

*Harlan Community
School District*
Employee Handbook



2024-2025

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OPENING STATEMENT

Welcome to the Harlan Community School District! This handbook is intended to be used by staff to provide general information about the Harlan Community School District and to serve as a guide to the District's policies, rules and regulation, benefits of employment and performance expectations.

Every staff member is responsible for becoming familiar with the handbook and knowing the information contained in it. Although the information found in the handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all encompassing so as to cover every situation and circumstance that may arise. This handbook is intended to supplement other documents that deal with employment, including contracts, master contract and policies and regulation of the Board of Education. In reading this handbook, please understand that where a direct conflict exists, state or federal law, the negotiated agreement and Board policies and regulation will control.

This handbook does not create a contract of employment. Staff positions and assignments which do not legally require a certificate or are otherwise not protected by the teacher tenure laws may be indeed or changed on an "at will" basis notwithstanding anything in this handbook or any other publication or statement, except for a contract approved by the Board of Education.

The administration will be responsible for interpreting the rules contained in the handbook and shall have the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time. Should a situation or circumstance arise that is not specifically covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon applicable school district policies, state and federal statutes and regulations, and the best interests of the District.

Definitions

An administrator's title, such as superintendent or principal, also means that individual's designation unless otherwise stated.

"The district" means the Harlan Community School District.

"Online learning platform" means Zoom, Google Classroom, or any other web application used to conduct virtual learning.

"Parent" also means "guardian" unless otherwise stated.

"School activities" means all school activities in which students are involved whether they are school-sponsored or school-approved, whether they are an event or an activity, or whether they are held on or off school grounds.

"School facilities" includes school district buildings and vehicles.

"School grounds" includes the school district facilities, school district property, property within the jurisdiction of the school district or school district premises, school-owned or school-operated buses or vehicles and chartered buses.

School District Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Educational Goals and Expected Outcomes

The Harlan Community School District mission statement is "To produce lifelong learners and productive citizens."

The central purpose of the Harlan Community Schools is to develop students who can demonstrate the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to become productive and contributing members of society. Although all children will not learn all things equally well, we recognize that all children should have an equal opportunity in the pursuit of educational qualifications for the world ahead. Recognizing the uniqueness of each student, Harlan Community Schools will attempt to balance the curriculum to provide for the varied interests and talents of all students. The school accepts the premise that the center of the school curriculum is the child and that the instructional program should be designed to fit each and every child's unique needs.

The education of children is a comprehensive program that must be undertaken in cooperation with other services and institutions within society and the local community. The Harlan Community Schools will seek to establish and maintain strong ties with parents, patrons, the business community and other community institutions.

Equal Opportunity Employment

The district will provide equal opportunity to employees and applicants for employment in accordance with applicable equal opportunity and affirmative action laws, directives and regulations of federal, state and local governing bodies. The district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age, sexual orientation and gender identity in its employment and personnel practices. Opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment includes hiring, placement, promotion, transfer or demotion, recruitment, advertising or solicitation for employment, treatment during employment, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and layoff or termination. The school district will take affirmative action in major job categories where women, men, minorities and persons with disabilities are

underrepresented. Employees will support and comply with the district's established equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies. Employees will be given notice of this policy annually.

The board will appoint an affirmative action coordinator. The affirmative action coordinator will have the responsibility for drafting the affirmative action plan. The affirmative action plan will be reviewed by the board at least every two years.

Advertisements and notices for vacancies within the district will contain the following statement: *"The Harlan Community School District is an EEO/AA employer."* The statement will also appear on application forms.

Inquiries by employees or applicants for employment regarding compliance with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, will be directed to the Affirmative Action Coordinator by writing to the Affirmative Action Coordinator, Harlan Community School District, 2102 Durant Street, Harlan, IA 51537 or by phone at 712-755-2152.

Inquiries by employees or applicants for employment regarding compliance with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, may also be directed in writing to:

- The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Milwaukee Area Office, Reuss Federal Plaza, 310 West Wisconsin Ave., Suite 800, Milwaukee, WI., 53203-2292, 1-800-669-4000 or TTY 1-800-669-6820, www.eeoc.gov/field/milwaukee/index.cfm

AND/OR

- The Iowa Civil Rights Commission, 400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319, (800) 457-4416, <https://icrc.iowa.gov/>.

This inquiry or complaint to the federal office may be done instead of, or in addition to, an inquiry or complaint at the local level.

Further information and copies of the procedures for filing a complaint are available in the school district's central administrative office and the administrative office in each attendance center.

The Harlan Community School District Affirmative Action Plan can be found on our district website.

Completed School Calendar

Harlan Community Schools 2024-2025 Calendar										
Summary of Calendar		AUGUST								
1st Semester	78	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI				
2nd Semester	94				1	2		August 5-9	Fall Sport Camps	
Total Student Days	172	6	8	7	8	9		August 12	All fall practices begin	
Includes 2 conference compo days		12	13	14	16	18	0 0	August 19, 21-23	Prof. Development	
		19	20	21	22	23**	0 0	August 20	Teacher Work Day	
Calendar Legend		28**	27**	28	29	30	5 5	August 26	1st Student Day	
Begin/End of Quarter		SEPTEMBER								
New Teachers		2	3	4	5	6	4 9	Sept 2	No School - Labor Day	
.5 Work Day/.5 PD Day		9	10	11	12	13	5 14			
Vacation Days		18	17	18	19	20	4 18	Sept 18	No School Teacher PD Day	
Prof Development		23	24	25	26	27**	5 23	Sept 27	Homecoming	
Conferences		30					1 24			
Full work Day		OCTOBER								
2 hour early out	**		1	2	3	4	4 28	Oct 9	No School Teacher PD Day	
2 hour early out/Teacher PD		7	8	9	10	11	4 32	Oct 24	End of First Quarter (41 days)	
Homecoming		14	15	16	17	18	5 37	Oct 25	No School -.5 Work Day/.5 PD	
		21	22	23	24	25	4 41	Oct 28	Start of Second Quarter	
		28	29	30	31		4 45			
Holidays		NOVEMBER								
Labor Day	Sept 2					1	1 46	November 5	Conferences 4:00-7:30	
Thanksgiving Day	Nov 28	4	5**	6	7**	8	4 50	November 7	Conferences 3:30pm - 6:30pm	
Christmas Day	Dec 25	11	12	13	14	15	5 55	November 8	No School Teacher PD Day	
New Year's Day	Jan 1	18	19	20	21	22	5 60	November 27	No School (Comp day)	
Good Friday	April 18	25	26	27	28	29	3 63	November 28-29	Thanksgiving Break	
Memorial Day	May 26	DECEMBER								
		2	3	4	5	6	5 68			
		9	10	11	12	13	5 73	December 20	End of Second Quarter (37 days)	
Contract Days		18	17	18	19	20**	5 78	December 20	End of First Semester (78 days)	
Student Days	172	23	24	25	26	27	0 78	December 23-31	Holiday Break	
Full Work Days	2	30	31							
August 20 and		JANUARY								
Holiday Break or May 30				1	2	3	0 79	January 1-3	Holiday Break	
		6	7	8	9	10	5 83	January 6	Begin Second Semester	
.5 Work Day/.5 PD Day	2	13	14	15	16	17	5 88	January 20	No School Teacher PD Day	
October 25 & March 12		20	21	22	23	24	4 92			
		27	28	29	30	31	5 97			
Prof. Development	10	FEBRUARY								
Aug 19, 21-23, Sept 18, Oct 9,		3	4	5	6	7	5 102	Feb 19	No School Teacher PD Day	
Nov 8, Jan 20,		10	11	12	13	14	5 107	Feb. 25	Conferences 4:00-7:30	
Feb 19, Apr 2		17	18	19	20	21	4 111	Feb 27	Conferences 3:30-6:30	
May 7th-2Hour Early Out/ PD		24	25**	26	27**	28	5 116	Feb 28	No School (Comp day)	
							0 116			
		MARCH								
		3	4	5	6	7	5 121	March 11	End of 3rd Quarter (45 days)	
Teacher Choice Days	4	10	11	12	13	14	4 125	March 12	No School -.5 Work Day/.5 PD	
Total	190	17	18	19	20	21	5 130	March 13	Start of 4th Quarter	
		24	25	26	27	28	5 135			
		31					1 136			
Make-Up Days		APRIL								
The last student day could be as early as May 23rd if there are no snow days. This calendar allows for three snow days.			1	2	3	4	3 139	April 2	No School Teacher PD Day	
		7	8	9	10	11	5 144			
		14	15	16	17	18	4 148	April 18 & 21	No School Holiday Break	
		21	22	23	24	25	4 152			
		28	29	30			3 155			
		MAY								
					1	2	2 157	May 7	Two Hour Early Out/Teacher PD	
		5	6	7**	8	9	5 162	May 16	Last Day for Seniors	
		12	13	14	15	16	5 167	May 18	Graduation	
		19	20	21	22	23	5 172	May 26	Memorial Day	
		26	27	28	29**	30	5 177	May 29	End of 4th Quarter (49 days)	
							3 175	May 29	End of 2nd Semester (94 days)	
		JUNE								
		2	3	4	5	6	175 175	May 30	Teacher Work Day or any Day of Holiday Break	

District Contacts

Name	Title	Phone	Email
Dr. Jenny Barnett	Superintendent	755-2152	jenny.barnett@hcsdcyclones.com
Anthony Donahoo	Activities Director	755-3101	anthony.donahoo@hcsdcyclones.com
Brian Gubbels	School Business Official	755-2152	bgubbels@hcsdcyclones.com
Ann Heithoff	Assistant Elementary Principal	755-2725	aheithoff@hcsdcyclones.com
Catherine Hubbard	HR Director, Nutrition Director & Board Secretary	755-2152	catherine.hubbard@hcsdcyclones.com
Jeff Moser	Elementary Principal	755-5903	jmoser@hcsdcyclones.com
Bill Mueller	Middle School Principal	755-3196	bmueller@hcsdcyclones.com
Casey Ring	High School Principal	755-3101	casey.ring@hcsdcyclones.com
Mike Dahir	Director of Maintenance & Operations	755-2152	mike.dahir@hcsdcyclones.com

Members of the Board of Education

Name	Email
Jim Reischl, President	james.reischl@hcsdcyclones.com
Al Hazelton, Vice President	al.hazelton@hcsdcyclones.com
Jenn Arkfeld	jennifer.arkfeld@hcsdcyclones.com

Board Policies

Board policies are established for the success, safety, and protection of all school employees in the performance of their job duties. Board policies are available on the school website. Employees are expected to know existing board policies and know to refer to the policies when necessary. If you have questions about board policies, please contact Human Resources.

Handbook Subject to Change

Although every effort will be made to update the handbook on a timely basis, the district reserves the right, and has the sole discretion, to change any policies, procedures, benefits, and terms of employment without notice, consultation, or publication, except as may be required by contractual agreements and law. The district reserves the right, and has the sole discretion, to modify or change any portion of this handbook at any time.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Licensure

An employee required to hold a license, authorization or certification for his/her position is solely responsible for ensuring it is current. Failure to do so could, and likely will, result in termination because by law the district cannot offer a teacher contract and employ an employee who does not have a current license, authorization or certification. Specific information regarding an employee's license, authorization, or certification can be obtained from the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE). The BOEE can be reached by calling (515) 281-3245 or by visiting their website, located at www.boee.iowa.gov/.

Compensation

Regular Salary and Extra-Duty Compensation.

Compensation is paid only as authorized by the Board of Education. Teachers are paid a salary based on placement on the salary schedule set forth in the collectively

bargained negotiated agreement between the District and the collective bargaining agent for the certificated teaching staff (referred to in this handbook as the “negotiated agreement”), and the schedule for professional services (reflecting participation which extend beyond the regularly scheduled in-school day) also incorporated into the negotiated agreement.

Changes in Salary Schedule Placement.

Changes in a teacher’s placement on the salary schedule shall be governed by the provisions of the negotiated agreement. Teachers are expected to provide the Human Resources with a transcript for all graduate hours earned for purposes of advancement on the salary schedule and fill out the Lane Advancement Form on or before September 1st of the school year in which such hours are to be credited for the teacher’s placement on the salary schedule. Failure to timely provide an official transcript from the post-graduate institution of the graduate hours earned will result in a loss of such credit for such a school year.

Payroll.

Certified employees and twelve month staff's salary is payable over twelve equal installments. Staff will be paid on the 20th of the month, or the last preceding school day, if the 20th falls on a vacation or week-end day. In emergency cases exceptions may be made, subject to the approval of the Board. In no case shall the Board advance more than one month's salary. Upon separation of a teacher’s employment, or upon fulfillment of the contract, the teacher may, at the option of the Board, be paid all salary due in one lump sum. Classified staff hired before 2023 will be paid over twelve equal installments for the 2024-2025 school year. At the start of the 2025-2026 school year, all classified, ten month staff will be paid hourly as they go over a ten month period.

Teacher Supplemental Salary.

- a) Teachers will receive teacher supplemental salary monies as stated by law. If the legislation regarding Teacher Salary Supplement (“TSS”) Funds is amended or if the funding formula or monies appropriated for Teacher Salary Supplements are changed, then any integrated TSS monies shall be adjusted or removed from the salary schedule.
- b) TSS monies will be distributed on a per FTE basis and will be separately identified as part of the single salary schedule for teachers.
- c) The amount of the individual FTE determined TSS payment to teachers will be preliminarily calculated at the time that negotiations are completed. When the FTE of teachers who are entitled to receive TSS payments is finalized the TSS payment will be adjusted.

Work Hours and Method of Recording.

The assigned work hours differ for categories of employees and can differ within the categories of employees. Generally speaking, employees will use the online reporting

system to accurately record their hours of work. Failure to keep accurate track of time worked will result in discipline, up to and including termination. It is necessary for all employees to complete the number of hours worked daily. Any time absent from work should be recorded through the online absence system; those with unpaid lunch will check in and out during their unpaid lunch time. No employee may extend paid hours by voluntarily arriving early, staying late, or working over a lunch period. Any extension of normal working hours must be pre-approved.

Compensation for Extracurricular/Extra Duty Positions

An employee may volunteer or be required, depending on a given situation, to take on an extra duty position(s), with the extra duty being secondary to the major responsibility of the employee.

Extra Pupil Contact Time

Any teacher who is assigned an extra pupil teacher contact, which renders them without a plan period, shall be paid at a rate proportionately equal to the current rate of sub pay. A teacher may only be paid for one period a day. It is a management prerogative to determine student coverage as a result of teacher absence.

Weight Room Compensation.

Weight room supervision will be paid at the rate of \$15.00 per hour.

Extended Duty Pay.

Extended duty for any teacher beyond the number of contract days established by the Board of Education for the school year shall be paid on a per diem basis for such teacher's extended time.

Coaching & Professional Services Contracts.

Coaching and professional services contracts are paid according to the number of contract days for the position and an amount equal to the pay for one day of service shall be deducted from the salary of the coach for each day of service not performed if absence from duty is not authorized by the Board or leave policy in effect.

In addition to the normal duties traditionally required of teachers, a teacher may be assigned such "extra duty" assignments to support the extra-curricular programs of the District. Whenever possible teachers shall be exempt from these duties if there are enough willing people to take these duties. Those teachers, who are supervising, shall be compensated \$12.00 per hour. Extra duties include but are not limited to such assignments as selling/taking tickets, supervising pep buses and activity spectators.

Teacher Leadership and Compensation

The goals of the Teacher Leadership and Compensation System (TLC) are:

- Attract able and promising new teachers by offering competitive starting salaries and offering short-term and long-term professional development and leadership opportunities.
- Retain effective teachers by providing enhanced career opportunities.
- Promote collaboration by developing and supporting opportunities for teachers in schools and school districts statewide to learn from each other.
- Reward professional growth and effective teaching by providing pathways for career opportunities that come with increased leadership responsibilities and involve increased compensation.
- Improve student achievement by strengthening instruction.

Group Health Insurance

Employees who work 30 hours per week are eligible for dental, vision, life, long term disability and health benefits. Documents detailing the plan design and enrollment period will be provided to all eligible employees at least 30 days before the start of the enrollment period. All new employees shall receive group insurance and health benefits information upon acceptance of employment. For additional information, please contact Human Resources.

Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS)

The district participates in the Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS). This defined benefit plan provides a lifetime retirement benefit to you upon retirement in accordance with a formula based on your age, years of service and the average of your highest five years of wages. For additional information, please contact IPERS at (800) 622-3849 or visit the IPERS website at [About IPERS | IPERS](#).

403(b) Salary Reduction Agreements

The District will cooperate with staff who choose to participate in an investment program under the Internal Revenue Code Section 403(b) provided that the employee executes a "salary reduction agreement" provided by the District and the vendor of the 403(b) plan elected by the employee has entered into a "service provider agreement

Travel Compensation – Outside the District

Employees traveling on behalf of the district and performing approved school district business will be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses. Actual and

necessary travel expenses will include, but not be limited to, transportation and/or mileage costs, lodging expenses, meal expenses and registration costs. Employees required to travel in their personal vehicle may be reimbursed at \$.39 mileage rate and must have the travel pre-approved by building principals and/or the superintendent.

Travel outside of the school district must be pre-approved. Pre-approval will include an evaluation of the necessity of the travel, the reason for the travel, and an estimate of the cost of the travel to qualify as approved school district business. Travel outside the school district by employees, other than the superintendent, is pre-approved by the superintendent or an immediate supervisor. Requests for work-related travel outside of the state will be denied in most cases unless a compelling reason exists for out-of-state travel.

Reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses will be allowed for travel outside the school district if the employee received pre-approval for the travel. Prior to reimbursement of actual and necessary expenses, the employee must provide the school district with a detailed, itemized receipt, indicating the date, purpose, and nature of the expense for each claim item. Failure to have a detailed itemized receipt will make the expense a personal expense. Personal expenses, including mileage, in excess of that required for the trip are reimbursed by the employee to the school district no later than 30 working days following the date of the expense.

Reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses for travel outside the school district will be limited to the pre-approved expenses. Pre-approved expenses for registration are limited to the actual cost of the registration.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Background Checks

Employees, volunteers and substitutes are subject to criminal, dependent adult abuse and child abuse background checks at least every five years. The background check will either be conducted by the school district or another agency.

Conflict of Interest

No employee may use his or her position to obtain financial gain or anything of substantial value for the private benefit of himself or herself or his or her immediate family, or for an organization with which he or she is associated. Such actions may subject employees to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees will not act as an agent or dealer for the sale of textbooks or other school supplies to the school district. Employees will not participate for personal financial remuneration in outside activities wherein their position on the staff is used to sell goods or services to students or parents. Employees will not engage in outside work or activities where the source of information concerning the customer, client or employer originates from information obtained because of the employee's position in the school district.

Since employees have access to information and a captive audience that could present a conflict of interest, employees may only solicit other employees or students for personal or financial gain with the prior, advance approval of the superintendent. If the approval of the superintendent is given, the employee must conduct the solicitations within the conditions set by the superintendent. Further, the superintendent may, upon five days' notice, require the employee to cease approved solicitations as a condition of continued employment.

Employee Orientation

Employees must know their roles and duties. New employees will participate in an orientation program. The employee's immediate supervisor should provide the new employee with a review of the employee's responsibilities and duties. Payroll procedures and employee benefit programs and accompanying forms will be explained to the employee by their immediate supervisor and/or Human Resources.

Employee Records

The district will maintain personnel records on employees. The records are important for the daily administration of the educational program, for implementing board policy, for budget and financial planning and for meeting state and federal requirements.

The records will include, but not be limited to, records necessary for the daily administration of the school district, salary records, evaluations, application for employment, references and other items needed to carry out board policy. Employee personnel files are school district records and are generally considered confidential records and therefore are not open to public inspection or accessibility.

Only in certain limited instances will employee records be made available to the public. This occurs when the employee gives signed consent or records are non-confidential records such as an employee's salary, an employee's individual contract, or the fact the employee resigned in lieu of termination, was discharged, or was demoted as a result of a disciplinary action, and the documented reasons and rationale why.

Employees may have access to their personnel files, except for letters of reference, and copy items from their personnel files at a time mutually agreed upon between the business office and the employee. The school district may charge a reasonable fee for each copy made.

Employee Searches

Employees should have no expectation of privacy in their classrooms, desks, computers or other school districts provided space, or equipment. The school district may examine these items when needed. Anything on the school district's computers, server, website, online learning platform, etc. and in school district files, etc. are considered a public record and open to public inspection. If the school district conducts an examination or inspection under the terms of this policy, there will be at least two individuals present at the time of the examination or inspection. Should the school district get a request to see this information, at that time, a determination will be made whether the information can be withheld as confidential information. The school district assumes no responsibility or liability for any items of personal property which are placed in the desk or workspace which is assigned to employees.

Evaluation

Evaluation of employees on their skills, abilities and competences is an ongoing process supervised by the building principals and conducted by approved evaluators required by law. The goal of the formal evaluation process is to improve the education program, to maintain employees who meet or exceed the board's standards of performance, to clarify the employee's role, to ascertain the areas in need of improvement, to clarify the immediate priorities of the board and to develop a working relationship between the administrators and other employees. The evaluation orientation ensures employees understand the evaluation system.

Tier 1- Beginning Teacher Evaluation

The purpose of Tier 1 is to generate multiple, usable, and reliable pieces of evidence that will support deciding to recommend a beginning teacher for a standard teaching license. The procedures, processes, and relationships established and maintained within Tier 1 should assist new teachers in developing professionally and personally, promote a professional environment that encourages teachers and administration to understand the importance and usefulness of evaluation, and support the practice of personal and peer reflection and continuous professional learning. Teachers who are new to the district will participate in a teacher mentoring and induction program [Iowa Code 284.4; IAC 281—83.3(1); IAC 281—83.3(2)] to enhance the success of beginning teachers in the classroom. Tier 1 is specifically designed for beginning teachers and newly hired veteran teachers during their first two years in the district. By having them involved in Tier 1, the teachers would quickly learn the district's values and

expectations even though there is not a licensure decision made for a teacher possessing at least an Iowa standard teacher license.

Tier 1 Activities:

- Pre-Evaluation Information – Building administrator (evaluator) meets with all beginning teachers within the first month of employment to discuss the district’s beginning teacher evaluation plan and expectations, including a copy of the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria. The beginning teachers should also be provided copies of the evaluation guidelines and forms.
- Observations – The evaluator conducts three formal observations for each beginning teacher in year one and two with dates aligning with the local board educator evaluation policy. The observation cycle includes a pre-observation conference, the classroom observation, and a post-observation conference. The teacher completes any necessary pre- and post- observation forms and needs to be ready to share and discuss with the evaluator at the corresponding conferences. Additional observations may be conducted at the discretion of the evaluator.
- Informal Observations – Informal observations may be used at the discretion of the administrator to gather further evidence regarding the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria. These observations may include unannounced classroom observations or walkthroughs, professional behaviors in a variety of settings, involvement in extracurricular district activities, etc.
- Summative Conference – The licensed evaluator conducts a summative conference with the first-year teacher on or before the date articulated in local school board policy. The conference provides the teacher with a performance review based on the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria to include feedback and explanation from evidence gathered through formal and informal evaluation activities conducted during year one.
- Comprehensive Evaluation – The licensed evaluator conducts a comprehensive evaluation with a second-year teacher on or before the date articulated in local school board policy. A written evaluation includes the evaluator’s licensure recommendation for the teacher or a recommendation for continued participation in the district’s mentoring and induction program that should not exceed one year. The school district uses the comprehensive evaluation provided by the Iowa Department of Education [See Appendix 3a and 3b]. (IAC 284.3, subsection 2, Code Supplement 2001)

Tier 2: Career Teacher Evaluation

Given that most teachers in a district are neither beginners or in need of assistance, Tier 2 becomes the dominant strand within a local teacher evaluation system. Tier 2 is focused on the ongoing assessment of a career teacher’s mastery of the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria and developing and supporting the professional growth of teachers. The purpose of this tier is to provide a structured, supportive, and collaborative environment to support professional growth linked to advancing the teacher’s individual professional development plan, the district’s comprehensive school

improvement plan, and most importantly, student learning. The evaluator has continuous responsibility of monitoring the teachers practice by using multiple alternative sources of data to include but not limited to formal and informal observations, measures of student learning, review of professional development plans, student and parent feedback, etc.

An individual professional development plan needs to emphasize a continuous appraisal of the career teacher's performance. The plan and process needs to be flexible, creative, and stimulating. At a minimum, a teacher's plan should reflect the needs of the teacher, integrate the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria, and support the student learning goals of the attendance center. A teacher shares responsibility in developing and implementing the individual professional development plan with the evaluator and works collaboratively with colleagues in regularly monitoring and adjusting the plan. If summative and formative components of the teacher's evaluation indicate the teacher needs additional training and supports, the individual professional development plan should articulate the same skills and/or practices that are being studied collectively with other educational professionals.

Tier 2 Activities: The following Individual Professional Development Plan activities (areas of inquiry and/or investigations) could include but are not limited to:

- Refinement of Current Practice – Address the refinement of teaching skills and strategies (e.g., questioning, motivation techniques, small group instruction, cooperative learning, etc.) that the teacher is currently using in practice. The plan is generally done individually and is typically a short-term activity (one-year).
- Acquisition of New Skills – Assumes access to resources to acquire and support new skills or knowledge (e.g., integration of technology, research-based instruction strategies for a specific content area(s), teaching for understanding, etc.). The plan may be done by an individual but most likely by a team. It needs to clearly relate to the teaching discipline and the building improvement plan. The plan would likely be for two or three years.
- Redesign/Restructuring – Articulates a rationale for change, potential student outcomes, changes in curriculum and instruction, and an evaluation scheme. This plan requires additional resources, time, and district commitment. A redesign/restructuring plan is primarily a team activity that spans two or three years and connects directly to a building or district initiative (e.g., technology, personalized learning, multi-grade classrooms, standards-based grading, etc.).
- Development of Curriculum/Program – Three potential directions:
 - o Deepening – Addresses moving curriculum coverage to a deeper level (i.e., focusing on themes rather than linear facts). Individuals or teams may engage in this work that generally spans one to three years.
 - o Integrating – Focuses on developing integrated lessons and courses. A team approach is suggested with work spanning two to three years.

- o Engaging – Develops materials and activities with a focus on engaging students more in the work of the classroom. Individuals or teams may engage in this work that generally spans one to three years.
- Monitoring Student Outcomes/Progress – Addresses the development of new and/or alternative assessments that measure or describe student learning. The work may include collecting, interpreting, and disaggregating student achievement data. An individual or team approach may be used spanning one to three years.
- Special Populations/Opportunities to Learn – Focuses on developing new or alternative learning opportunities for special needs students (e.g., gifted, at-risk, special education, etc.). An individual or team approach may be used spanning one to three years.
- Completing Requirements for Licensing Endorsements – Assists a teacher not fully licensed in an endorsement needed to instruct students in the teacher’s educational setting.

As an individual professional development plan reaches closure, two separate actions occur. The first action (a formative component) is the creation of a written review of the progress and the outcomes of the teacher's individual plan. The written review is the responsibility of the individual teacher with the support of the evaluator. The teacher should be prepared to discuss the written review and share results and/or products related to the plan. A copy of the individual professional development plan and the subsequent written review will be placed in the individual teacher’s district file.

The second action (a summative component) involves the evaluator writing an evaluation of the teacher. The evaluator needs to engage in the continuous collection of evidence during the period of time articulated in the individual professional development plan. The written evaluation is then based on multiple sources of evidence related to the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria and local district expectations garnered by the evaluator. Although a plan may be written for one-, two-, or three-years, a summative evaluation must occur every three years as stipulated in Iowa Code 284.3. The written evaluation then needs to be presented to and discussed with the teacher.

Tier 3: Intensive Assistance Plan

The purpose of the Intensive Assistance Plan is to provide organizational support and assistance to career teachers who are not meeting the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria. The existence of this plan makes it possible for Tier 2 to focus on professional growth rather than remediation. The Intensive Assistance Plan demonstrates the district’s commitment to quality teaching by providing a structured and supported system of assistance to ensure that every career teacher is meeting the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria. The decision regarding implementation of Tier 3 should be collaborative; however, it may be directive. The Intensive Assistance Plan is further

defined within Iowa Code section 284.8 and further explained in Iowa Administrative Rule 83.5(3). Specifically, if a supervisor or evaluator determines that a teacher's performance is not meeting the district expectations, the teacher will participate in an intensive assistance program. Once the teacher completes the intensive assistance plan, the evaluator reevaluates the teacher's performance and evidence and makes the determination if the teacher successfully completed the program. If the teacher was not successful, the local school board may immediately terminate the teacher's contract, terminate the contract at the end of the school year, or continue the contract for no more than one year. If a teacher has previously participated in an Intensive Assistance Plan related to the Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria, he or she may not participate in another intensive assistance program related to the same standards or criteria. The program and its implementation are not subject to negotiation or grievance procedures. A Tier 3 plan may begin at any time. Given the nature of the plan, confidentiality is expected by all parties.

Tier 3 defines two phases – Awareness and Assistance:

1. Awareness Phase

In the awareness phase, the evaluator identifies a problem relating to the Iowa Teaching Standards that is characteristic of a teacher's performance rather than anomaly. The evaluator needs to contact the teacher in writing, identifies the specific Iowa Teaching Standard(s) of concern, collaboratively develops a plan to resolve the problem, and schedules periodic meetings (not to exceed three months) with the teacher to discuss progress and potential barriers related to plan. While the teacher and evaluator attempt to resolve the problem, the teacher remains in Tier 2 and works on the Individual Professional Development Plan. At the conclusion of plan, the evaluator will review the progress and evidence to make one of the following recommendations:

- The problem is resolved and the teacher is removed from the Awareness Phase and continues to work within Tier 2.
- If the issue is not resolved, the teacher is notified in writing and placed into the Assistance Phase. Placement in the Assistance Phase suggests that activities regarding the Individual Professional Development Plan would be suspended at the recommendation of the evaluator.

2. Assistance Phase

After the final meeting of the Awareness Phase and determination is made to move to the Assistance Phase, a letter is sent to the teacher to formally notify him/her of placement. A copy of the letter is forwarded to the Superintendent and placed in the teacher's personnel file. A teacher may request assistance for the local teacher association. A meeting is held between the teacher and evaluator to develop an Assistance Plan that includes a problem statement related to one or more of the Iowa Teaching Standards and a specific growth promoting goals that are measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and time-bound. A plan needs to identify and apply strategies

needed to achieve the goals, establish reasonable timelines for strategic actions, and align specific criteria for evaluating the successful completion of the plan. A team of professionals, who have the knowledge and skills to assist the teacher in improving his/her performance, may be identified. The team may contribute to the development of the Assistance Plan, but they may not identify the standards by which the teacher is placed on intensive assistance or conduct the summative evaluation of the teacher. The designated and trained evaluators are responsible for conducting those actions. At the end of the Assistance Plan's timeframe, one of three recommendations are made by the evaluator at the conclusion of the summative evaluation:

- The problem is resolved. The teacher is removed from the Assistance Phase and returns to Tier II and the activities regarding the Individual Professional Development Plan.
- Progress is noted and work continues in the Assistance Phase. The timeline is extended but may not exceed twelve months according to Iowa law.
- No progress is noted to resolve the problem. Actions are taken by the evaluator and the district to move towards a recommendation for non-renewal of the contract or immediate termination.

The formal evaluation shall be in writing. The principal or immediate supervisor will review the evaluation with the employee. The employee shall sign the evaluation. The signature will indicate that the principal or immediate supervisor has discussed the results with the employee but does not necessarily imply the employee agrees with the evaluation results.

An employee that feels the evaluation is unfair, unjust or inaccurate may begin the handbook complaint process or other appropriate process. Failure to submit a complaint shall indicate agreement with the evaluation. The evaluation results shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

If the principal or immediate supervisor determines that the employee's performance is not meeting expectations as prescribed by board policy, district procedures or law, the principal or immediate supervisor shall recommend to the superintendent that the employee participate in an intensive assistance program. If an employee has gone through an intensive assistance plan and failed to meet the established criteria, the district may begin the termination process.

Grievance Procedure

DEFINITION OF A GRIEVANCE

A grievance is the infliction of wrong or hardship on a person. In the school setting, the essential ingredients are a policy procedure or contractual provision, and one or more employees who claim that there has been a violation, misinterpretation of the policy, procedure, or contractual provision. In a grievance action the aggrieved (one who has been wronged) claims that he/she was denied something to which he/she was entitled under established school board policies.

“Grievances should be distinguished from complaints”, according to a 1966 statement by the National Educational Association. Any act of an administrator which arouses the ire or objection of a teacher may be the ground for a complaint. The teacher may disagree with the principal’s evaluation of his/her teaching or may resent the way the principal talked to him/her.

A complaint, however, is not a grievance unless there is a claim that an administrator has denied the complainant something to which he/she had a right under the rules of the teacher handbook, policies of the Board of Education, or contractual provisions. In other words, in a grievance action, the aggrieved claims that the guarantee of some right, or benefit provided in a policy, procedure, or contractual provision has not been honored.

GOAL

The goal of this procedure is to secure, at the earliest possible level, equitable solutions to the problems which may arise affecting certified personnel.

WHO MAY INITIATE A GRIEVANCE

- A group of educators having the same grievance.
- An aggrieved person under contract with the school system.
- An aggrieved person accompanied by another person.

STRUCTURE OF FORMAL APPEAL

In the event that the matter is not resolved informally, there are three additional steps of formal appeal:

1. Immediate supervisor or his/her appointee.

If the grievance occurs within a building, the aggrieved shall file the grievance with the building administrator or his/her appointee. If the grievance arises from an action of an

authority higher than the principal or a school or department head, the aggrieved may present such grievance to the appropriate person.

2. The Superintendent or his/her appointee.
3. Arbitration.

STEP I

Prior to the filing of a written statement, the aggrieved person must ask for and receive time for an informal discussion. This meeting should be an attempt to resolve the grievance in a businesslike manner. (This conference must be held in the office of the Administrator.)

If a grievance is resolved in this step, it is recommended that no record be forwarded to the Superintendent's Office.

STEP II

In the event that the matter is not resolved informally, a grievance should be filed, in writing, as soon as possible, but not to exceed ten (10) contract days, excluding Saturday, Sunday and school holidays, following the act or condition which is the basis for the grievance. The problem must be submitted as a grievance to the building principal if a teacher is involved.

The administration shall state his/her decision in writing, together with his/her supporting reasons, and shall furnish a copy to the aggrieved within ten (10) days after receiving the grievance in writing.

STEP III

After receiving the decision of his/her administrator, the aggrieved may appeal the decision to the Superintendent or his/her appointee within three (3) contract days.

After the delivery of the appeal, the Superintendent or his/her appointee shall investigate the grievance and shall give all persons who participated in Step II a reasonable opportunity to be heard. Upon request of either the Administrator or the aggrieved, all persons will meet at the same time.

The Superintendent or his/her appointee must give his/her decision, in writing, together with his/her supporting reasons, to the aggrieved and to his/her administrator. This decision must be given within ten (10) contract days after he/she personally receives the grievance, excluding Saturday, Sunday, and school holidays, unless the aggrieved or the Superintendent calls for a hearing in which case there will be an extension of five (5) contract days.

STEP IV

- (a) If the aggrieved person is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance by the Superintendent, or if no disposition has been made within the time limits, the aggrieved person and the Association shall meet within five (5) school days of disposition of the grievance or to discuss the merits of submitting the grievance to arbitration.
- (b) If the aggrieved person determines that the grievance is meritorious, the aggrieved may submit the grievance to arbitration within five (5) school days.
- (c) Within ten (10) school days after written notice to the Superintendent of submission to arbitration, the Superintendent and the aggrieved shall attempt to agree upon a mutually acceptable arbitrator and shall obtain a commitment from said arbitrator to serve. If the parties are unable to agree upon an arbitrator or to obtain such a commitment within the specified period, a written request for a list of arbitrators shall be made to the Public Employment Relations Board (PER Board) by either party. The list shall consist of three arbitrators and the parties shall determine by lot which party shall have the right to remove the first name from the list. The party having the right to remove the first name shall do so within two (2) school days, and the other party shall have one (1) additional school day to remove one of the two remaining names. The person whose name remains shall be the arbitrator.
- (d) The arbitrator so selected shall confer with the representatives of the school district and the aggrieved and hold hearings promptly and shall issue his/her decision not later than fifteen (15) school days from the date of the close of the hearings, or, if oral hearings have been waived, then from the date the final statements and conclusions on the issues were submitted. The arbitration hearing shall be scheduled not later than sixty (60) days following the date on which the request for arbitration was submitted to the superintendent. The arbitrator shall be without power or violation of the terms of this Agreement. The decision of the arbitrator shall be submitted to the Superintendent and the aggrieved and shall be final and binding on the parties.

(e)The costs of the services of the arbitrator, including per diem expenses, if any, and actual and necessary travel, subsistence expenses, and the cost of the hearing room shall be borne equally by the parties.

Mandatory Cooperation in Workplace Investigations

Any workplace investigation conducted by administrative staff, or their designee will receive complete cooperation from all employees. Employees may be disciplined, up to and including termination, for making any untrue statement or providing information that is dishonest, misleading, inaccurate or incomplete during the investigation and related procedures. Employees may also be disciplined, up to and including termination, for impeding, obstructing or failing to cooperate with the investigation and related procedures.

Mandatory Reporting of Post-Employment Arrests and Convictions

Any employee who is arrested or convicted of any criminal charges shall report such information to Human Resources within 24 hours. Failure to do so shall incur discipline, up to and including termination.

Nepotism

More than one family member may be an employee of the school district. It is within the discretion of the superintendent to allow one family member employed by the school district to supervise another family member employed by the school district subject to the approval of the board.

The employment of more than one individual in a family is on the basis of their qualifications, credentials and records.

Probationary Status

The first three years of a newly licensed teacher's contract is a probationary period unless the teacher has already successfully completed the three-year probationary period in an Iowa school district. Teachers who have successfully completed a probationary period in a previous Iowa school district will serve a two year probationary period.

The probationary period for classified employees is 90 days unless otherwise stated in an employee contract, letter of assignment or applicable Master Contract.

Public Complaints about an Employee

The board firmly believes concerns should be resolved at the lowest organizational level by those individuals closest to the concern. Whenever a complaint or concern is brought to the attention of the board, they will be referred to the administration to be resolved. Prior to board action however, the following should be completed:

- a. Matters should first be addressed to the teacher or employee.*
- b. Unsettled matters from (a) above or problems and questions about individual attendance centers should be addressed to the employee's building principal.*
- c. Unsettled matters from (b) above or problems and questions concerning the school district should be directed to the superintendent.*
- d. Unsettled matters from (c) above or problems and questions concerning the superintendent, after executing (a) from above should be directed to the board.*
- e. If a matter cannot be settled satisfactorily by the superintendent, it may then be brought to the board for consideration. To bring a concern, the individual shall notify the board president or board secretary in writing, who will bring it to the attention of the entire board.*

It is within the discretion of the board to address complaints from the members of the school district community, and the board will only consider whether to address complaints if they are in writing, signed, and the complainant has complied with this policy. The board is not obligated to address a complaint and may defer to the decision of the superintendent. If the board elects not to address a complaint, the decision of the superintendent shall be final. If the board does elect to address a complaint, its decision shall be final.

Qualifications, Recruitment, and Selections

Job applicants for all positions will be considered on the basis of the following: training, experience, and skill; nature of the occupation; demonstrated competence; and possession of, or ability to obtain, state license if required for the position.

Job openings shall be submitted to the Iowa Department of Education for posting on [IowaWORKS](#), the online state job posting system. Additional announcements of the position may occur in a manner which the superintendent believes will inform potential

applicants about the position. Whenever possible, the preliminary screening of applicants will be conducted by the administrator who will be directly supervising and overseeing the person being hired.

The board will employ employees after receiving recommendations from the superintendent. The superintendent, however, will have the authority to hire an employee on a temporary basis until a recommendation can be made and action can be taken by the board on the position.

The board may employ temporary teachers for a period of up to six months and temporary administrators up to nine months. Temporary employees will be employed to fill a vacancy created by a leave of absence or unexpected termination of a licensed employee.

Release of Credit Information

The following information will be released to an entity with whom an employee has applied for credit or has obtained credit: title of position, income and number of years employed. This information will be released without prior written notice to the employee as it is all public information. Confidential information about the employee will be released to an inquiring creditor with a written authorization from the employee.

Transfers

Determining the location where an employee's assignment will be carried out is the responsibility and within the sole discretion of the board. In making such assignments, the board will consider the qualifications of each employee and the needs of the school district.

Vacancies shall be posted on the school website and emailed with the board agenda. Employees must submit an application to apply for a vacant position. When filling a vacancy, the district will consider the applicant's education, experience, previous evaluations, and years in the district. Involuntary transfers of employees may be made by the district when transfers are necessary for the efficient operation of the district. When determining which employees will be transferred, the district will consider:

- *The employee's qualifications*
- *The educational needs of the district*
- *The employee's academic background*
- *The financial needs of the district*
- *The applicable laws, rules, and regulations, and*
- *The number of years the employee has worked for the district*

Employees who are transferred will be notified, in writing, of the involuntary transfer and the reasons why before the transfer goes into effect. The employee may request a conference with the superintendent to discuss the reasons for transfer.

Teachers shall not be involuntarily transferred into a Teacher Leader and Compensation (TLC) position.

Workday

Workday procedures are used to ensure that students will begin and end their day at a consistent time. Parents rely on consistent schoolwork day procedures when preparing their family schedules.

The Workday at the Harlan Community School District is from 7:30am to 3:30pm.

The school year for certified staff will contain 190 days of service. The workday for employees shall begin at 7:30 am and end at 3:30pm.

The school year for year round staff will contain 260 days of service. The workday for employees shall include 8 hours to be determined at each building level.

Employees are to be in their assigned building or online learning platform during the workday. Advance approval to be absent from the school building must be obtained from the principal or supervisor whenever an employee must leave the school building during the workday.

Non Student Work Days and Summer Hours

All building offices will be open during the working hours of 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. to include being open through the lunch hour. Specific daily personnel hours will be determined by building principals. In the case of vacation time, illness, training or the like, a note will be placed on the main door to the office directing parents, guests, contractors, etc to the nearest open office to receive assistance. Twelve-month non-certified employees, including administrators and directors, are required to work at least 6.5 hours per day on non-student working days. The summer months begin the last week of May through the second full week of August, twelve-month non-certified employees including administrators and directors, will have the option to either work 4 days/week at 8.125 hours per day or 5 days/week at 6.5 hours per day. The building office must be covered 5 days per week when possible.

DISTRICT PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Procurement Card Use

Employee entrusted with a procurement credit card (“p-Card”) for use in the purchase of goods and services solely and exclusively for the authorized business purposes of the District; and the Employee agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of the p-Card as set forth below:

1. The Employee hereby agrees to immediately return the p-Card to the District upon request.
2. The Employee shall not use the p-Card for the purchase of any goods or service that is not authorized by the terms of the Procurement Card Rules or by the direct written approval of the building principal or supervisor.
3. The procurement card is to be used for business expenditures only. The procurement card may only be used following the parameters and procedures established for the Procurement Card Program as described in the “Procurement Card Rules”. The card may not be used for personal purposes.
4. The employee shall submit itemized receipts and such other reasonable documentation of goods or services purchased immediately after use to the card custodian. **Submitting a swiped credit card transaction receipt is NOT an itemized receipt.**
5. The employee shall immediately notify MasterCard in the event of a possible loss, theft, or unauthorized use of the Card by phone at (800) 361-3361. The employee shall also immediately notify the p-Card Administrator of possible loss, theft, or unauthorized use of the Card.
6. The p-Card may not be utilized to circumvent State and District competitive bid laws and policies.
7. **Any unauthorized or undocumented expenditures will be deducted from the employees next regular payroll check. Un authorized expenditures include, but not limited to, tipping and sales tax. The employee must notify the seller of the tax exemption status when purchasing any goods or services. If the seller can not exclude sales tax or tip the employee needs to notify the central office.**

8. The employee signature on the last page of this handbook acknowledges that the Procurement Card Rules have been made available to them and they have reviewed them.

Copyright

Copyright is a form of intellectual property that protects original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works. The copyright laws of the United States make it illegal for anyone to duplicate copyrighted materials without permission. Severe penalties are provided for unauthorized copying of all materials covered by the act unless the copying falls within the bounds of the “fair use” doctrine. Any duplication of copyrighted materials by district employees must be done with permission of the copyright holder or within the bounds of “fair use.”

Discipline

Employee violations of board policy and work rules may result in discipline, up to and including termination. Employees whose employment is terminated will be given the appropriate level of due process as required by law.

The district uses progressive discipline procedures to prevent undesirable employee behavioral issues. In most cases, the district will follow the steps below. However, the district may combine or skip steps depending on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense.

Step One – Verbal Warning

The employee and the principal or immediate supervisor shall meet to bring attention to the existing conduct issue. The principal or immediate supervisor shall discuss the nature of the problem and clearly describe company policies and procedures. The principal or immediate supervisor shall document this meeting.

Step Two – Written Warning

If the issue in Step One is not corrected, the employee and the principal or immediate supervisor shall meet to review the existing behavioral issue and any additional incidents. The principal or immediate supervisor shall outline the consequences for failing to meet conduct expectations to the employee. Employees in Step Two shall be placed in an intensive assistance plan.

The principal or immediate supervisor shall document the Step Two meeting and give a copy of the documentation to the employee. The original copy shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.

Step Three – Recommendation for Termination of Employment

If the issue in Step Two is not corrected, the employee may be subject to the termination procedures as outlined in Iowa Code and in board policy. The principal or immediate supervisor will discuss the appropriate action with the superintendent. The superintendent has the authority to recommend the termination of an employee to the Board.

Employee Recognition

The district recognizes and appreciates the services of its employees. Employees who retire or resign may be honored by the board, administration and staff in an appropriate manner.

If the form of honor deemed appropriate by the administration and employees involves unusual expenses to the school district, the superintendent will seek prior approval from the board.

Employee Publication or Creation of Materials

Materials created by employees and/or the financial gain therefrom are the property of the school district if school materials and/or time were used in their creation and/or such materials were created in the scope of the employee's employment unless prior arrangements are made. The employee must seek prior written approval of the superintendent concerning such activities.

Limitations to Employment References

School employees shall not assist another co-worker, contractor, or agent in obtaining a new job, apart from the routine transmission of administrative personnel files, if the employee knows, or has probable cause to believe, that such co-worker, contractor, or agent engaged in sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student in violation of the law.

This limitation does not apply if the matter has been properly reported to law enforcement and any other regulatory authorities required by law, and either:

- the matter has been officially closed by the law enforcement agency;

- the individual is acquitted or otherwise exonerated of the alleged misconduct; or
- more than four years has passed since the case was opened, and no charges or indictment have been filed.

Parent-Teacher Organization/Association

The board values the participation and the support of school district-community groups, including, but not limited to, the booster clubs and parent-teacher organizations, which strive for the betterment of the school district and the education program. The board will work closely with these groups.

Prior to any purchase of, or fund raising for the purchase of goods or services for the school district, the group will confer with the superintendent or the identified district liaison to assist the group in purchasing goods or services to meet the school district's needs.

Funds raised by these groups for the school district may be kept as part of the accounts of the school district.

It is the responsibility of the building principal to be the liaison with the school district-community groups affiliated with the building principal's attendance center.

Payroll Accountability

The district believes in taking appropriate measures to ensure the accurate expenditure of district funds through payroll. All district employees shall be responsible for accurately and timely reporting their time worked. The District Office Manager shall be responsible for the timely and accurate disbursement of payroll for the district. No individuals beyond the employees and the Principal shall have authority to alter timekeeping for employees without prior approval from the superintendent. The superintendent shall develop procedures to ensure the accurate recording of time worked and compensation disbursed for all district employees.

Professional Development

High quality teaching is imperative for student success and professional development plays a key role in this success. Employees are expected to attend all professional development opportunities and staff meetings provided by the school district unless they are on leave or have been excused by their building principal.

For all professional development programs, the district will provide employees notice indicating the section of the law, or rules adopted by the state board of education or board of educational examiners that the district determines requires the employee to participate in the program.

Requests for attendance or participation in a development program, other than those development programs sponsored by the school district, are made to the building principal. Approval of the building principal must be obtained prior to attendance by a licensed employee in a professional development program when the attendance would result in the licensed employee being excused from their duties or when the school district pays the expenses for the program.

Religious Holiday Celebrations in Public Schools

Employees should be cognizant of creating an inclusive space for all their students by maintaining a learning environment that is unbiased and objective. Holiday related activities should reflect this learning environment and will be educationally sound and sensitive to religious differences. Employees must not solicit or encourage religious or anti-religious activities/celebrations. Employees should be especially careful in planning activities that are to take place immediately preceding or on a religious holiday.

Employees must not inhibit students from expressing their religious beliefs or non-beliefs during the school day as long as it is non-disruptive to the instructional day, does not violate student behavior rules, and does not impose religious beliefs on other students. Expressions of belief or nonbelief initiated by individual students are permitted in composition, art forms, music, speech and debate. However, employees may not require activities which indoctrinate or force students to contradict their personal beliefs or nonbelief.

School Nutrition Program

The district operates a school nutrition program. Employees may purchase meals and other items, including milk. Employees are expected to pay their lunch balances using ezschool pay.

School Publicity and Community Relations

The district staff is the connection between the schools and the community. Employees are expected to work in a professional manner with parents and the community, when appropriate, for their positions. Teachers especially are expected to work closely with parents throughout the school year to ensure the success of all students, as parents are vital partners in the education of their children.

The board president is the spokesperson for the board, and the superintendent is the spokesperson for the school district. It is the responsibility of the board president and superintendent to respond to inquiries from the news media about the school district.

Staff Meetings

Employees are expected to attend staff meetings unless they are on leave or excused by an administrator. Staff meetings additional information detailing district staff meeting procedures shall be included in communications from Principals.

CONDUCT IN THE WORKPLACE

Employee Use of Cellphones

School district and personal phones and message devices are to be used appropriately at times that do not conflict with the employees' duties. All personal calls should be made during sanctioned breaks. District telephones are only for official school business. Failure to follow this guideline will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employee Use of District-Owned Vehicles

Certain district employment positions may require regular and extensive travel. Due to the required duties of these positions, the district may provide certain positions with use of district-owned vehicles. Employees who utilize district-owned vehicles during their job duties are fulfilling the public purpose of meeting the needs of the educational community in an efficient, and time-sensitive manner. District-owned vehicles are purchased and maintained with public money and must be used strictly in accordance with fulfilling a public purpose. These vehicles represent the district in carrying out its educational mission. Therefore, district-owned vehicles will always be clearly marked to identify the district.

After use, district vehicles will be sanitized by the Transportation Director in accordance with public health guidelines.

Fighting

Any verbal or physical altercations between or among employees or others will not be tolerated and may subject the employee(s) to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Fraud/Unlawful Gain

Any deliberate deception which secures an employee unfair or unlawful gain will be grounds for discipline and may be turned over to law enforcement. The school district will also file a complaint with the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners as a violation of the employee's Code of Ethics and the district will also petition for license revocation.

Neglect of Duties

All employees are mindful that students are not to be left unattended and employees should not place themselves in any position where student safety is at risk or neglect of duty could be claimed. Employees, in a supervisory role, needing to leave an area where students are present must ensure another adult is present before leaving.

Offensive or Abusive Language

Threatening, intimidating, or using abusive and profane language by school district employees towards others, including derogatory slurs, will not be tolerated. Violation will incur discipline, up to and including termination.

Performing Unauthorized Work While on Duty

All district employees are prohibited from performing unauthorized work while on duty. Doing so could result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Use of School Facilities and Equipment

The district attempts to maintain equipment and supplies which permit work to be accomplished in the most efficient and effective manner possible. While employees are encouraged to use these items, it is important to understand that they are school district property only to be used for conducting school district business. After use, school facilities and equipment are to be sanitized by building custodians in accordance with public health guidelines.

Abuse or misuse of school district or non-district owned property is to be reported immediately to the Superintendent. Failure to do so will limit district responsibility and/or increase employee responsibility. It is expected all employees will use care and caution when using district and non-district property.

Abuse or misuse or unauthorized use of district property, private property, materials and/or equipment is subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Use of Time

An employee is responsible for the time on the job which he/she is assigned. Each employee must develop work habits and systems to eliminate backtracking or poor usage of time. This requires initiative and planning on the employee's part. Do not allow students, teachers, fellow workers or others to interrupt your work with lengthy conversations; simply excuse yourself and say you have work to do.

Actions such as the following are strictly prohibited by employees and will result in discipline, up to and including termination: loafing, loitering, sleeping, engaging in unauthorized personal business or prolonged visiting while on duty.

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Academic Freedom

The district's curriculum leaves room for teacher discretion and academic freedom within the confines of acceptable materials as outlined in each curriculum. Teachers are expected to use good judgment in their pedagogy and consider the culture and climate of the school and community and age of the students, as they individualize curriculum and provide a learning environment and assignments for their students. Teachers are expected to create a learning environment of age-appropriate civil discourse where a variety of viewpoints can be freely shared to enhance student learning.

Break of Meal Periods

Leaving the place of duty during a work shift without permission of an Administrator, except during unpaid break periods, is cause for discipline, up to and including termination. Employees are expected to return to work immediately upon completion of a paid or sanctioned unpaid break.

Dress and Grooming

All employees are required to dress in a professional and appropriate manner in light of the environment in which they work, the duties of their jobs and the impressionable youth they serve. Clothing should be neat and clean. Discretion and common-sense call for an avoidance of extremes which would interfere with or have an effect on the educational process. Clothing deemed inappropriate will be discussed with the employee. Any clothing which could be deemed unsafe or disruptive to the school environment could result in disciplinary action. Questions about appropriate attire should be addressed to human resources. Also, as role models for students, all staff members are expected to not only dress appropriately, but to practice exemplary hygiene.

Employee Outside Employment

The board believes that the primary responsibility of employees is to the duties of their position within the school district as outlined in their job description. The board expects that district employees will give the responsibilities of their positions in the school district priority over any other employment. Employees with external employment must keep the two positions separate and the external job cannot impact the school district job. Should a supervisor believe the external position is impacting the internal one; the supervisor will address it with the employee.

The board may request the employee cease the outside employment as a condition of continued employment with the school district.

Employee Political Activity

Employees have full equality with other citizens in the exercise of their political rights and responsibilities, but employees shall refrain from certain political activities in the workplace and on district property under the jurisdiction of the board. Such prohibitions include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging in any activity for the solicitation, promotion, election or defeat of any referendum, candidate for public office, legislation or other political action during work hours/while engaged in official duties and in the presence of any student.
- Soliciting or receiving from any employee or other person any contribution or service for any political purpose during work hours/while engaged in official duties.
- Using classrooms, buildings or students for solicitation, promotion, election or defeat of any referendum, candidate for public office, legislation or other political action. (This provision does not apply to employee use of district facilities if they

are related to third-party events/activities authorized by the district that are outside the employee's scope of employment.)

- Using school equipment or materials for solicitation, promotion, election or defeat or any referendum, candidate for public office, legislation or other political action.

Engaging in prohibited political activities may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees may request a leave of absence to run for public office. That provision is detailed in the "Political Leave" section of this handbook.

Ethics – Board of Educational Examiners

School district employees are expected to perform their jobs in an ethical and honest manner consistent with board policy and the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE) rules. Any actions deemed unethical or dishonest will incur appropriate discipline. Licensed staff members are expected to know and understand the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics of the BOEE. The BOEE's Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics constitutes mandatory minimum standards of practice for all licensed employees. While classified employees, except coaches, are not subject to the BOEE Code of Ethics, it is good guidance for all employees and recommended reading for classified employees as well.

For a copy of the ethics code, please visit [Ethics | Iowa Board of Educational Examiners](#).

Failure to Complete Reports

In order to have the school district function in an efficient manner, all employees are expected to meet deadlines for all assigned paper or electronic reports, including but not limited to: time sheets, grade reports, student records, Individualized Education Plan (IEP) documentation and testing results. Failure to meet the required deadlines may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Gifts

Employees will not, either directly or indirectly, solicit, accept or receive any gift or series of gifts, unless the gift is valued at less than three dollars or has a negligible resale value. Honorariums may be received but must be turned over to the school district unless the employee was on his or her own time, the donor does not meet the

definition of “restricted donor” or the gift or honorarium does not meet the definition of gift or honorarium.

Insubordination

Insubordination is the disobedience, failure or refusal to follow the written or oral instructions of supervisory authority or to carry out work assignments and will not be tolerated. Insubordination will result in discipline up to and including termination.

School district employees shall contact their principal or immediate supervisor if there are concerns regarding working conditions.

Relationships with Co-Workers

School district employees are encouraged to create an environment where co-workers' collaboration and cooperation add to the overall functioning of the district and fulfillment of individual job responsibilities. All employees must have a respectful attitude toward their job and co-workers, and they should not allow students, teachers, fellow workers or others to interrupt or demean their work.

Staff Technology Use

Usage of the school district's computer resources is a privilege, not a right, and use entails responsibility. All information on the school district's computer system is considered a public record. Whether there is an exception to keep some narrow, specific content confidential is determined on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, users of the school district's computer network must not expect, nor does the school district guarantee, privacy for email, online learning platforms or the school district's computer network including websites visited. The school district reserves the right to access and view any material stored on school district equipment or any material used in conjunction with the school district's computer network.

Employees shall not post confidential or proprietary information, including photographic images, about the school district, its employees, students, agents or others on any external web site without the consent of the superintendent. The employee shall adhere to all applicable privacy and confidentiality policies adopted by the school district when on external websites. Employees shall not use the school district logos, images, iconography, etc. on external websites. Employees shall not use school district time or property on external sites that are not directly related to the employee's job. Employees, students and volunteers need to realize that the internet is not a private platform and anything posted on an external site may be viewed by others, all over the world. Employees, students and volunteers who do not want school

administrators to know their personal information should refrain from exposing it on the internet. Employees who would like to start a social media site for school district sanctioned activities must contact the superintendent for approval. Once approved by the superintendent, the employee must work with appropriate staff in establishing and maintaining the site.

Social Media

District employees enjoy the right to freedom of speech under the US and Iowa Constitutions. However, employees should consider whether their use of social media puts their professional reputation and effectiveness as a district employee at risk. Employees may not post any information concerning students or other employees that is confidential as a matter of law. Staff are encouraged to check and maintain appropriate privacy settings when posting and sharing on social media.

Employees who use social media platforms are encouraged to remember that the school community may not be able to separate employees as private citizens from their role within the district. Employee expression on social media platforms that interferes with or materially disrupts the district's operations or prevents the district or employee from functioning efficiently and effectively may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Additionally, employees should refrain from using social media for personal use while on work time. Employees should also refrain from using their district email addresses to register for social media platforms such as blogs, networks, or other online tools unless these tools are directly related to work for the district.

Theft

All thefts should be reported immediately to a principal or immediate supervisor. Any employee found to be involved in theft of the district's or another person's property will result in appropriate discipline, up to and including termination.

Treatment of Patrons of the District

Patrons of the district are to be treated with respect on school grounds and at school events. Employees should always be courteous, and report to district administration any mistreatment by district patrons.

Volunteers

In compliance with state regulations and our dedication to fostering a safe and secure environment for all individuals within our school community all volunteers intending to engage with students are required to undergo background checks prior to their involvement. This measure is mandated by state law and is essential for ensuring the safety and welfare of our students.

Upon arrival at the school premises, volunteers must proceed to the school office to check in and obtain a visitor pass. This protocol enables us to maintain awareness of individuals present on campus and reinforces our commitment to student safety.

We acknowledge and appreciate the valuable contributions of our volunteers in enhancing the educational experience of our students. By adhering to these policies, we collectively uphold our responsibility to create a positive and secure learning environment for all.

Employee Expression

The school district shall take reasonable measures as required by law to protect the intellectual freedom of students and employees and protect students and staff from discrimination based on speech. Employees who file a complaint alleging a violation of their intellectual freedom or discrimination based on speech shall not be retaliated against and shall have whistleblower protections under Iowa law.

Employees will comply with Iowa law to the extent that compliance does not infringe on employee's free speech rights.

Employees who use social media platforms are encouraged to remember that the school community may not be able to separate employees as private citizens from their role within the district. Employee expression on social media platforms that interferes with the district's operations or prevents the district or employee from functioning efficiently and effectively may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

A district employee who acts to protect a student for engaging in free expression or who refuses to infringe on students engaging in free expression and who is acting within the scope of their professional ethics will not be retaliated against or face any adverse employment action based on their behavior provided that expression is otherwise permitted by law and board policy.

If the board or court finds an employee that is subject to licensure, certification or authorization by the Board of Educational Examiners discriminated against a student or

other district employee, the board will refer the employee to the Board of Educational Examiners for additional proceedings as required by law and which may result in discipline up to and including termination.

STUDENT AND CLASSROOM ISSUES

Abuse of Students by a School District Employee

School district employees are encouraged to create professional relationships with students to assist with their learning. Employees must not create relationships with students that are unhealthy or illegal. Adults must always be able to be trusted and caring for students, but the district will not tolerate any inappropriate relationships.

Physical abuse, sexual abuse and sexual misconduct towards a student by employees will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to sexual or physical relationships, grooming behavior, and otherwise inappropriate relationships with students. Employees found in violation of this policy and rule will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

The district will respond promptly to allegations of abuse of students by school district employees by investigating or arranging for the investigation of an allegation. Employees are required to assist in the investigation when requested, to provide information and to maintain confidentiality of the reporting and investigation process.

Child Abuse Reporting

The district believes in protecting our students and we strive for them to be productive without outside factors weighing on their ability to learn. In compliance with state law and to provide protection to victims of child abuse, the board believes incidents of alleged child abuse should be reported to the proper authorities. All school employees 18 years of age or older are required as mandatory reporters, to report alleged incidents of child abuse they become aware of within the scope of their professional duties.

Child abuse is the result of the acts or omissions of a person responsible for the care of a person under the age of 18 who has suffered one or more of the categories of child abuse as defined in *Iowa Code 232.68* (physical abuse, mental injury, sexual abuse, denial of critical care, failure to supervise, child prostitution, presence of illegal drugs, manufacturing or possession of a dangerous substance, bestiality in the presence of a minor, allows access by a registered sex offender, allows access to obscene material or child trafficking).

When a mandatory reporter suspects a student is the victim of child abuse, the mandatory reporter shall make an oral report of the suspected child abuse to the Iowa Department of Human Services within twenty-four hours of becoming aware of the abusive incident and shall make a written report to the Iowa Department of Human Services within 48 hours following the oral report. If the mandatory reporter believes the child is in immediate danger, the local law enforcement agency will also be notified. Within six months of their initial employment, mandatory reporters will take a two-hour training course involving the identification and reporting of child and dependent adult abuse or submit evidence they have taken the course within the previous three years. The course will be re-taken at least every three years.

Corporal Punishment, Restraint, and Seclusion of Students

State law forbids school employees from using corporal punishment, mechanical restraint, and/or prone restraint against any student. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment. School employees may use “reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain” to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons.

State law also places limits on school employees’ abilities to restrain or seclude any student. The law limits why, how, where, and for how long a school employee may restrain or seclude a student. If a student is restrained or secluded, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child’s parent. District employees will receive Chapter 103 training on physical restraint and seclusion prior to using these behavior interventions with students.

Non-employees whose duties could require the individual to participate in or be present when physical restraint or seclusion is being used will be invited to join employee training on this subject.

Failure to comply with Chapter 103 training or requirements shall result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Field Trips

In certain classes, field trips and excursions are authorized and may be taken as an extension of the classroom to contribute to the achievement of the educational goals of the school district. If a field trip is required for a course, students are expected to attend the field trip, unless an appropriate reason prohibits attendance. The field trip must be approved by the building principal in advance.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to eligible children. Employees are expected to comply with IDEA. For additional information regarding IDEA, please visit The United States Department of Education website, located at <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>. Additionally, employees are expected to follow school district procedures for identifying students who need additional assistance and meet the needs of identified students.

Searches of Students and Property

In order to protect the health and safety of students, employees and visitors to the school district and for the protection of the school district facilities, students and their belongings and school owned lockers and desks may be searched or inspected without a search warrant.

Employees must adhere to district policy and administrative regulations regarding the search, pat down or inspection of a student and his or her belongings.

Standardized Testing and Assessment

Assessment is an important part of the education process and the school district is committed to ensuring the integrity of testing and assessment practices. Employees are expected to administer standardized tests consistent with Iowa law and Board of Educational Examiners ethical codes that promote the integrity of the assessment and the validity of student responses. Failure to do so may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Student Records

School employees are entrusted with confidential information – whether it is about students or fellow employees. Employees must not disclose confidential student information unless it is permitted by law. Please contact the superintendent if you have a request for student records.

Give careful thought to what you discuss concerning school matters whether with parents, colleagues, and members of the community. Rumors and criticism are promoted by outside gossip. Many rumors and unnecessary criticism can be avoided by referring community members to the school principal or appropriate staff member.

Employees must exercise significant care and judgment when handling confidential information. A break in confidentiality can result in discipline, up to and including termination, and expose the employee to personal liability for violation of Iowa's privacy law.

Student Disclosure of Gender Identity

It is the goal of the district to provide a safe and supportive educational environment in which all students may learn. This includes transparency and collaboration with parents in an effort to support their students. As part of creating that safe educational environment, no employee of the district will provide false or misleading information to the parent/guardian of a student regarding that student's gender identity or intention to transition to a gender that is different from their birth certificate or certificate issued upon adoption.

If a student makes a request to a licensed employee to accommodate a gender identity, name, or pronoun that is different than what was assigned to the student in the student's registration forms or records, the licensed employee is required by Iowa law to report the request to an administrator. The school administrator receiving the report is then required by Iowa law to report the request to the student's parent/guardian. This requirement also applies to all nicknames.

Transporting Students by Employees

Generally, transportation of students is in a motor vehicle owned by the school district and driven by a school bus driver. Students may be transported in private vehicles for school purposes. It is within the discretion of the superintendent to determine when this is appropriate.

Individuals transporting students for school purposes in private vehicles must have the permission of the superintendent and meet all applicable requirements set by the district, including public health guidelines. Private vehicles will be used only when:

- The vehicle is in good condition and meets all applicable safety requirements
- The driver possesses a valid driver's license
- Proof of insurance has been supplied to the superintendent and insurance satisfies the minimum coverage requirements for driving personal vehicles in the State of Iowa, and
- The parents of the students to be transported have given written permission to the superintendent

Tutoring

Every effort will be made by the licensed employees to help students with learning problems before recommending that the parents engage a tutor. Since there are exceptional cases when tutoring will help students overcome learning deficiencies, tutoring by licensed employees may be approved by the superintendent. Licensed employees may only tutor students other than those for whom the teacher is currently exercising teaching, administrative or supervisory responsibility unless approved by the superintendent.

Tutoring for a fee may not take place within school facilities or during regular school hours unless approved by the superintendent and the fees go to the school district, not the teacher. Any questions about whether a tutoring relationship or activity complies with the Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics for educators should be directed to the Board of Educational Examiners.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Administering Medication

The supervision of any medication distribution to students shall be in strict compliance with the rules and regulations of the board. District employees may not dispense or administer any medications, including prescription and non-prescription drugs, to students except as outlined in board policy.

Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment (Policy 104 and 104.R1)

The district is committed to providing all students, employees, and volunteers with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and/or harassing behavior can seriously disrupt the ability of school employees to maintain a safe and civil environment, and the ability of students to learn and succeed.

Bullying and/or harassment of or by students, employees, and volunteers is against federal, state, and local policy and is not tolerated by the board.

Accordingly, school employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in bullying or harassing behavior while on school property, while in school-owned or school-operated vehicles, while attending or participating in school-sponsored or sanctioned activities, and while away from school grounds if the conduct materially interferes with the orderly operation of the educational environment or is likely to do so.

Complaints may be filed with the superintendent or superintendent's designee pursuant to the regulation accompanying this policy. The superintendent is responsible for implementation of this policy and all accompanying procedures. Complaints will be investigated within a reasonable time frame. Within 24 hours of receiving a report that a student may have been the victim of conduct that constitutes bullying and/or harassment, the district will notify the parent or guardian of the student.

If, as a result of viewing surveillance system data or based on a report from a school district employee, the district determines that a student has suffered bullying or harassment by another student enrolled in the district, a parent or guardian of the student may request to enroll the student in another attendance center within the district that offers classes at the student's grade level, subject to the requirements and limitations established in Iowa law related to this topic.

A school employee, volunteer, or student, or a student's parent or guardian who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment, in compliance with the procedures in the regulation, to the appropriate school official designated by the school district, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to participation in any administrative or judicial proceeding resulting from or relating to the report.

Retaliation Prohibited

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures.

Any student found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, removal from service and exclusion from school grounds.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the defined words shall have the following meaning:

- **“Electronic”** means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optic cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. “Electronic” includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, and electronic text messaging.

- **“Harassment”** and **“bullying”** mean any repeated or potentially repeated electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or other ongoing conduct toward an individual based on any trait or characteristic of the individual which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:
 1. Places the individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual’s person or property.
 2. Has a substantial detrimental effect on the individual’s physical or mental health.
 3. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual’s academic or career performance.
 4. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
- **“Trait or characteristic of the individual”** includes but is not limited to age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status.
- **“Volunteer”** means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

Filing a Complaint

An individual who believes that the individual has been harassed or bullied may file a complaint with the superintendent or superintendent’s designee. The complaint form is available on the school website or linked [here](#). If the complainant is a school employee, after filing the complaint with the superintendent or superintendent’s designee, the employee may separately notify the parent or guardian of the student alleged to have been harassed or bullied.

An alternate investigator will be designated in the event it is claimed that the superintendent or superintendent’s designee committed the alleged bullying or harassment or some other conflict of interest exists. Complaints shall be filed within 180 of the event giving rise to the complaint or from the date the Complainant could reasonably become aware of such occurrence. The Complainant will state the nature of the complaint and the remedy requested. The Complainant shall receive assistance as needed.

Investigation

The school district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying or harassment upon receipt of a written complaint. The ***[superintendent or the superintendent's designee or name the position if not the superintendent]*** (hereinafter “investigator”) will be responsible for handling all complaints alleging bullying or harassment.

The investigation may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Interviews with the complainant and the individual named in the complaint (“respondent”)
- A request for the complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint.
- A request for the respondent to provide a written statement.
- Interviews with witnesses identified during the course of the investigation
- A request for witnesses identified during the course of the investigation to provide a written statement, and
- Review and collection of documentation or information deemed relevant to the investigation

The investigator shall consider the totality of circumstances presented in determining whether conduct objectively constitutes bullying or harassment as defined in board policy. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator shall issue a report with respect to the findings and provide a copy of the report to the appropriate building principal or Superintendent if the investigation involves the building principal.

The complaint and identity of the Complainant, Respondent, or witnesses will only be disclosed as reasonably necessary in connection with the investigation or as required by law or policy. Similarly, evidence uncovered in the investigation shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible.

School Decision

The investigator, building principal or superintendent, depending on the individuals involved, shall inform the Complainant and the accused about the outcome of the investigation. If, after an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of the policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures, which may include suspension and expulsion. If after an investigation a school employee is found to be in violation of this policy, the employee shall be disciplined by appropriate measures, which may include termination. If after an investigation a school volunteer is found to be in violation of this policy, the volunteer shall be subject to appropriate measures, which may include exclusion from school grounds.

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying and/or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall any person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. Any student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds.

Bloodborne Pathogens

Annually, all employees will be given the opportunity to take the bloodborne pathogens training and all employees will be required to take the training.

Communicable Diseases – Employees

Employees who are ill are encouraged to stay home.

Employees with a communicable disease will be allowed to perform their customary employment duties provided they are able to perform the essential functions of their position and their presence does not create a substantial risk of illness or transmission to students or other employees. The term “**communicable disease**” will mean an infectious or contagious disease spread from person to person, or animal to person, or as defined by law.

Prevention and control of communicable diseases is included in the school district’s bloodborne pathogens exposure control plan. The procedures will include scope and application, definitions, exposure control, methods of compliance, universal precautions, vaccination, post-exposure evaluation, follow-up, communication of hazards to employees and record keeping.

Employee Injury on the Job

Employee and student safety is a major district concern. An employee should therefore remove him or herself from and report any situations where employee safety is compromised. If an employee becomes seriously injured on the job, the employee’s supervisor will attempt to notify a member of the family, or an individual of close relationship, as soon as the employee’s supervisor becomes aware of the injury.

If possible, an employee may administer emergency or minor first aid. An injured employee will be turned over to the care of the employee's family or qualified medical professionals as quickly as possible.

It is the responsibility of the employee injured on the job to inform Human Resources and file an accident report within twenty-four hours of the occurrence. Employees should call the work comp nurse line at 844-322-4668. The work comp nurse will help diagnose the injury and determine if medical assistance is needed.

Employee Physical Examination

The district believes good health is important to job performance. School bus drivers will present evidence of good health upon initial hire and every other year in the form of a physical examination report, unless otherwise required by law or medical opinion.

The cost of the initial examination will be paid by the school district. The form indicating the employee can perform the duties, with or without reasonable accommodation, for which the employee was hired, must be returned prior to the performance of duties. The cost of bus driver renewal physicals will be paid by the school district. The school district will provide the standard examination form to be completed by the personal physician of the employee or a certified medical examiner for bus drivers.

Employees whose physical or mental health, in the judgment of the administration, may be in doubt must submit to additional examinations to the extent job-related and consistent with business necessity, when requested to do so, at the expense of the school district.

The district will comply with occupational safety and health requirements as applicable to its employees in accordance with law.

Hazardous Chemical Disclosure

Each employee will annually review information about hazardous substances in the workplace. When a new employee is hired or transferred to a new position or work site, the information and training, if necessary, is included in the employee's orientation. When an additional hazardous substance enters the workplace, information about it is distributed to all employees, and training is conducted for the appropriate employees. The Director of Maintenance will maintain a file indicating which hazardous substances are present in the workplace and when training and information sessions take place.

Smoke and Tobacco Free Workplace

The district is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and to promoting the health and well-being of employees. As required by *Iowa Code* Chapter 142D, the Iowa Smokefree Air Act, and also motivated by a desire to provide a healthy work environment, the district prohibits smoking, and the use of tobacco and nicotine products as cited in board policy, on all school grounds and in school vehicles.

Substance Free Workplace

Alcoholic beverages, illegal substances, and legal substances used illegally shall not be consumed at any time during the employee's work shift. It is in violation of school district work rules for an employee to report to work in an unsafe condition, or in a condition which impairs the employee's judgment or performance of job functions due to the use of alcohol or other substances. Unauthorized possession or use of alcoholic beverages or other substances during work hours, while on district time or property, or while engaging in district business will result in discipline, including termination.

It is a violation of the federal *Substance-Free Workplace* law for an employee to unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of in the workplace any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance or alcohol, as defined in Schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812) and further defined by regulation at 21 C.F.R. 1300.11 through 1300.15 and *Iowa Code* Chapter 124.

"**Workplace**" is defined as the site for the performance of work done in the capacity as an employee. This includes school district facilities, other school premises or school district vehicles. Workplace also includes off school property if the employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity, event or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the control of the school district or where the employee is engaged in school business.

Employees who operate school vehicles are subject to mandatory random and scheduled federal drug and alcohol testing if a commercial driver's license is required to operate the vehicle and the vehicle transports sixteen or more persons including the driver. For regulations and forms please visit the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration website located at: <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations>.

EMPLOYEES ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED it is a condition of their continued employment that they comply with the above policy of the school district and will notify

their supervisor of their conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation committed in the workplace, no later than five days after the conviction.

LEAVES AND ABSENCES

Absenteeism

In order to accomplish the goals and mission of the district, daily attendance by all employees is imperative. Employees are encouraged to limit absenteeism to emergencies and appropriate instances that cannot be scheduled outside of a workday.

Employees must notify their direct supervisor of all times when they will be absent or to submit leave requests into the electronic system by 6:30 a.m. Absences arranged in advance (vacations and personal days) do not require a call when absent or when returning to work, unless outside the scheduled time off. If an employee is absent for three consecutive workdays, without proper notification and authorization, the employee shall be considered to have abandoned his or her position and may be terminated. Misuse of leave procedures or misrepresentation of reasons for leave may lead to discipline, up to and including termination. Failure to report promptly at the starting time or leaving before the scheduled quitting time or failure to timely notify the proper supervisor of impending absence or tardiness, prior to designated starting time, is reason for discipline even if the employee has not yet exhausted available paid leave.

For personal and other leaves, a teacher must request leave from his/her supervisor via conversation or email and once approved, submit the same into the electronic absence system. The request for leave process must be initiated by the teacher at least forty-eight hours prior to the leave and/or in accordance with negotiated agreement or board policy using such other advance notice as is practicable under the circumstances. The District reserves the right to grant no more than 10% of each staff personal leave at any one time. Staff is discouraged from taking personal leave the first seven days, or last 15 days of the school year. Personal leave days taken during the first (7) school days or the last fifteen (15) school days of the school year shall be requested a minimum of twenty (20) days in advance.

Personal Illness (Sick) Leave

Personal illness leave ensures that employees can take care of their health needs. Employees who are ill are encouraged to stay home.

Evidence may be required regarding the mental or physical health of the employee when the administration has a concern about the employee's health. Evidence may

also be required to confirm the employee's illness or family member's illness, the need for the illness leave, the employee's ability to return to work, and the employee's capability to perform the duties of the employee's position. It is within the discretion of the board or the superintendent to determine the type and amount of evidence necessary. When an illness leave will be greater than three consecutive days, the employee will comply with appropriate policies and procedures on employee leave.

The district's personal illness leave procedures are as follows:

Employees will be granted 12 days of sick leave in their first year of employment. Each year thereafter, one additional day of sick leave will be granted to the employees up to a maximum of 17 days per year. The maximum number of accumulated sick leave shall be 120 days. There shall be no payment for unused accumulated sick leave.

Family Sick Leave

In the event of an illness within the immediate family, an employee can request up to ten (10) days of absence. Family illness leave can be taken for illness, injury, or medical treatment. The days taken will be deducted from the employee's sick leave. Supervisors will consider the relationship and caregiver status of the family illness request before granting leave. An absence longer than 48 hours will require a statement from the attending physician as proof of illness. If the employee's sick leave is exhausted, the employee may use personal days.

Immediate family is defined as spouse, child (step, adopted, in-law, foster, legal guardian relationship) mother, father, step-parent, brother, sister, grandchildren, grandparent, mother-in-law, father-in-law, and step relatives of the same degree. Any other relationship not defined above is not considered immediate family.

Employee Holidays

- A. Twelve-month non certified employees will be granted time off with pay for the following legal holidays:
 - New Year's Day
 - Memorial Day
 - Independence Day
 - Labor Day
 - Thanksgiving Holiday
 - Winter Break

- B. Part time non certified employees will be granted time off with pay for the following legal holidays:
 - New Year's Day

Memorial Day (Unless the school year has ended)
Independence Day (12 month part time employees
Labor Day (unless the school year has not started)
Thanksgiving Holiday
Winter Break

- C. If the holiday falls on a weekend, the superintendent will designate which workday will be granted off.
- D. To be eligible for a holiday off with pay, an employee must have worked the last designated work day preceding the holiday, and the first designated work day following the holiday, unless vacation time is used or the absence is excused by the superintendent.
- E. Twelve-month non-certified employees will receive Friday off after Thanksgiving, Good Friday, the day before Christmas and a floating holiday to be used during winter break.
- F. Vacation use requires prior approval from the employee's immediate supervisor.

Personal Leave

Ten month staff shall be eligible for three (3) personal leave days per school year. In addition, staff who in any given school year misses no days of work including unpaid days, personal or family illness, or doctor or dental appointments not related to the job shall be eligible for an additional personal day the following year not to exceed a total of five (5) days.

Unused personal leave

At the end of each contract year, the unused personal days shall be banked, not to exceed a maximum of five (5) days, or reimbursed at the rate of \$200 for certified staff and the categorical base wage per scheduled contract hour for classified staff. Employees must request this reimbursement in writing by June 1st each year.

Employee Vacations

Paid vacation is available to regular full time (12 month) employees. Twelve month non certified staff shall receive eleven days of vacation with pay. Each year after five years of employment one day shall be added, up to a total of twenty (20) days.

The vacation may be taken during the school year provided the vacation will not disrupt the operation of the school district. The employee must submit a vacation request via the leave management system for approval.

Vacation can be taken in hourly increments. Upon termination, unused earned vacation will be paid in a lump sum in the employee's final paycheck. Vacation must

be used by June 30 with exception of seven days that can be carried over until October 1st. Up to seven days will automatically be carried over on June 30th.

Bereavement Leave

The district understands that employees may need time off to mourn the loss of a family member or close friend.

Employees may be allowed up to a maximum of five (5) days per occurrence per year without deduction in pay for death of a parent, spouse or child (step, adopted, foster, legal guardian relationship). Employees may be allowed up to a maximum of three (3) days per occurrence per year without deduction in pay for the death of an immediate family member as defined above, with inclusion of daughter-in-law and son-in-law. The days taken will be deducted from the employee's sick leave. If the employee's sick leave is exhausted, the employee may use personal days.

After five (5) days of bereavement leave per occurrence per year or after ten days of family illness per year, whichever applies, will be considered unpaid leave. Such leave must require the prior approval of the administration. Superintendent may approve an extension of bereavement leave and family illness leave for immediate family, upon written request, due to extenuating circumstances until sick leave is exhausted. If the employee's sick leave is exhausted, the employee may use personal days (9/10 month employees) or vacation days (12 month employees).

Up to one (1) additional day per year is allowed to use in the event of the death of a friend or relative outside the employee's immediate family, as defined above. The days taken will be deducted from the employee's accumulated sick leave. Employees may accumulate up to two (2) days of other funeral leave. If the employee's sick leave is exhausted, the employee may use personal days.

After a maximum of two (2) days, when accumulated, per year of other funeral leave, the cost of a substitute in the amount equal to the daily substitute rate, FICA and IPERS will be deducted even if no substitute is required. Such leave must receive the prior approval of the employee's building principal and superintendent. If the employee's sick leave is exhausted, the employee may use personal days.

Family Illness, bereavement and other funeral days will be tracked in hours and one (1) day is equivalent to the hours each individual employee works in a day.

If the employee's sick leave is exhausted, the employee may use personal days or these days.

Bereavement leave is taken out of sick leave shall not disqualify the employee's accumulation of his or her personal days.

Cyclone Time

Cyclone leave in the amount of .49 of the employee's work day is afforded the employee annually. The approval of such leave is contingent upon the ability to find adequate coverage. Advance notice of 48 hours or more is required.

Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)

Unpaid family and medical leave will be granted up to 12 weeks (or up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness) per year to assist eligible employees in balancing family and work life. Requests for family and medical leave will be made to Human Resources. Employees eligible for family and medical leave must comply with the applicable administrative rules and the district's family and medical leave policy prior to starting family and medical leave.

For additional information regarding the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) please contact Human Resources or visit the "Family and Medical Leave Act" section of the United States Department of Labor's website, at [Family and Medical Leave \(FMLA\) | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](#).

Jury Duty

Employees may be summoned for jury duty. Employees who are called for jury service will notify their supervisor within twenty-four hours after notice of call to jury duty and will provide suitable proof of jury service to the school district.

Employees will receive their regular salary. However, any payment for jury duty will be paid to the school district. The employee will report to work within one hour on any day when the employee is excused from jury duty during regular working hours.

Military Service

Employees may be called to participate in the armed forces, including the National Guard. If an employee is called to serve in the armed forces, the employee will have a leave of absence for military service until the military service is completed.

The leave is without loss of status or efficiency rating and without loss of pay during the first thirty calendar days of the leave.

Political Leave

Employees are provided a leave of absence to run for elected public office. The superintendent will grant an employee a leave of absence to campaign as a candidate for an elective public office as unpaid leave.

The request for leave must be in writing to the superintendent of schools at least 30 days prior to the starting date of the requested leave.

Unpaid Leave

Unpaid leave may be used to excuse an absence not provided for in other leave policies of the board. Unpaid leave for employees must be authorized by the superintendent. Unpaid leave approval is decided on a case-by-case basis and will be approved sparingly due to the availability of other leave options.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Asbestos Notification

Asbestos has been an issue of concern for many years. The *Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1986 (AHERA)* was designed to determine the extent of asbestos concerns in the schools and to act as a guide in formulating asbestos management policies for the schools. The school district facilities have been inspected by a certified asbestos inspector as required by AHERA. The inspector located, sampled and determined the condition and hazard potential of all material in the school facilities suspected of containing asbestos. The inspection and laboratory analysis records form the basis of the asbestos management plan.

A certified management planner has developed an asbestos management plan for the school district facilities which includes notification letters, training for employees, a set of procedures designed to minimize the disturbance of asbestos-containing materials and plans for regular surveillance of the materials. A copy of the management plan is available for inspection in the office.

Building Security

The district is committed to maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff. In order to accomplish this, it is the responsibility of all employees to do their part in creating this safe and secure environment. Employees should

contact the school resource officer, to report any security/safety hazard(s) or condition(s) they identify.

Drills and Evacuations

Periodically the district holds emergency fire and tornado drills. In addition, the district will hold one emergency operations drill. At the beginning of each semester, teachers must notify students of the procedures to follow in the event of a drill. Emergency procedures and proper exit areas must be posted in all rooms. When drills are staged, every staff member and student must follow proper procedures.

Emergency Closings, Inclement Weather and Other Interruptions

When the superintendent decides the weather threatens the safety of students and employees, she will notify the radio/television stations, social media and school messenger to broadcast a school closing announcement.

Employees who are not required to report for duty due to inclement weather conditions or other circumstances whereby a duty day is canceled, such days shall not be credited as a contract day served. Make up days may be scheduled by the administration during the contract year as needed to allow all employees to serve the full number of contract days.

Staff Identification Badges

An identification badge shall be issued to each employee. Badges shall be worn when the employee is on duty and shall be displayed between the waist and the shoulder on the outer garment or on a lanyard. If an employee comes to work without the permanent badge, a temporary badge may be obtained from their corresponding office. The loss of a permanent badge shall be immediately reported to the Business Offices, who will issue a replacement badge at a cost to the employee of \$10. Badges remain the property of the district and shall be returned *to Human Resources* at the time of resignation, retirement or termination.

Threats of Violence

All threats of violence - whether oral, written or symbolic - against students, employees, visitors, or to school facilities are prohibited. All such threats will be promptly investigated. Law enforcement may be contacted. Threats issued and delivered away from school or school activities may be grounds for discipline if the

threat impacts the orderly and efficient operation of the school. Employees engaging in threatening behavior will face discipline, up to and including termination.

Visitors/Guests

The board welcomes the interest of parents and other members of the community and invites them to visit the school buildings and sites. Visitors, which include persons other than employees or students, must notify the office of their presence in the facility upon arrival.

Individuals who wish to visit a classroom, whether in person or remotely, while school is in session are asked to notify the principal and obtain approval from the principal prior to the visit so appropriate arrangements can be made and class disruption can be minimized.

Visitors will conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with mutual respect and consideration for the rights of others while attending school events. Visitors will also be required to follow district rules on health and safety as well as social distancing and other public health guidelines. Visitors failing to conduct themselves accordingly may be asked to leave the premises. Children who wish to visit school must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult.

It is the responsibility of employees to report inappropriate conduct. It is the responsibility of the superintendent and principals to take the action necessary to cease the inappropriate conduct. If the superintendent or principals are not available, a school district employee is responsible for taking the action necessary to cease the inappropriate conduct.

Weapons

The district believes weapons and other dangerous objects in school district facilities cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees and visitors on the school district premises or property within the jurisdiction of the school district.

Employees are prohibited from bringing weapons and other dangerous objects on school grounds. Weapons under the control of law enforcement officials or other individuals specifically authorized by the board are exempt in accordance with law and board policy.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Contract Release – Licensed Employee

Licensed employees who wish to be released from an executed contract must give at least twenty-one days' advance notice to the superintendent. Licensed employees may be released at the discretion of the board. Only in unusual and extreme circumstances will the board release a licensed employee from a contract. The board will have sole discretion to determine what constitutes unusual and extreme circumstances.

Release from a contract may be made contingent upon finding a suitable replacement. Licensed employees requesting release from a contract after it has been signed and before it expires may be required to pay the board the cost of advertising or other reasonable administrative costs incurred to locate and hire a suitable replacement. Upon written mutual agreement between the employee and the superintendent, and to the extent allowed by law, the costs may be deducted from the employee's salary. When required, payment of these costs will be a condition for release from the contract. Failure of the licensed employee to pay these expenses when required may result in the district filing a cause of action in small claims court against the employee.

Resignation

Any employee who terminates employment with the District shall return all files, records, keys, and other material that are property of the District. No final settlement of an employee's pay will be made until all items are returned in appropriate condition. The cost of replacing non-returned items will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck. Furthermore, any outstanding financial obligations owed to the District will also be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

Resignation – Licensed Employee at Year End

A licensed employee who wishes to resign must notify the superintendent in writing within the time period set by the board for return of the contract. This applies to regular contracts for the licensed employee's regular duties and for an extracurricular contract for extra duty. Resignations of this nature will be accepted by the board.

Resignation – Classified Employees

Classified employees who wish to resign mid-year or mid-assignment must give the school district at least 30 days' advance notice. Those resigning at year end or at the end of an assignment must try to give notice by the end of the school year.

Reduction in Force

The board has the exclusive authority to determine the appropriate number of employees. A reduction of employees may occur as a result of, but not be limited to, changes in the education program, staff realignment, changes in the size or nature of the student population, financial situation considerations and other reasons deemed relevant by the board.

Due process for termination because of a reduction in force will be followed. When, in the judgment of the board, reduction of staff becomes necessary, the Superintendent shall issue preliminary informal notice to each employee who may be affected by a potential lay off no later than March 31. The Superintendent shall issue a written statutory notice to all staff that staff reduction is being recommended no later than April 30. Reduction in Force procedures will not apply to employees hired with ESSER funds.

Reduction Procedure

When, in sole, exclusive and final judgment of the Board of Education, decline in enrollment, reduction of program or any other reason requires reduction of staff among teachers, the Administration shall attempt to accomplish the same by attrition. In the event necessary reduction in staff cannot be adequately accomplished by attrition given the necessity to hire and/or maintain the most competent and qualified staff available in the interests of perpetuating the highest quality education program possible, the Administration shall base its decisions as to resulting contract renewals on:

- 1) Performance based on the most recent evaluation
- 2) Certifications and endorsements held

Employees shall be classified in the following manner for purposes of staff reduction and shall be laid off in accordance with said classifications: PK-5, 6-12 grade levels. Reduction in the 6-12 grade level classification shall be within curriculum departments. Reduction in art, music, library and physical education shall be within a PK-12 classification. An employee in grades 6-12 with a split assignment shall be classified in each department in which he/she is currently working.

Special Education, Talented and Gifted, ESL, Guidance Counselors, and Title 1 employees shall be classified according to the grade level they serve the majority of the time. y

- 3) If a tie exists based on the above two criteria, the administration has final determination of decisions referencing employment.

Recall Rights

Any tenure teacher laid off under this policy shall have an opportunity to interview with other candidates for a position.

Retirement

Employees who will complete their current contract with the board may apply for retirement. No employee will be required to retire at a specific age. If the board offers an early retirement notice it will be communicated to all employees along with the stipulations and timeframes to which it will be accepted.

Application for retirement will be considered to be made when the employee states in writing to the superintendent, no later than the date set by the board for the return of the employee's contract to the board, the intent of the employee to retire. The letter must state the employee's desire to retire and be witnessed by another party other than the principal or the superintendent. Applications made after the date set by the board for the return of the employee's contract to the board may be considered by the board if special circumstances exist. It is within the discretion of the board to determine whether special circumstances exist.

Board action to approve an employee's application for retirement is final and such action constitutes nonrenewal of the employee's contract for the next school year.

APPENDIX

Acknowledgement of Receipt

I acknowledge that I have received or can access a copy of the Harlan Community School District's Employee Handbook available at www.harlan.k12.ia.us. I understand the employee handbook contains important information about the district and my role, responsibilities, and duties as an employee. I acknowledge I am expected to be familiar with the contents. I also understand that I should consult human resources with any questions I have about the contents of the employee handbook or any questions that I feel were not addressed.

I understand that the employee handbook is a general source of information and may not include every possible situation that may arise. I acknowledge that the Employee Handbook is not intended and does not constitute a contract between the district and any one or all of its employees.

Employee's Signature

Date

Employee's Name (Printed)

TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE