

Gilbert Community School District Employee Handbook



2024-2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OPENING STATEMENT	1
Welcome Letter	1
Welcome to Gilbert Community Schools	1
Definitions	1
School District Mission Statement, Educational Goals and Expected Outcomes	1
Equal Opportunity Employment	2
School Calendar	3
Map of District/School	3
District Contacts	3
Board Policies	3
Handbook Subject to Change	4
COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS	4
Licensure	4
Compensation	4-5
Compensation for Extracurricular/Extra Duty Positions	6-7
Group Insurance Benefits	6-8
Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS)	7
Teacher Leadership and Compensation	8
Travel Compensation – Inside the District	9
Travel Compensation – Outside the District	9
Use of District-Owned Vehicles	10
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS	10
Background Checks	10
Conflict of Interest	11
Employee Orientation	11
Employee Records	11-12
Employee Searches	13
Evaluation	13-14
Handbook Complaints	14

Mandatory Cooperation in Workplace Investigations	15
Mandatory Reporting of Post-Employment Arrests and Convictions	15
Nepotism	15
Probationary Status	15
Public Complaints about an Employee	15
Qualifications, Recruitment and Selections	16
Release of Credit Information	17
Transfers	17
Work Day	18
DISTRICT PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES	18
Business Office Procedures	18
Child Labor	18
Committees	18
Copyright	18
Discipline	19
Employee Recognition	19
Employee Publication or Creation of Materials	19
Limitations to Employment References	20
Payroll Accountability	20
Dillon’s Rule & Personal Responsibility	20
Professional Development	21
Religious Holiday Celebrations in Public Schools	22
School Fees	22
School Nutrition Program	22
School Publicity and Community Relations	22
Staff Meetings	23
Electronic Records and Signature	23
CONDUCT IN THE WORKPLACE	23
Employee Use of Cellphones	23
Employee Use of District-Owned Vehicles	24

Fighting	24
Fraud/Unlawful Gain	24
Neglect of Duties	24
Offensive or Abusive Language	24
Performing Unauthorized Work While on Duty	25
Use of School Facilities and Equipment	25
Use of Time	25
EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT	25
Academic Freedom	25
Artificial Intelligence	26
Break or Meal Periods	26
Dress and Grooming	27
Employee Outside Employment	27
Employee Political Activity	27
Ethics – Bureau of Educational Examiners	28
Failure to Complete Reports	28
Gifts	29
Insubordination	29
Relationships with Co-Workers	29
Staff Technology Use/Social Networking	29
Social Media	30
Theft	30
Treatment of Patrons of the District	31
Volunteers	31
Employee Expression	31
STUDENT AND CLASSROOM ISSUES	32
Abuse of Students by a School District Employee	32
Child Abuse Reporting	32
Corporal Punishment, Restraint and Seclusion of Students	33
Field Trips	33

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	34
Homework and Grading	34
Parent/Teacher Conferences	34
Searches of Students and Property	34
Standardized Testing and Assessment	34
Student Funds and Fundraising	35
Student Records	35
Student Disclosure of Gender Identity	35
Transporting of Students by Employees	36
Tutoring	36
HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	37
Administering Medication	37
Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment	37-40
Bloodborne Pathogens	40
Communicable Diseases – Employees	40
Employee Injury on the Job	41
Employee Physical Examination	41
Hazardous Chemical Disclosure	42
Smoke and Tobacco Free Workplace	42
Substance Free Workplace	43
LEAVES AND ABSENCES	44
Sick Leave	44
Absenteeism	44
Bereavement Leave	45
Employee Holidays and Personal Leave	45
Employee Vacation	46
Family and Medical Leave	47
Maternity/Paternity Leave	48
Catastrophic Leave Option	48
Jury Duty	48

Professional Leave	48
Military Service Leave	49
Association Leave	49
Student Activities Leave	49
Personal Illness (Sick) Leave	49
Political Leave	49
Unpaid Leave	49
SAFETY AND SECURITY	50
Asbestos Notification	50
Building Security	50
Drills and Evacuations	50
Emergency Closings, Inclement Weather and Other Interruptions	50
Staff Identification Badges	51
Threats of Violence	51
Visitors/Guests	51
Weapons	52
TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT	52
Contract Release – Licensed Employees	52
Resignation – Licensed Employees at Year End	53
Resignation – Classified Employees	53
Reduction in Force	53-54
Retirement	55
APPENDIX	56
Acknowledgement of Receipt	56

OPENING STATEMENT

Welcome Letter

Welcome to Gilbert Community Schools

Welcome to the Gilbert School District, one of Iowa's finest educational institutions. Gilbert is a growing district located in the heart of Iowa. With a current enrollment of over 1600 students, we are able to offer outstanding academics, while providing students many opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities. Gilbert Community Schools has a rich history of providing a quality education and sending our students out well prepared for the challenges that come post high school. We have consistently received recognition for academic excellence including an exceptional rating in the most recent [Iowa School Report Card](#) from the Iowa Department of Education. You are welcome to stop and visit any of our four buildings all conveniently located within a few blocks of each other. We love the opportunity to share how we are serving Every Student – Every Day!

Definitions

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

"The district" means the Gilbert Community Schools.

"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, and 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, Educational Goals and Expected Outcomes

The Gilbert Learning Community will foster a passion for learning and empower each student to become a productive citizen in today's global society.

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 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, Vic Vanderpool, 103 Mathews Dr., Gilbert, IA 50105 or by phone at 515-232-3740.

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

OR

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

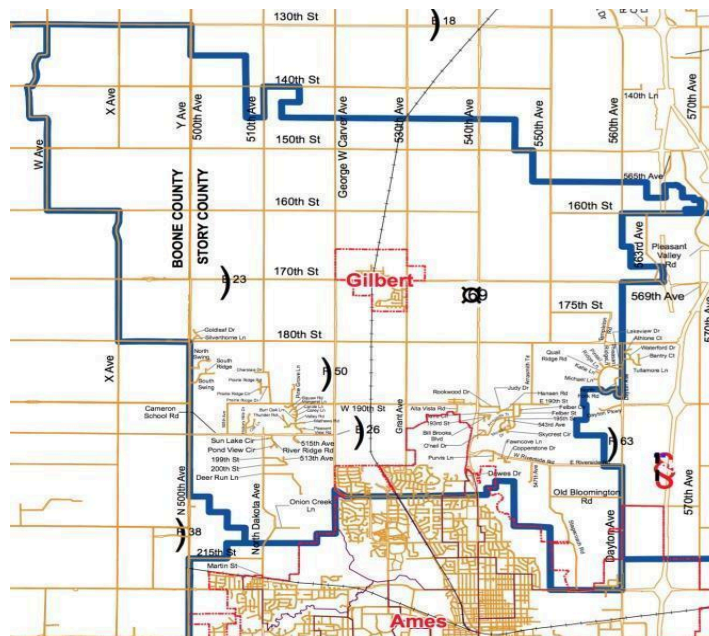
This inquiry or complaint to the federal office may be done instead of, or in addition to, an inquiry or complaint at the local level.

Further information and copies of the procedures for filing a complaint are available in the school district's central administrative office and the District's Website [Affirmative Action Plan](#).

School Calendar

The school calendar can be located on the District's Website- [2024-2025 District Calendar](#).

Map of District/School



District Contacts - [Staff Directory](#)

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 our [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 the Superintendent of Schools (515)232-3740.

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 pay an employee who does not have a current license, authorization or certification. Specific information regarding an employee's license, authorization, or certification may be obtained from the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE). The BOEE may be contacted by calling (515) 281-3245 or by visiting their website, located at www.boee.iowa.gov/.

Compensation

Licensed Staff should refer to the [Master Contract](#) regarding compensation.

Advancement on Salary Schedule – Increments

Licensed Staff on the regular salary schedule shall be granted one (1) increment or vertical step on the schedule for each year of service within the District until the maximum step for their educational classification is reached.

Licensed Staff desiring reclassification on the salary schedule shall take courses at an accredited college or university in the Employee's area of assignment or in education. All courses taken to meet this provision shall be approved in advance by the Superintendent. For a teacher to teach a concurrent (dual) credit class they must have a master's degree in their area of assignment.

A Licensed Staff Member must file a written request with the superintendent by March 1st of the current school year in order to qualify for a salary reclassification for the following school year and verification of credits earned must be filed with the

Superintendent no later than September 10th for the Employee to earn a salary reclassification.

Classified Staff Base Pay Rates for 2024-2025 School Year:

Associates (Special Ed, DOP, LMC, ESL, Reg. Classroom, Health, etc.)	\$15.00/hr
Custodial	
Cleaner – Day	\$15.00/hr
Cleaner - Night	\$15.25/hr
Lead Custodian – Day – ES/IS	\$16.00/hr
Lead Custodian – Night – HS	\$16.25/hr
Head Custodian – Day – MS/HS	\$18.00-\$20.00/hr
Kitchen	
Dishwasher	\$15.00
Cook Substitute	\$15.00
Cook Assistant	\$18.00
Kitchen Captain	\$20.00
Baker/Prep	\$18.00
Professional Development for Teachers	\$30.00/hr
Secretary	
Administrative Assistant - 8 hrs/6 hrs	\$15.00/hr
Substitute Teacher (4 hrs or less = ½ day pay; 4.25 hrs or more = 1 day pay)	\$140.00/day
Substitute Teacher Long-Term (after 10 consecutive days of service for the same teacher)	(Per Diem of BS Step 1 Base Only)
Technology Intern	\$15.00/hr
Transportation	
Bus Routes (AM/Noon/PM) Aver 1.5 hr	\$46.25/route
Activity Trips (3 hour minimum)	\$18.00/hr
Ames Area Aver .5 hr	\$25.00/route
Woodward/Granger Area Aver 1.25 hr	\$46.25/route
Woodward/Granger Area (AM & PM) >1.25 hr – 2.5 hrs	\$69.00/route

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.

Salary Schedule B 2024-2025

Any assignments listed on the extra-curricular duty schedule which is in addition to the regular eight hour work day shall not be obligatory but by mutual agreement of the principal and the Employee. Employees presently having such assignments may terminate such duties only by mutual agreement with their principal.

Group Insurance Benefits

For employees employed on or before July 1, 2012, the Employer shall provide a monthly allowance for each employee working a minimum 20 hours per week. Full allowance would be available to employees who work at least nine (9) months per year and at least twenty-seven and one-half (27.5) hours per week. Half of the allowance would be available to employees who work at least nine (9) months per year and at least twenty (20) but less than twenty-seven and one-half (27.5) hours per week. This allowance may be applied toward the purchase of employee benefits from a menu of options. The annual flex amount will be determined by the total premium for the single Co-pay 2000 health insurance and the single dental insurance.

For those employees employed after July 1, 2012, may receive medical, dental, long-term disability and group life insurance benefits if the employee works at least 30 hours per week for the nine-month school year to become eligible for half-time health insurance benefits. Employees working a minimum of 35 hours a week for a nine-month school year become eligible for full-time health insurance benefits.

Annual Compensation	Life Insurance
Superintendent	\$50,000
Administrator	\$40,000
Employee earning less than \$20,000	\$15,000
Employee earning \$20,000 or more	\$20,000

For each employee who has reached age 65, but not age 70, the amount of insurance will be 67% of the amount shown above. The amount of insurance will be rounded to the next higher multiple of \$1,000, if not already an exact multiple.

The Employer shall pay the premiums for long term disability insurance for Employees which provides benefits equal to 60% of the Employee's covered monthly compensation to a maximum benefit of \$7,000 less any payments for that month for which the Employee and the Employee's dependents are eligible under the Federal Social Security Act and any accrued benefits received under IPERS or any other retirement benefit plan of the District. Once established, the monthly income benefit

shall not be further reduced by subsequent increases in social security benefits. The qualifying period shall be three consecutive months.

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 and dental benefits information upon acceptance of employment. For additional information, please contact the Business Manager at the District Office.

Other supplemental insurance programs are available at employee cost. All employees are paid the 20th of each month.

The District will provide a maximum stipend of \$520.72/month to the following employees:

Anderson, Catherine Bellon, Holly Braucher, Kendra Currans, Heather Davis, Penny Fisher, Lynet Franzen, Joel Gray, Deborah Griffin, Amy	Hochstetler, Elizabeth Hurn, Jodi Johnson, Stacy Jones, Melissa Kautman, Laura Klaver, Nicole Lammers, Sarah Livingston, Linda Nees, Kathryn	Nelson, Terri Oberender, Halli Pudenz, Jennifer Roetman, Carmen Schnormeier, Jennifer Stephenson, Erin
---	--	---

The stipend will be subject to all appropriate taxes and withholdings. The employee may direct the District to place the stipend into a District approved retirement savings program, if desired.

This agreement will continue until all those employees above have severed their employment with the District or enrolled in health or dental insurance. If any employee above enrolls in health or dental insurance, this benefit is no longer an option. In the event that this agreement is found to be in contradiction with the IRS Code and/or penalties are assessed, this agreement will require amendment or cancellation until noncompliance or penalty assessment issues are resolved.

Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS)

The district participates in the Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS) for all contracted employees. 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 1-800-622-3849 or visit the IPERS website at www.ipers.org

Teacher Leadership and Compensation

Iowa Department of Education requirements for Teacher Leader positions.

- Hold a valid teaching license
- Have at least three years of teaching experience
- Have taught in the Gilbert district for at least one year

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

- Attract and retain new teachers who will be afforded additional support beyond our current system.
- Provide and reward career opportunities for veteran teachers who have specific job-embedded expertise unique to highly competent practitioners.
- Enhance a culture based on teacher collaboration for the benefit of student learning.
- Focus on improving student achievement through improved targeted instruction

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.

The district's TLC plan is as follows:

<https://reports.educateiowa.gov/EOYPublic/Home/Plan>

Additional information regarding the Teacher Leadership and Compensation System can be located at

<https://educateiowa.gov/pk-12/educator-quality/teacher-leadership-and-compensation-tlc-system>.

Please Contact Carrie Clark, clarkc@gilbertcsd.org with any questions pertaining to Gilbert's Teacher Leadership System.

Travel Compensation – Inside 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 between school district buildings to carry out the duties of their position may be reimbursed mileage at the Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate. Travel must be approved by their supervisor.

Employees must follow the proper procedures for documenting mileage for reimbursement. This can be accomplished by filing a claim using the [Employee Self Service System \(ESS\)](#). All reimbursements must be approved by the employee's supervisor.

Travel allowances within the district will be provided only after Board approval. Employees who are allowed a within school district travel allowance will have the amount of the allowance actually received during each calendar year included on the employee's W-2 form as taxable income according to the Internal Revenue Code.

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.

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.

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 10 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.

Pre-approved expenses for transportation within three-hundred miles of the school district administrative office will be by automobile. If a school district vehicle is not available, the employee will be reimbursed mileage at the Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate. Travel to/from home and work is never a reimbursable travel expense. Pre-approved expenses for transportation outside of three-hundred miles of the school district administrative office may be by public carrier. Reimbursement for air travel will be at the tourist class fares. Should an employee choose to travel by automobile, reimbursement will be limited to the public carrier amount. Pre-approved expenses for transportation in a rental car is limited to the cost of a Class "C" rental car at a medium-priced agency unless the number of people traveling on behalf of the school district warrants a larger vehicle. Travel costs for a spouse or anyone other than the district employee shall be a personal expense not reimbursed by the district.

Pre-approved expense for lodging outside the state is limited to the rate of a medium-priced hotel in the area. Lodging may be pre-approved for a larger amount if special circumstances require the employee to stay at a particular hotel. Pre-approved expenses for meals are limited to \$10.00 for breakfast, \$15.00 for lunch and \$15.00 for dinner, not to exceed \$40.00/day.

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 the course of 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 be clearly marked at all times to identify the district.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Background Checks

Employees and volunteers 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 employee 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 the Business Manager, located in the District Office.

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, and 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, when the employee has given a signed consent or non-confidential records such as an employee's salary, an employee's individual contract, or if the employee resigned in lieu of termination and the documented reasons why, will employee personnel records be accessible to individuals other than the employee or authorized school officials.

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 Manager and the employee. The school district may charge a reasonable fee for each copy made.

Personnel Files

All formal evaluations made pursuant to this Article shall be kept in a confidential personnel file maintained in the central office.

Except by order of a court of competent jurisdiction, evaluation documents and responses thereto shall be available only to the evaluated Employee, the Board of Directors, the administrative staff, the State Board of Education, the board and the administrative staff of any school to which such Employee applies for employment, and such other persons specified by the Employee in writing.

Material shall not be placed in the Employee's file unless the Employee has had an opportunity to read the material and affix his/her signature on the copy to be filed. Such signature shall only indicate the Employee's awareness of the material but shall not be interpreted to mean agreement with the content of the material. In the event an Employee refuses to sign any material, the refusal may be attested to in writing by the principal and a representative of the teaching or administrative staff in the presence of the Employee.

Employees shall have the opportunity to review their personnel files, with the exception of confidential letters of recommendations and college and university credentials or other confidential material. Such review shall be conducted in the presence of the principal, superintendent or designee during ordinary office hours, and at a time when the Employee is not required to be on duty. No material shall be removed from the file by the Employee during such review. The Employee shall have the right to respond to all materials contained in the Employee's personnel file, such response to be dated and signed and attached to the item in question and inserted in the personnel file. The

Employee must file such a response within five (5) school days of the time the matter is brought to their attention.

An Employee may have any evidence of competence, professionalism, or outstanding performance or service he/she chooses, placed in his/her personnel file at the central office.

All Employee evaluations are to be fair and accurate. Any Employee who has been evaluated has the right to grieve said evaluations as unfair, unjust, and inaccurate through the grievance procedure set forth in this agreement.

Employee Searches

Employees should have no expectation of privacy in their classrooms, desks, computers or other school district 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 work space which is assigned to employees.

Evaluation

Evaluation of employees on their skills, abilities and competences is an ongoing process supervised by the building principals or immediate supervisors and conducted by approved evaluators, if required by law. Each building principal or immediate supervisor will complete an annual written evaluation and an evaluation conference with each employee will be held to review the evaluation.

The Superintendent or his designated representative has the responsibility for appraisal of all certified personnel within the School District.

By September 30th of each school year, a member of the administrative staff shall acquaint employees with the evaluation procedures, criteria, and instruments. An employee starting work after the beginning of the school year shall be given such notification no later than one (1) week prior to the first formal evaluation. The beginning Employee, without previous experience, shall be formally evaluated a minimum of three

(3) times each of the first two years of employment. The performance of Employees with experience in their first through second years of employment within the District shall be formally evaluated a minimum of two (2) times each of the first two years of employment and a summative report will be completed by April 30th of each contract year. Employees thereafter shall have their performance formally evaluated a minimum of once in a three (3) year period. The formal observation shall occur prior to April 30th. An employee may request an evaluation at any time and the administrative staff shall conduct such formal evaluations whenever the administration determines it is advisable.

The formal evaluation procedure shall include a classroom and/or other building area visitation by the administrative staff of the District.

Results of the formal evaluations provided for in this Article shall be in writing.

The evaluator shall have a meeting with the Employee within fifteen (15) school days following the formal evaluation and at that time a copy of the evaluation shall be given to the Employee. The Employee will be asked to sign the written evaluation; however, such signature shall only indicate the Employees' awareness of the evaluation but shall not be interpreted to mean agreement with the content of the material. The Employee may within five (5) school days submit a written position which shall be attached to the file copy of the evaluation in question.

Such formal written evaluations and any responses thereto shall be maintained in a personnel file for such Employee for a period not less than three (3) years from the date such evaluation was made.

In the event an Employee receives a less than satisfactory rating on the formal evaluation in specific teaching areas, the evaluator shall present, in writing, suggestions for ways to improve the areas rated less than satisfactory.

Handbook Complaints

Complaints alleging the misinterpretation or misapplication of the district employee handbook are addressed in this section. Handbook complaint procedures are a means of internal dispute resolution by which an employee may have their complaints addressed. The goal of the handbook complaint process is to, at the lowest level possible, secure equitable solutions to problems that arise.

This section addresses complaints to the employee handbook. Employee complaint procedures are in accordance with the [district's board policy 401.4](#).

Mandatory Cooperation in Workplace Investigations

Any workplace investigation conducted by administrative staff or their designee will receive complete cooperation of 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 their principal or supervisor immediately. 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 one year probationary period.

Classified employees are employed at-will. Work hours and specific responsibilities will be determined by their supervisor.

Public Complaints about an Employee

The board recognizes situations may arise in the operation of the school district which are of concern to parents and other members of the school district community. While constructive criticism is welcomed, the board desires to support its employees and their actions to free them from unnecessary, spiteful, or negative criticism and complaints that do not offer advice for improvement or change.

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 it 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 for licensed employees and the superintendent for classified employees.
- c. Unsettled matters regarding licensed employees from (b) above or problems and questions concerning the school district should be directed to the superintendent.
- d. If a matter cannot be settled satisfactorily by the superintendent, it may then be brought to the board. To bring a concern regarding an employee, the individual may notify the board president in writing, who may bring it to the attention of the entire board, or the item may be placed on the board agenda of a regularly scheduled board meeting in accordance with [board policy 213.1](#).

It is within the discretion of the board to address complaints from the members of the school district community, and the board will only do so if they are in writing, signed, and the complainant has complied with this policy.

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.

All 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 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 a classified employee's assignment will be performed is the responsibility of the superintendent and within the sole discretion of the board. In making such assignments each year the superintendent will consider the qualifications of each classified employee and the needs of the school district.

A transfer may be initiated by the employee, the principal or the superintendent. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to transfer classified employees and report such transfers to the board per [board policy 411.6](#).

For certified staff, a notice of an opening creating any opportunity to transfer shall be posted in each building at least five (5) business office work days before the final date when applications must be submitted. A vacancy that occurs during the summer months will be posted at the central office and emailed to the Association president. Any Employee possessing the necessary qualifications may apply for consideration for any posted vacancy. Such applications must be in writing and received in the Superintendent's office by the date posted on the notice. An application must be made each time an opportunity is posted, and applications shall not carry over from one opportunity to transfer to another. All applications for transfer shall be considered along with any applications from non-employees. The filling of the vacancy shall be based upon the needs of the District as determined by the Employer in its sole discretion. Employees shall be notified if they are denied a transfer. If the Employee involved desires a meeting between the Employee and the Employer will be held to explain the denial. The five (5) days posting period shall be waived by mutual agreement of the superintendent and the president of the Gilbert Education Association in emergency situations.

Work Day

The work day for employees will begin at a time established by the principal or supervisor. “Day” is defined as one work day regardless of full-time or part-time status of an employee.

Employees are to be in their assigned building during the work day. Advance approval to be absent from the school building must be obtained from the principal or supervisor whenever the employees must leave the school building during the work day.

DISTRICT PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

Business Office Procedures

Time Clock Procedures Document

Purchase Orders - Procedures

Fundraisers and Fundraising Guidelines

Credit Cards and Procedures Document

Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, in Des Moines at (515) 284-4625 or visit www.iowadivisionoflabor.gov/child-labor.

Committees

Committees will follow board policies [208](#) and [208.1E1](#).

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.”

For additional information about copyright and fair use, please visit the “Frequently Asked Questions about Copyright” section of the United States Copyright Office located at <https://copyright.gov/help/faq/index.html>.

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. All employees who do not have a 279.13 teaching contract or 279.24 administrator contract are considered “at-will” employees and serve at the will of the board. Employees whose employment is terminated will be given the appropriate level of due process as required by law.

Employees will perform their assigned job, respect and follow board policy and obey the law. The superintendent is authorized to suspend a classified employee with or without pay pending board action on a discharge or during investigation of charges against the employee or for disciplinary purposes. It is within the discretion of the superintendent to suspend a classified employee with or without pay. In the event of a suspension, due process will be followed according to [board policy 413.3](#).

The board believes classified employees should perform their jobs, respect board policy and obey the law. A classified employee may be dismissed upon thirty days’ notice or immediately for cause. Due process procedures will be followed. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to make a recommendation for dismissal to the board. A classified employee may be dismissed for any reason, including, but not limited to, incompetence, willful neglect of duty, reduction in force, willful violation of board policy or administrative regulations, or a violation of the law according to [board policy 413.4](#).

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.

Payroll Accountability

The district believes in taking appropriate measures to ensure the accurate expenditure of district funds through payroll. District employees shall be responsible for accurately and timely reporting their time worked using [Frontline-Time and Attendance](#). The Director of Finance shall be responsible for the timely and accurate disbursement of payroll for the district. No individuals beyond the employees and the Business Office shall have authority to alter timekeeping for employees without prior approval from the superintendent. All overtime must be approved in advance by the appropriate supervisor. Failure to do so will result in discipline, up to and including termination. The superintendent shall develop procedures to ensure the accurate recording of time worked and compensation disbursed for all district employees.

The payroll calendar can be located on District's Website [Payroll Calendar 2024-2025](#)

Dillon's Rule & Personal Responsibility

School districts operate under "Dillon's Rule". School districts have only that authority specifically granted to them through the laws and code of Iowa. The Iowa Constitution and Iowa Code address the "Public Purpose" concept regarding the use and appropriation of public funds and property and anyone using such public

funds/property for private purpose, personal gain, or to the detriment of the public office commits a serious misdemeanor.

Failure to follow appropriate fund management procedures may force the District to hold an employee personally responsible for incurred expenses. Administration, sponsors, coaches, and teachers may not operate school business from their personal bank accounts or utilize personal rewards programs (**ex. Menards Rebates, Hy-vee PERKS or Casey's Rewards**) using District funds. No district cash or checks for deposit are to be taken home in a personal vehicle or to leave the district premises for any reason other than to be taken directly to the bank by personnel specifically designated by the Superintendent or the Director of Finance.

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 immediate supervisor. 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.

Each building has a yearly plan in place for teacher professional development that is developed by district administration with the cooperation of the teacher quality and professional development committee. Teachers may consult the master contract for professional development leave. Teacher associates may participate in building-level professional development if directed by their building principal. Classified staff employees are expected to participate in job –related professional development provided by the district when these opportunities are provided or when directed by their respective supervisor. Bus drivers are required to complete continuing education coursework on an annual basis. The district pays the employees for their class time and the registration fees for the 3-hour STOP renewal class and the 12-hour driver certification class. All school nutrition employees are required to meet Professional Standards and Continuing Education/Training requirements. The district pays the employees for their class time and the registration fees for these training requirements.

Staff members seeking professional development opportunities should discuss it with their supervisor. All district staff will participate in required meetings and training as required by district policy. Required training will be paid for by the district.

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 is 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 Fees

Iowa law identifies the types of fees schools can charge. School districts only have the authority to charge fees for textbooks, school supplies, eye and ear protective devices, summer school, driver's education and transportation for students not eligible for free transportation. For those that are charged, the fees must be waived or reduced for those students who meet the eligibility requirements for free or reduced price meals. Employees cannot charge a student fee for anything without prior consent.

School Nutrition Program

The district operates a school nutrition program. Employees may purchase meals and other items, including milk.

If employees have negative lunch balances at the end of the school year, they may elect to have a payroll deduction to pay their negative balance.

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 along with our Director of Community Engagement. It is the responsibility of the board president and superintendent to respond to inquiries from the news media about the school district.

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings provide an opportunity for the communication of important school district information to be shared between administration and employees. Employees are expected to attend staff meetings unless they are on leave or excused by an administrator. Additional information detailing district staff meeting procedures may be available from the building principal or immediate supervisor.

Electronic Records and Signature

The Board of Directors authorizes the sending and acceptance of electronic records and electronic signatures to and from other persons or entities and further authorizes the creation, storage and use of electronic records and electronic signatures for records and contract documents or as otherwise authorized by the Board from time-to-time, to the extent permitted by law.

The Board President, or the Superintendent as may be permitted by the Board for certain statutorily authorized contracts, is authorized to create and affix an electronic signature for the execution of authorized electronic records and contracts. The signature shall be an electronic sound, symbol or process attached to or logically associated with the record and executed or adopted with the intent to sign. The signature initially created shall be affixed upon the record or contract with proof of authenticity by affidavit of the Board Secretary. This electronic signature shall satisfy the legal requirements in the law where a signature is required.

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. Cell phones should be set on silent or vibrate modes during school hours to minimize disruptions. 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 the course of 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 be clearly marked at all times to identify the district.

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.

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 back-tracking 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, maturity and intellectual and emotional capacities 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.

Artificial Intelligence

The district believes that to adequately prepare modern learners for the future, advances in technology should first be explored within the education environment. Generative AI for the education environment has the potential to automate classroom organizational tasks, enhance individualized student learning, teaching, assessment of student learning, and even enhance research and professional development for educators.

However, generative AI tools can be vulnerable to inaccuracy in some significant ways. AI tools can: have bias in how the tools detect patterns; detect patterns/draw conclusions based on inaccurate data; and may not be fully accessible to students with differing abilities. It is valuable for students to understand the potential uses and limitations of this imperfect technology in an educational environment where AI tools have been carefully selected and are monitored and reviewed within appropriate guidelines. For this reason, human oversight and decision making must lead to the selection, use, and review of AI tools in the education environment.

Use of AI tools by students and staff will be at all times appropriate to the educational environment and subject to all applicable laws, regulations and policies. This includes but is not limited to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule; as well as district policies on student conduct, copyright protections, student records, personnel records, bullying and harassment, and staff/student expression.

Break or Meal Periods

Leaving the place of duty during a work shift without permission of their immediate supervisor, except during unpaid break periods, is cause for discipline, up to and including termination. Employee's supervisor may request the employee to clock out/in. 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 the building administrator. Also, as role models for students, all staff members are expected to not only dress appropriately, but to practice exemplary hygiene.

Employee furnished work uniforms are expected to be kept clean and in good repair. The uniforms must be returned to the district when they become unwearable or upon termination of employment.

Casual Fridays and other special days may be held. Appropriate dress would be jeans and nice shirts/tops. Sweatshirts, sweatpants, and t-shirts (inappropriate for the occasion) are not to be worn.

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 to 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 – Bureau of Educational Examiners

School district employees are expected to perform their jobs in an ethical and honest manner consistent with board policy and the state Bureau 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. [IOWA BOEE Ethics Brochure](#)

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.

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/Social Networking

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 platform or use of 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 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 in direct-relation to the employee's job. Employees, students and volunteers need to realize that the internet is not a closed system 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 should contact the superintendent for approval. Once approved by the superintendent, the employee must work with the Technology Support Director in establishing and maintaining the site according to board policies [605.6](#) and [605.6E1](#).

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 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 be courteous at all times, and report to district administration any mistreatment by district patrons.

Volunteers

All school district volunteers are required to have a background check before volunteering. Background checks will be completed at each building using the Raptor system.

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 in a position 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 24 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 three 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 at [AEA Learning Online](#)

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.

[503.5 - Corporal, Punishment, Mechanical Restraint and Prone Restraint](#)

[503.6 - Physical Restraint and Seclusion of Students](#)

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.

Homework and Grading

Information on this topic is located in building handbooks and [board policy 505.5R1](#).

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Information regarding Parent/Teacher Conferences is located on the District's Website at [Parent-Teacher Conferences](#).

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 per board policy [502.8](#).

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 Funds and Fundraising

Student fundraising for school activities may occur upon approval by the building principal or athletic director at least two weeks prior to the fundraising event or the start of a fundraising campaign and with an employee overseeing the fundraising. A **[FUNDRAISING APPROVAL FORM](#)** must be completed before the fundraising event starts. Funds raised remain in the control of the school district and the board. School-sponsored student organizations must identify a specific purpose for fundraising and secure the approval of the principal prior to spending the money raised. The district's fundraising guidelines must be followed.

Any person or entity acting on behalf of the district and wishing to conduct an online fundraising campaign for the benefit of the district shall begin the process by seeking prior approval from the superintendent. Money or items raised by an online fundraising campaign will be the property of the district only upon acceptance by the board, and will be used only in accordance with the terms for which they were given, as agreed to by the board. Please refer to [Board policy 704.6-Online Fundraising Campaigns-Crowdfunding](#).

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 Business Office 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 from 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 of 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. 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 Examiner

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

[Board policy 104 - Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment Policy](#)

[Board policy 104.R1- Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment Investigation Procedures](#)

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. 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 [board policy 104.E1](#). 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 days 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. The building principal (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 involved 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](#).

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. [Refer to board policy 507.3.](#)

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 their immediate supervisor within twenty-four hours of the occurrence. It is the responsibility of the employee’s immediate supervisor to file an accident report within twenty-four hours after the employee reported the injury **to SFM Work Injury Hotline at 855-675-3501**. If treatment is needed, report to Occupational Medicine at McFarland Clinic (239-4400) whenever possible and prudent for care and treatment.

If an employee is injured on the job and is being compensated through Worker's Compensation, leave will not be used.

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 bus driver examinations 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 up to a maximum amount charged by McFarland Clinic Occupational Medicine. 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 Maintenance Director** will maintain a file indicating which hazardous substances are present in the workplace and when training and information sessions take place.

The mandatory poster for State of Iowa Job Safety and Health is located on the Iowa Workforce Development website https://www.iowaosha.gov/sites/authoring.iowadivisionoflabor.gov/files/OSHA.snh_.posterb-w-2_%284%29.pdf and is also displayed at each building's staff lounge.

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

Sick Leave

Employees are granted leave of absence for **personal or family illness or injury**, doctor's or dentist's appointments, or for pre or post-operative doctor's appointments with full pay in the following amounts:

- The first year of employment- 10 days
- The second year of employment- 11 days
- The third year of employment-12 days
- The fourth year of employment- 13 days
- The fifth year of employment-14 days
- The sixth year and subsequent years of employment- 15 days

The above amounts shall apply only to consecutive years of employment in the Gilbert Community School District and unused portions shall be cumulative to a maximum of one hundred thirty-five (135 days). Upon written request, employees will be given a written accounting of accumulated sick leave within 10 days of such request. The Employer may require such reasonable evidence as it may desire confirming the medical necessity for such leave of absence.

Family will be defined as the employee's spouse, child, sibling, parent, parent-in-law, child-in-law, or grandchild, including any "step" situations. In addition to the relationships listed in the previous sentence, any person living in the same household as the employee will be considered family. Sick leave may be granted for additional family relationships not already listed at the discretion of the superintendent or superintendent's designee.

If an employee has been sick for five (5) consecutive days, a note from a doctor to return to work is required.

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 immediate supervisor of all times when they will be absent or to submit leave requests. 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 (3)** 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.

A leave request for an employee should be entered into the leave system, [Frontline-Absence Management](#), only by the employee requesting the leave, if known one (1) hour in advance. If not known one (1) hour in advance, notify the supervisor, principal or principal's designee of the absence or if there are issues with the leave system.

Bereavement Leave

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

Employees shall be granted paid leave time in the amounts of time and death in the family as follows:

- 5 days-Death of Employee's spouse, child, parent, parent-in-law, child-in-law, grandchild or sibling, including any "step" situations.
- 1 Day- bereavement leave may be used for estate business at a time determined by the employee, within one calendar year from the first day of bereavement taken.
- 3 days- Death of Employee's grandparent or sibling-in-law, including any "step" situations.
- In the event of the death of a person other than those mentioned above, an Employee may be granted by the Employer up to one (1) day of paid leave to attend the funeral.

Employee Holidays and Personal Leave

Classified employees who work twelve months a year will be allowed eight paid days for holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and either the day before or after Christmas. If the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the holiday will either be the Friday immediately before the holiday or the Monday immediately after the holiday. In a week where a paid holiday would fall and overtime work hours would be required, the paid holiday time will be considered work time for overtime calculation purposes.

Employees shall be allowed two (2) days paid leave per year for personal leave to be used at the discretion of the employee. Employees who do not use their personal leave during the year may carry over 2 personal leave days, not to exceed five (5) days in any one school year. An employee planning to use a leave day shall notify his/her principal five (5) school days in advance, if possible. No more than three (3) members of the staff at each building may use the same day.

Personal leave shall not be granted the first or last day of the school year, nor the day immediately preceding a recess period or holiday except in the event of graduation exercises for the employee, the employee's spouse or the child; an honors convocation honoring the employee, the employee's spouse or the employee's child; the military departure of an employee's spouse or employee's child; or state sanctioned event involving the employee's spouse as a coach/sponsor or child as a participant (including the Iowa State Fair).

In addition to the restrictions noted in paragraph 3, personal leave shall not be granted during scheduled professional development time as established on the school calendar, unless approved at the discretion of the superintendent and/or designee.

If an employee has more than three unused personal days at the end of the school year, then the employee will be paid utilizing the chart below. If the substitute daily rate changes beyond the chart below, then the District and GEA will mutually agree upon the pay rate for unused personal days (including partial days at the corresponding partial rate) as the rate is approximately equal to the daily substitute pay rate minus the District's cost for IPERS and FICA contributions for the day.

<u>Substitute</u>	<u>Substitute Daily Rate</u>	<u>Employee Pay per Day</u>
	\$131-\$140	\$110
	\$141-\$150	\$115
	\$151-\$160	\$125
	\$161-\$170	\$135

Employee Vacation

Vacation leave is available to full time employees who work twelve months a year. Vacation schedules are to be coordinated through the employee's supervisor.

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 to their immediate supervisor, who will determine whether the request will disrupt the operation of the school district.

The board will determine the amount of vacation, holidays and personal leave that will be allowed on an annual basis for classified employees.

1-5 years = 10 days	11-15 years = 15 days
6 years = 11 days	16 years = 16 days
7 years = 12 days	17 years = 17 days
8 years = 13 days	18 years = 18 days
9 years = 14 days	19 years = 19 days
10 years = 15 days	20 years = 20 days

Classified employees will be paid only for the hours they would have been scheduled for the day. Vacation will not be accrued from year to year without a prior arrangement with the superintendent.

Family and Medical Leave

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 the superintendent. Employees must provide a written request for leave and sufficient medical certification to the Superintendent within 15 calendar days from the date of the employee's absence. The District reserves the right to designate leave as FMLA or to request recertification at the District's discretion in accordance with federal law. Employees must comply with all other FMLA administrative rules prior to starting FMLA leave.

The requirements stated in [Board Policy 409.3](#) between employees and the board regarding family and medical leave of such employees will be followed. 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 the Business Manager located at the District Office or visit the “Family and Medical Leave Act” section of the United States Department of Labor’s website, at <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/benefits-leave/fmla>.

Maternity/Paternity Leave.

In cases of employees giving birth or adopting a child, 8 weeks for the birthing parent or 2 weeks for the non- birthing parent. Existing paid leave (personal and sick leave) must be utilized first and concurrent with FMLA leave. If the birth mother is still under the care of their health care team after 8 weeks for up to 12 weeks, they may use additional sick days as paid time off. Any additional FMLA leave entitlement will be unpaid. For additional FMLA information refer to Board Policy 409.03: Employee Family and Medical Leave.

Catastrophic Leave Option

Employees who are experiencing a catastrophic event may request catastrophic leave. The employee must first exhaust all paid leave and incur ten (10) unpaid days. Other employees can donate only personal leave with a cap for the affected employee of 20 days. The Superintendent may approve at his/her discretion.

Jury Duty

An Employee who is called for jury service shall be permitted to be absent from his/her duties. An Employee who receives jury duty interview and appearance notice shall notify the Superintendent within one (1) day of such notice. If an Employee reports for jury duty, he/she shall furnish the Superintendent a written statement from an appropriate public official listing the dates served and the amount of payment received for jury duty. Any payment received for jury duty will be submitted to the District Business Office and the Employee will be paid the difference between his/her normal salary and the amount received for jury service, provided he/she makes himself/herself available for work within his/her regular work schedule when not occupied for jury service. Any Employee abusing this privilege shall not be entitled to the pay differential and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Professional Leave

Up to two (2) days shall be granted to employees to visit other schools or for attendance at meetings in the employee's subject matter areas. Only one (1) of the two (2) days may be used to attend athletic clinics, which must be in a sport the employee is currently coaching in the district. Professional leave may be taken upon either teacher or administrative request. See Master Contract for additional information.

Military Service Leave

A military leave will be granted to an Employee in accordance with applicable federal and state laws governing military leave. Such leaves shall be without pay except as provided by Section 29A.28 of the Code of Iowa. An Employee on military leave shall be credited with experience on the salary schedule if the Employee performs services at least ninety-four (94) contract days. Sick leave will accumulate during the period of military leave.

Association Leave

Up to two (2) days leave shall be granted paid leave time for certified delegates to attend the ISEA Delegate Assembly.

Student Activities Leave

Coaches and sponsors attending a scheduled conference, non-conference or state-sponsored activity in which they are coaching or sponsoring Gilbert students will be granted Student Activities Leave as paid time.

Political Leave

The board will provide a leave of absence to employees 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. An [Unpaid Leave Form](#) must be completed and authorized by the superintendent. Leaves of absences without pay are not encouraged and such requests will generally be denied.

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 a district administrator, 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, he/she will notify students and employees by using School Messenger and media to broadcast a school closing announcement. Support staff will be contacted by their supervisor regarding work obligations. If conditions cause lateness or inability to report to work, contact your supervisor immediately. If school is dismissed early due to poor weather and/or road conditions, teachers, and support staff personnel may leave immediately after the school buses have left. Building secretaries may leave as soon as all buses have returned and all students are accounted for. Hourly employees should make the appropriate adjustment on the weekly time sheet if they leave early. Due to the circumstances surrounding snow and ice storms and blizzard conditions, work hours for custodial staff will be coordinated and/or adjusted by the director of maintenance to coordinate snow removal efforts in order to ensure school facilities can be reopened in a timely manner.

When weather conditions require that school be canceled for the day, only twelve (12) month employees are required to report to work or take vacation time in lieu of reporting to work.

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 the office. The loss of a permanent badge shall be immediately reported to your administrator, who will issue a replacement badge. Badges remain the property of the district and shall be returned to the building administrator 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 principal 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 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 502.6](#).

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Contract Release – Licensed Employees

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. [Refer to board policy 407.2](#)

Resignation – Licensed Employees 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 10 working days' advance notice. Notice of the intent to resign will be in writing to the superintendent.

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.

A. The Employer shall have the sole and exclusive right to determine when it is necessary to have a reduction in staff.

B. In the event the Employer determines a reduction in staff is necessary, the Employer shall attempt to accomplish the reduction by attrition within the professional category where reduction is to be made, unless the Employer determines that programs cannot be maintained.

C. In the event reduction in staff cannot be adequately accomplished under Section B, the Employer shall attempt to reduce those Employees teaching within the professional category where reduction is to be made who have completed less than two (2) continuous years of professional service in the District, unless the Employer determines that programs cannot be maintained. In the event more than one Employee within the professional category where reduction is to be made have less than two (2) continuous years of professional service in the District, the Employer shall have sole discretion in determining which Employee shall be reduced.

D. In the event reduction in staff cannot be adequately accomplished under Section B and C, the Employer shall attempt to reduce those Employees teaching within the professional category where reduction is to be made with the least continuous professional experience with the District, unless the Employer determines that programs cannot be maintained.

E. Professional categories shall include:

Preschool-6 Regular Classroom

K-6 by subject area - Special Education, Reading Specialist, Guidance

7-12 by subject area - Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Family & Consumer Science, Mathematics, Industrial Education, Drivers' Education, Spanish, Business Education, Special Education, Agricultural Education, Health, Technology, Guidance

K-12 by subject area - Art, Vocal Music, Instrumental Music, Nurse, Physical Education, Media Specialist, TAG

F. If a teacher has taught in a professional category while at the District but has chosen to make a move to another professional category then that teacher can revert back to the original category if a reduction occurs. Seniority will be established on the hire date in the District.

G. The phrase “unless program cannot be maintained” shall mean (1) that other teachers teaching in the affected professional category are not fully certified, approved, and/or endorsed to teach the remaining assignments in the professional category; or (2) that other teachers in the District are not available to teach in another professional category in which the Employee to be reduced also teaches; or (3) that another teacher in the District is not fully certified or available for an extra-curricular assignment which the Employee to be reduced also is assigned to handle.

H. This Article shall not apply to Employees hired to replace an Employee on leave of absence or to Employees hired after September 1 for the school year in which reductions are made. Matters concerning reduction, termination or recall of these Employees, shall not be subject to the grievance procedures.

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.

Application for retirement will be considered 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. Please refer to [Board Policy 407.6 Voluntary Early Retirement Program](#) and [407.6 Exhibit A](#) [Exhibit B](#) [Exhibit C](#)

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 Gilbert Community School District's Employee Handbook available at the District's Website under [Employee Resources](#). 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 the Business Manager at the District Office 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)

PLEASE RETURN TO THE DISTRICT OFFICE

**TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE – COPY PROVIDED TO
EMPLOYEE IN ESS**