence date. Employees are encouraged to submit their leave requests well in advance of the scheduled date.

Personal leave may be used to conduct private affairs, including the observance of religious holidays or personal business that cannot be attended to during non-work hours. Advance requests for vacation leave are required and should be submitted to the employee's supervisor a minimum of three (3) days prior to the requested absence date. Refer to the collective bargaining agreement for detailed information. The Cooperative limits the number of employees who can be out on personal leave on any given day.

Employees should review the Collective Bargaining Agreement for possible dates not available for personal leave use.

Usage

Requests for vacation and personal leave are subject to supervisor approval, based on the operating needs of the Cooperative.

Balances

The Cooperative Office will maintain employee leave balances in SMART.

Sick Leave

An employee receives paid sick leave accruals as defined in their collective bargaining agreement. Paid sick leave can be used when the employee is unable to report for work due to a personal illness or the illness of a family member. Accrued paid sick leave can also be used in the event of a long-term illness.

Balances

The Cooperative maintains employee leave balances. Employees are responsible for monitoring their leave balances and ensuring that they have enough leave time remaining to cover any absences. Leave balances can be reviewed via SMART.

Medical Documentation

In some circumstances, an absence due to a personal illness or family illness may require submission of a medical confirmation from a healthcare provider. Situations that may require medical documentation include, but are not limited to:

- A period of absence consisting of multiple consecutive working days.
- Leave of any duration if absence from duty recurs frequently or habitually.
- Leave of any duration when there is reasonable cause for requiring medical confirmation.
- Leave of any duration that occurs on Cooperative-defined “high volume” days.
- Leave of any duration if the illness is as a result of a workplace injury.
- Return from medical leave that is longer than three (3) to five (5) days, depending on the circumstance.
- Return from medical leave with medical restriction(s) like a need for a temporarily reduced work schedule or limitations in job duties that can be performed.

Any absence that applies to The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 requires the Cooperative to provide up to twelve (12) work weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain individual or family medical reasons. Employees are eligible if they have worked for the Cooperative for at least one year and have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours during the twelve (12) months prior to the leave.

Note: For the purposes of this provision, “year” is defined as a rolling twelve (12) month period measured backward from the date an employee’s leave is to commence. Failure to supply the required medical documentation could be grounds for discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Extended Illness or Recuperation

If an employee exhausts their accrued paid leave during a prolonged illness or injury, they may be permitted to use other accrued time. Once the applicable paid time is exhausted, the employee’s absence will be modified to a leave of absence without pay. Consult the collective bargaining agreement and the Cooperative procedures for information on these options and other programs such as the teacher sick leave pool.

Bereavement Leave

Paid bereavement leave benefits are defined in the employee collective bargaining agreement. If paid leave is not available, employees can use vacation leave, personal leave or unpaid leave. An employee who takes time off for bereavement is required to submit a leave request.

Jury Duty

Employees who receive a summons for jury duty are to notify their supervisor as soon as possible after receipt of summons. Should employees serve as jurors, they will be allowed time off with full pay. Any reimbursements, less mileage and parking expenses for serving as jurors, shall be deducted from pay.

Note: Employees who serve in casual or temporary positions are generally not required to abide by this section. However, employees should check with the Cooperative Office if they receive a notice for jury duty in order to obtain the appropriate information for their employment status.

If employees on jury duty are excused from jury duty at any time throughout their scheduled workday, they are expected to return to their normal work location and continue serving in their normal assignment. This leave applies only when the employee’s normal work schedule conflicts with jury duty time. If an employee is “on call” for jury duty, he/she must report to work until required to report for jury duty.

If an employee is summoned for jury duty, the employee will not lose regular salary or benefits. In order to properly account for duty time, the employee must submit the following to the Cooperative Office.

Employee is required to submit the following within 48 hours of receipt of the summons for jury duty:

- Completed Absence Request Form

- The summons the employee received requiring the employee to report for jury duty.

Submit the following within thirty (30) days of the last jury duty day served:

- The original receipts for expenses incurred while serving as a juror (e.g., parking),
- The stub from the expense/mileage check received for serving on the jury,
- A check from the employee representing the difference between the stipend the employee received for jury duty and the total amount of the receipts (including mileage) the employee is submitting.

If the necessary items are not received within thirty (30) days from the time the employee served on the jury, the Payroll department will be advised to account for the time absent as time without pay and to dock employee compensation accordingly.

Military Leave of Absence

Employees taking part in a variety of military duties are eligible for benefits under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Such military duties include leaves of absence taken by members of the uniformed services, including Reservists and National Guard members, for training, periods of active military service, and funeral honors duty, as well as time spent being examined to determine fitness to perform such service. Employees requesting leave for military duty should notify their supervisor and contact the Cooperative Office to request leave as soon as they are aware of the need for leave. Employees are required to submit necessary documentation to support the leave request.

Unpaid Long Term or Extended Leave

Employees may, in certain instances, be granted a long-term leave of absence without pay. Employees who request and are granted a long-term leave must be prepared to have their benefits reduced. Employees do not accrue vacation or paid leave in any month in which an employee has been on leave for an entire month. Service credit toward salary schedule advancement, retirement, seniority and longevity may be suspended as well. Employees who choose to continue to participate in the Cooperative group health plans will be required to pay the full cost of medical premiums.

Requests for an unpaid long term or extended leave should be submitted to Human Resources for approval consideration. Employees are expected to check their collective bargaining agreements to make sure they meet all necessary deadlines. Among other considerations, the Cooperative will take into account the reason for the employee's request, any applicable employment laws, and the Cooperative's operating needs when considering a leave of absence request.

Professional Conference

All Cooperative employees shall make a written application using the given request form for attendance at meetings or conferences. For pre-payment of conference costs, the request form must be submitted by the 5th day of the month preceding the month that pre-registration is due. The following conditions shall determine reimbursements and/or deductions as appropriate to the assignment or request. Any requests made after the 5th of the month may necessitate the employee paying the costs and claiming expenses post attendance.

- Lodging will be paid in full. However, no lodging shall be allowed when the setting is within 50 miles of the person's home, place of work, or the Cooperative offices, whichever is the shortest distance.
- Expenses incurred through travel shall be at the current Federal rate for the use of a personal car. When more than one person attends the same function, mileage will be paid for one car, unless the number of persons warrants mileage payment for another car. The actual transportation method shall determine the amount of reimbursement.
- Registration fees shall be reimbursed but not expenses for college credit earned through the experience.
- Itinerant employees are required to notify scheduled programs of their absence and indicate so by initializing the Request Form.

- All requests will have completed registration forms and a copy of the conference agenda attached to them.
- The Executive Director reserves the right to review and/or refuse requests which are not in accordance with the established policy.
- Purchase orders will be utilized where possible.

Procedure for hotel registration:

1. Fill out a conference/meeting request form with complete hotel information
2. Submit form to the Executive Director for approval
3. Cooperative office staff will complete hotel reservation process

Benefits

For more information regarding benefits programs, please refer to the Cooperative website.

The Cooperative provides health, dental, life, and disability insurance coverage to eligible employees. Eligibility for the Cooperative's contribution toward all benefit plans is determined by the employee's bargaining unit's eligibility and negotiated employer contributions. A summary of employee bargaining unit's benefit plans and cost of participation is available on the Cooperative website.

Coverage

Coverage in group insurance programs is available upon the first day of employment for employees eligible for group insurance coverage. Eligible employees are automatically enrolled in the Cooperative long-term disability and life insurance coverage. Health, dental, and optional life insurance coverage shall be effective on the first day of employment once enrollment is completed. New employees are allowed up to a maximum of thirty (30) calendar days to complete enrollment. Current employees may make changes to their current enrollment within thirty (30) days of a change in employment status or life change event (see below).

Change in Employment Status or Life Change Event

A life event is an opportunity for employees to change their health and or dental insurance coverage due to an event such as marriage, birth of a child, divorce, death, or change in spouse's insurance coverage through their employer following IRS guidelines. An employee, who experiences a life change event, is required to make the change within thirty (30) days of the date of the event. The Cooperative Office can provide detailed information.

Benefits Open Enrollment

Benefits open enrollment is the only time during the year employees are able to change their health insurance plan or coverage, enroll in or decline health and/or dental insurance, and enroll in flexible spending without a life change event. Employees can watch their Cooperative email for more information regarding open enrollment.

Group Health Insurance Health and hospitalization insurance is offered to eligible employees based on their collective bargaining agreement with the Cooperative. Employees receive a Cooperative contribution toward the premium cost of single or family health insurance for each employee who qualifies for and is enrolled in the Cooperative insurance plan.

Group Dental Insurance

Dental insurance is offered to eligible employees through Delta Dental of Minnesota. Coverage is available upon the first day of employment. The opportunity for enrollment is within the first thirty (30) days of initial employment or within thirty (30) days of a change in employment status or life event. Employees receive a Cooperative contribution toward the premium cost of single coverage. Refer to the collective bargaining agreement for details on coverage.

Flexible Spending Account

The Cooperative Flexible Benefits Plan permits employees to set aside money from pre-tax income to be used to pay for certain eligible health care and dependent care expenses. As a result, the employee's taxable income is reduced, thereby saving the employee tax dollars and increasing take home pay. Eligible expenses include:

- Medical, dental and vision expenses (not paid by insurance)
- Day care expenses

Refer to the Cooperative website for additional information.

Note: Employees who choose to participate in the Flexible Spending Account benefit must submit an enrollment form every year of employment.

Group Life and Long-Term Disability Insurance

The Cooperative pays 100 percent of the premium cost for basic life insurance and long-term-disability insurance for eligible employees. Supplemental coverage for employees may be available at their own expense. Insurance coverage is effective on the employee's date of hire.

Retirement Plans (Public Pension)

The Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) & the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) are associations that are responsible for the administration of retirement plans providing defined benefit plan coverage to employees of the Cooperative. Employees contribute a percentage rate of their before tax earnings to fund their TRA or PERA contributions. The Cooperative also contributes a percentage rate on the employee's behalf. Additional information can be found on the following websites: MNTRA (All eligible licensed staff members) or PERA (All other eligible staff members.)

Retirement Savings (Tax-Sheltered Plans)

Eligible employees are allowed to authorize payroll deductions to be invested in a 403(b) account on a pre-tax basis. Information on investment companies, advisor contacts, and the required form to authorize this payroll deduction may be obtained through the Cooperative website.

Matching Contributions

The Cooperative will match contributions towards a tax-sheltered 403(b) plan for eligible employees. Eligibility and plan contribution amounts are specified by the collective bargaining agreement. For eligibility information and the required enrollment form contact the Cooperative Office.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

This Cooperative-paid program offers free and confidential assistance when an employee is experiencing personal life or work issues, such as alcohol or drug abuse or psychological, financial, family, or marital problems. Employees may request assistance on their own or may be referred by their supervisor. Eligible employees and eligible family members may utilize the Cooperative Employee Assistance Program.

APPENDIX A: Policies You Are Expected to Know

School Board policies are the “law of the land” in Cooperatives; they help ensure that our school system maintains safe and respectful learning and working environments. Employee work and activities in the Cooperative are governed by official School Board policies which have been developed and adopted by the School Board. Current School Board policies are available on the Cooperative website. In addition, Cooperative administration has developed procedures to implement these policies and to provide more information concerning Cooperative expectations and practices. You are expected to familiarize yourself and comply with these policies and procedures at all times.

The summary on the following pages is not exhaustive of all policies pertaining to education. This section is provided for general informational reference only. Full policies can be found on the Cooperative website (cannonvalleyspecialied.org). The Cooperative reserves the right to change/modify/terminate these policies or the above procedures at any time with notice to employees. As an employee, you are accountable for understanding and complying with all School Board policies. Violations of policies or expectations could be cause for disciplinary action.

Policy 101 – Racial Equity in Educational Achievement:

Key Idea: The Cooperative is committed to raising the achievement levels for each student by creating transformational system change to ensure equitable student achievement through ensuring that educational excellence and educational equity are provided for each learner. Through educational excellence and equity, each student in the Cooperative will be empowered and equipped as a lifelong learner, with the necessary tools to achieve dreams and contribute to community. The Cooperative will establish and maintain a commitment to educational excellence and equity in its systemic practices, which will support its contribution toward a community free from racially predictable disparities.

Good Practice: Become familiar with this policy. Treat students and colleagues with respect and care. Behave in accordance with our organizational core value that everyone has equal intrinsic value. Work to create a welcoming culture and inclusive environment that reflects and supports the racial and cultural diversity of the school’s student populations. Report any potential violation to your supervisor or to the Cooperative Office.

Policy 102 - Equal Educational and Employment Opportunity

Key Idea: The Cooperative prohibits discrimination against any student or employee who is a member of a class protected by the Minnesota Human Rights Act, such as race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital or parental status, or status with regard to public assistance or disability. Any student or employee who believes he/she may have been subject to discrimination has the right to submit a formal complaint in accordance with the grievance procedures outlined in the formal procedures for Policy 102 found on the Cooperative website.

Good Practice: Become familiar with this policy. Treat students and colleagues with respect and care. Behave in accordance with our organizational core value that everyone has equal intrinsic value. Report any potential violation to the executive director.

Policy 403 - Discipline, Suspension and Dismissal of Cooperative Employees

Key Idea: Employees are expected to behave professionally and to abide by any applicable state/federal laws, School Board policies and applicable professional codes of ethics. Violations could be subject to discipline up to and including discharge of employment.

Good Practice: Become familiar with this policy and procedure. Make sure your actions are always respectful, and professional. Maintain a high level of integrity and ethics in your work and in your relationships with those whom you encounter in your work. If you have any concerns, questions or need assistance, contact the Cooperative Office or your supervisor.

Policy 413 (employees) & Policy 548 (students) - Sexual, Religious and Racial Harassment and Violence

Key Idea: The Cooperative prohibits any form of violence or harassment based on any characteristic such as sex, religion, or other protected status. This includes any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and any other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature between a supervisor and a subordinate,

between peers, or between an employee and a student when it interferes with job performance, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or affects potential educational or employment opportunities or benefits. Employees are responsible for understanding what constitutes harassment and violence as outlined in the School Board policies and are required to report to the proper authorities any conduct that appears to be a violation of these policies.

Good Practice: Become familiar with these policies. Treat students and colleagues with respect and care. Behave in accordance with our organizational core value that everyone has equal intrinsic value. Refrain from any behavior that could be considered a violation of the policies. Consult with your supervisor or the Cooperative's Human Rights Officer in the Cooperative Office any time you have questions about appropriate behavior or believe a violation of these policies has occurred.

[Policy 414 - Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Children or Vulnerable Adults](#)

Key Idea: Any employee of the Cooperative is mandated to report suspected neglect or abuse (physical or sexual) of vulnerable adults or children in the home, school, and community settings. Any employee having reasonable cause to suspect that a student is being physically, emotionally or sexually abused, or neglected must immediately report this information to the appropriate authorities (Minnesota Department of Education, local welfare agency, police department, or the county sheriff).

Good Practice: Whenever possible, the employee will first share his/her suspicion with the site leader. The employee then has the responsibility to report directly to the Minnesota Department of Education, child protection, police, or sheriff in accordance with the procedure. If you suspect maltreatment of a student by a Cooperative employee, contact your supervisor and the Cooperative Office.

[Drug and Alcohol Testing \(Policy 416\) & Drug-Free Workplace/Drug-Free School \(Policy 418\) & Tobacco-Free Environment \(Policy 419\)](#)

Key Idea(s): The Cooperative prohibits the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, transfer, possession or use of any defined prohibited drug while on school property, in school vehicles, or while accompanying students on school-affiliated activities. The use of alcohol and/or tobacco including e-cigarettes is prohibited for all persons within all school buildings, in school or contracted vehicles, or on school grounds during all hours of every calendar day. The prohibition applies to all students and adults.

These policies apply at all times at any school-sponsored event, on or off campus, while students are under staff supervision. If there is reasonable suspicion that an employee may be under the influence of a mood-altering substance at work, the employee will be required to take a drug and/or alcohol test immediately when directed to do so.

Good Practice: Maintain a tobacco-free and chemical-free workplace. Keep tobacco, alcohol, and chemicals away from Cooperative property and away from school-sponsored activities, no matter where they are held. If you must take prescription drugs at the workplace, the drugs must be kept in a secure location inaccessible to other staff or students and must not impede your ability to perform the essential functions of your job. If you need assistance with finding a secure location, please consult with your supervisor. Any employee who suspects an individual may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol is required to report the information to their direct supervisor or to the Cooperative Office.

[Policy 421 – Gifts to Cooperative Personnel](#)

Key Idea: Cooperative employees who are considered Cooperative Officials and/or School Board members may not solicit, accept or receive a gift from a vendor or provider doing business with the Cooperative except in special circumstances defined by this policy. However, the Cooperative recognizes that students, parents, and others may wish to show appreciation to Cooperative employees. Cooperative employees may accept gifts as tokens of appreciation.

Good Practice: If you are a Cooperative Official, make sure you review this policy and understand the requirements. All employees who receive a gift as a token of appreciation should graciously accept the gift. Many employees have chosen to encourage those students and parents/guardians who want to give them a gift to donate to a charity on their behalf.

Policy 423 - Employee - Student Relationships

Key Idea: Cooperative employees should maintain professional relationships and appropriate boundaries with students in all their interactions with them whether on or off duty and on or off Cooperative locations, including in the use of social media.

Good Practice: Become familiar with this policy and procedure. Exercise good judgment and professionalism in all interpersonal relationships with students. Keep informal and social involvement to a minimum. Understand that you, as an educator, have an inherent position of authority and influence over students, and act accordingly. Maintain professional ethics and boundaries in all interactions, including interactions on social media. Consult with your supervisor any time you have questions about appropriate activity.

Policy 441 (employees) & Policy 524 (students) - Network/Internet Acceptable Use

Key Idea: Use of the Cooperative's network/Internet resources is intended only for educational and informational purposes, such as research, professional development, instruction, collaborative education projects, and dissemination of Cooperative information. The use of Cooperative technology and the Internet is a privilege and not to be abused. Use of network/Internet resources must support the curriculum and enhance student learning opportunities and/or support accurate and appropriate communication of Cooperative information. Misusing, intentionally damaging hardware or software, or other inappropriate activities may result in disciplinary action ranging from denial of privileges to criminal prosecution.

Use of Cooperative network/Internet resources for personal gain or profit is not permitted. Personal web pages and personal email accounts may not reside on the Cooperative's network. Cooperative network/Internet resources are not intended for use as a personal email station. All email messages that are sent and/or received on the Cooperative network are considered the property of the Cooperative. The Cooperative monitors all access to websites made through the Cooperative network.

Good Practice: Use the computer or network/Internet only for professional work-related purposes.

Policy 452 - Conceal and Carry Restrictions for Employees

Key Idea: Any employee of the Cooperative is prohibited from carrying firearms on Cooperative premises. Employees who have a conceal and carry permit may keep a firearm in designated areas within a vehicle on Cooperative property.

Good Practice: Keep firearms away from Cooperative property and from school-sponsored activities, no matter where they are held. If you must carry a firearm, make sure the firearm is properly and securely stored in your vehicle and that you are carrying the proper permit(s).

Policy 507 - Corporal Punishment

Key Idea: In accordance with Minnesota Statute, all Cooperative employees or agents are prohibited from inflicting corporal punishment on students. Corporal punishment is hitting or spanking with or without an object or using unreasonable physical force that causes bodily harm or substantial emotional harm as punishment or to correct unacceptable behavior.

Good Practice: Use positive behavior intervention strategies consistently and refrain from any physical contact with students whenever possible. In circumstances where you believe you or others may be subject to serious injury, it is acceptable to use reasonable force to prevent bodily harm or death. If an event occurs whereby you had to use reasonable force, immediately submit a verbal report to your supervisor and follow up with a written report as soon as possible but no later than twenty-four (24) hours following the event. If you witness corporal punishment occurring in the workplace, you must contact the Minnesota Department of Education and the Cooperative Office before you leave the worksite for the day.

Policy 514 - Bullying Prohibition

Key Idea: Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited conduct among students. This includes any intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harmful conduct that is objectively offensive and either (1) involves an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in prohibited conduct and the target of the behavior, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or (2) materially and substantially interferes with a

student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in Cooperative functions or activities or receive educational benefits, services, or privileges.

Good Practice: All staff members are responsible to help maintain a safe and healthy work and learning environment for students. Treat individuals with respect and courtesy. Avoid uses of social media and other circumstances where actions can be interpreted as bullying. Cooperative employees who witness prohibited conduct or possess reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a student is a target of prohibited conduct are responsible for reporting the conduct immediately to a supervisor.

Policy 515 - Student Records

Key Idea: Cooperative employees create and access a great deal of information about students. The process for storing, sharing, and accessing information about students is governed by a complex set of federal and state laws. In addition, The Cooperative has a School Board policy regarding the storage, dissemination, and access of student records.

The laws about data privacy are complex, and they are intended to protect the privacy of individuals. A good rule of thumb is to remember that almost all information on a student kept by school employees in any form is subject to federal and state data privacy laws. Cooperative employees are bound by data privacy laws regarding student records at all times, including at the employee's work site, other Cooperative sites, and in the community. Violations of data privacy laws may result in criminal penalties, civil penalties, and/or disciplinary action related to employment.

Good Practice: Most of the data school employees know or create about students is private data and includes academic, personal, attendance, medical, disability, special education, and disciplinary information. Logically, it is in these areas where breaches of data privacy occur. To avoid data privacy violations, it is important to remember that most educational data can only be shared with staff members who have a "professional need to know." Do not discuss a particular student with any other student or with parents/guardians other than his/her own, or in the presence of other staff members or volunteers who do not have a professional need to know. If you receive a request for student data, consult with your supervisor.

Policy 533 - Wellness

Key Idea: School Board actions and policies ensure a school environment that promotes and protects students' health, well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

Good Practice: Do your best to practice and model healthy eating and physical activity. If food or beverages are used as rewards for good behavior or achievement, make sure they are healthy options. Healthy options can include whole grains, fresh fruits, vegetables, and foods low in fat.

Policy 806 - Health and Safety

Key Idea: The Cooperative will provide a safe and healthy environment for staff and students. Safety and health protections are an integral part of all operations. Employees are expected to comply with safety rules/procedures, attend related training, and report any concerns or possible violations immediately to their supervisor.

Good Practice: Make sure you know the appropriate emergency response actions for your work location. Talk with your supervisor about training expectations and where to find Health and Safety related information. Comprehensive information is available on The Cooperative website.

APPENDIX B: Employment Laws

Background Checks

According to Minn. Stat. §123B.03, the Cooperative will seek a criminal background check for applicants who receive an offer of employment and/or seek to volunteer with the Cooperative. The offer of employment or the opportunity to provide services shall be conditioned upon a determination by the school that an individual's criminal history does not preclude the individual from employment with, or provision of services to, the Cooperative once unless you have a break in your employment and/or voluntary leave.

Equal Opportunity Employer

The Cooperative prohibits discrimination in any form on the basis of race, color, creed, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance. This procedure includes but is not limited to the following: employment, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, recall, corrective actions, termination, rate of pay, other compensation, and the application of policies and training. Employees who engage in discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, discharge of employment.

Immigration Law Compliance

The Cooperative is committed to employing only United States citizens and others who are authorized to work in the United States. As a condition of employment, you must properly complete, sign and date the first section of the US Citizenship and Immigration Services Form I-9.

Employment of Minors

No one under eighteen (18) years of age will be employed without providing proper proof of their age in an age certificate, birth certificate, or driver's license. Minors will be employed only in accordance with child labor laws and School Board policies. No one under sixteen (16) years of age will be employed in any capacity.

Comparable Worth (Pay Equity)

The School Board is committed to equitable compensation for employees without regard to gender. Cooperative job classifications are regularly reviewed to determine the comparable worth of the skills, duties, and responsibilities required in each position.