

COLUMBUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS



CLASSIFIED STAFF HANDBOOK

2016-17

This handbook is an outline of the basic policies, practices and procedures of the Columbus Public Schools. It contains general statements of policy and it should not be read as including the details of each policy, or a promise that the provisions in it will be applied in all cases. The provisions may be changed at any time, with or without notice. This handbook totally supersedes all previous handbooks. The handbook is not a contract, expressed or implied, between the school district and the employee.

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Intent of Handbook

Welcome to the Columbus Public Schools. This handbook is intended to provide classified employees with general information about the Columbus Schools and to serve as a guide to policies, rules, and regulations, benefits of employment, and performance expectations.

References in this handbook to Classified Employees are intended to apply to all staff that is not required by their position to hold a teaching or administrative certificate.

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

This handbook does not create a contract of employment. Classified employee positions and assignments may be ended or changed on an at-will basis notwithstanding anything in this handbook or any other publication or statement, except for the contract approved by the Board of Education.

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

This handbook will be in effect for the 2016-17 school year and subsequent school years unless replaced by a later edition.

The contents of this handbook shall supersede any oral statements made to any classified staff employee.

As an employee of the Columbus Public Schools you are a public figure and are expected to be a positive role model.

Mission and Vision of the Columbus Public Schools

The Mission of the Columbus Public Schools: “Engaging all learners to achieve success”

The Vision of the Columbus Public Schools:

As the cornerstone of educational excellence in our community, we will continuously and passionately strive to be a high performing Professional Learning Community that will effectively meet the unique learning needs of each and every student. To attain our Mission we must demonstrate that:

- We are committed to maintaining a clear and shared focus on student learning.
- We are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for learning and teaching.
- We are committed to establishing a high level of communication, trust, support, and accountability.

Members of the Board of Education

Mike Goos - President
3002 39 Street, Columbus, NE 402-564-9106

Theresa Seipel - Vice President
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Candace Becher
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Administrative Staff

Dr. Troy Loeffelholz Superintendent

Mr. Jason Harris	Executive Director	Student Services
Mr. Leonard Kwapnioski	Executive Director	Technology and Operations
Mr. Dave Melick	Executive Director	Business Services and Human Relations
Dr. Amy Romshek	Executive Director	Curriculum and Instruction

Mr. Jeff Bartels	Principal	Lost Creek Elementary School
Ms. Sara Colford	Principal	Emerson Elementary School
Mr. Bob Hausmann	Principal	North Park Elementary School
Ms. Jackie Herink	Principal	Centennial Elementary School
Ms. Paula Lawrence	Principal	West Part Elementary School

Ms. Amy Haynes	Principal	Columbus Middle School
Mr. Jordon Anderson	Assistant Principal	Columbus Middle School
Ms. Adriana Carnes	Dean of Students	Columbus Middle School

Mr. Steven Woodside	Principal	Columbus High School
Mr. R. Jon Frey	Assistant Principal	Columbus High School
Ms. Angela Leifeld	Assistant Principal	Columbus High School
Mr. David Hiebner	Activities Coordinator	Columbus High School
Mr. Jason Schapmann	Dean of Students	Columbus High School

ARTICLE 1: SCHOOL CALENDAR & SEVERE WEATHER & CANCELLATIONS

Section 2: Severe Weather and School Cancellations

The Superintendent of Schools is authorized by the Board of Education to close public schools in case of severe weather. Representatives of the superintendent's staff will notify local news media when inclement weather warrants such action. This information is broadcast regularly by radio stations. When the weather is questionable, please tune into KLIR 101.1 FM for announcements. A decision to close or delay the start of school will be made before 6:30 a.m.

There is no fail-proof way to determine severe weather and there are wide differences of opinion on how severe the weather must be before schools are closed. Good and bad decisions are made in trying to predict what Mother Nature will do. Decisions to close school or keep it open are made on the best available information. Weather information about winter storms is obtained from the news media. Personal observations on the weather and road conditions are also made.

Columbus Public Schools will operate school every day possible and will generally have school when surrounding school districts close. Rural districts operate many school buses; therefore; road conditions and visibility affect school closing decisions. The danger and risk to students is generally less in Columbus because Columbus students' homes are relatively close to school, streets are usually open, visibility is generally better in town, the shelter of homes in case of emergency is near, and Columbus operates few school buses.

The question is often asked, "Why not close school more frequently in bad weather?" Learning is important to Columbus Public Schools. The curriculum has been designed to be accommodated in 1,032 elementary hours, and 1,080 secondary hours; fewer school hours mean less learning. The staff cares about the learning that takes place. When weather jeopardizes the health and safety of young people, health and safety becomes priority number one and school is dismissed. In addition, the State of Nebraska maintains a minimum number of hours per year for school operation. Dropping below the 1,032 or 1,080 hour minimum may necessitate making up days on Saturdays, early summer, or after normal dismissal time. Making up hours is not preferred unless the danger imposed by weather necessitates dismissal.

Every attempt will be made to avoid closing school once classes are in session. In some instances, closing school during the day is inevitable if children are to safely return home before the brunt of a major storm hits. In these cases as much advance notice as possible will be given. If school is closed during the day staff will be notified and parents will be notified via media broadcast. Teachers and designated staff will be responsible for remaining with students until all students have safely left school or the administration has made arrangements for remaining students.

When school is canceled or delayed because of snow, the announcements will be as follows:

"Designated staff report" will mean full-time secretaries in the High School, Middle School, Administration Office, and elementary schools; all administrators; building/grounds supervisors; full-time maintenance, full-time custodians, and district technology staff report for duty at the regular time or as soon as possible unless the radio announcement indicates otherwise. Teachers need not report but may do so at their discretion. All classified employees will be paid only for the actual time worked on those days when school has been delayed or canceled due to inclement weather. Employees not expected to be on duty when schools are closed include: food service personnel, paraprofessionals, lunch-playground aides and other part-time non-certified employees.

"School will start at 10:00 a.m." is the announcement used when the delay helps the road and parking lot clearing efforts, or when bad weather is subsiding. Custodians, administrators, full-time secretaries, and

cooks report at regular times or as soon as possible as travel permits. Teachers, paraprofessionals, and other personnel report no later than 15 minutes prior to the announced starting time or at their regular reporting time, whichever is applicable.

If school is dismissed during the day because of a storm, teachers, paraprofessionals, and other instructional personnel may leave after students are dismissed and safely out of the building as per instructions of the building principal, but no sooner than fifteen minutes after student dismissal. Secretaries, custodians, and other personnel may leave after the building is clear of students and staff at the discretion of the building principal or their immediate supervisor. The Administration Office will remain open as weather dictates. On such days, employees will be paid for their actual hours worked.

Emergency Conditions

The Columbus Public Schools has a signal which, when activated, includes the necessity to either evacuate the building or to move to safer areas of the building. All regular drills are held as required by law through the school year. There are plans for Emergency Exit system, Tornado Warning System, and Critical Incident Response. School officials are not permitted to release students from the school building during a tornado warning. In the event of an emergency exit alert or tornado warning, you should implement the school's established safety procedures.

ARTICLE 2: EMPLOYMENT

Section 1: New Employees

Upon completion of the advertising process, review of applications, and reference checks, the person best qualified for a position with the district will be offered the job. Before a new employee can be eligible to receive their first paycheck, he/she must complete all necessary forms. Those documents include, but may not be limited to:

a. I-9
b. W-4
c. Nebraska State Retirement System Beneficiary Form
d. Long-term Disability Insurance Application
e. Life Insurance Application
f. Health/Dental Insurance Application
g. Physical, if required
h. Appropriate certification, if applicable
i. Background Check
j. Official transcripts for salary increase
k. Register on time clock, if applicable
l. Direct Deposit Enrollment Form
m. Section 125 Plan Enrollment Form
n. Email form for direct deposit

Section 2: Assignments

The duties to be performed by an employee with the District shall be subject to assignment by the appropriate administrator/supervisor. Job descriptions, where available, provide additional information about the position duties.

While on duty with the District, an employee will be expected to devote all of their duty time to the employee's position and to diligently and faithfully perform the assigned duties to the best of their ability.

Section 3: Definition of Full-Time Employee

A full time classified employee is one who is scheduled for thirty-five (35) hours a week or more, a minimum of nine months out of the year.

Section 4: Personnel Files

The District will follow the requirements of state and federal law and regulation with regard to employee personnel files.

Any employee of the Columbus Public Schools shall, upon his/her request, have access to his/her personnel file while on school premises, but may not have access to letters of recommendation solicited by the Columbus Public Schools or to sets of confidential credentials that are part of his/her file. No other person except school officials while engaged in their professional duties shall be granted access to such files; nor shall the contents thereof be divulged in any manner to any unauthorized person without the employee's written permission. Permission forms are available in the Human Relations or superintendent's offices in the Administration Building.

Section 5: Internal Complaint/Communications

The relationship between a building principal and the staff within the building is always enhanced by direct communication between the staff members and the principal. This direct communication is the best way to solve potential problems, relieve tensions, and to clarify any misunderstandings. If the staff member needs a definite course of action then the staff member should utilize the formal procedure listed in paragraphs two and three below.

The staff member should request a conference with the building principal and attempt to resolve the concern or complaint. If the staff member is dissatisfied with the result of this conference, the staff member can request that a second conference be scheduled. This conference will be chaired by the appropriate administrator and will include the administrator, the principal, and the staff member. In the event the staff member is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint at this level, the staff member can request a conference with the Superintendent of Schools for a discussion of the problem.

The Superintendent of schools will schedule a conference to attempt to resolve the problem. In the event the problem is not resolved at this level, the staff member is always free to request action from the Board of Education in an attempt to resolve the problem.

Section 6: Complaints about School Personnel

Constructive criticism of the school, school system, or school personnel is welcome when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program and to assist the school in performing its educational tasks more effectively.

The Board of Education has confidence in the school district employees and desires to support their actions in a manner which will resolve any legitimate complaints about their performance and which will free them from unnecessary, spiteful, or negative criticisms and complaints. The Board of Education advises the public that the proper channeling of complaints involving school personnel shall be from the complainant to the employee to principal to Superintendent and to the Board of Education. Every effort will be made to satisfy the complainant at the earliest possible stage. Any complaint about personnel except the Superintendent will be investigated by the administration before consideration and action taken by the Board of Education. The recommended procedure is as follows;

Principal and his/her designee reviews, investigates, and makes a recommendation.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the recommendation of the building principal, the principal's recommendation will be reviewed and a decision made by the appropriate central office administrator.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the administrator's decision, an appeal can be made to the Superintendent of Schools.

Any statement containing a charge or a complaint against an employee of the school district must be submitted in writing on forms available from any building principal, the Associate Superintendent, or the Director of Student Services. The complaint must be verified and signed by the complainant. The complaint form shall be filed with the person hearing the complaint and shall follow the complaint to the succeeding levels of consideration. The complainant will be contacted to follow-up on the complaint within three school days of receiving the completed complaint form.

Section 7: Time Clocks

Classified employees are to use the building time clock at all times to record start/end of work day, lunch period, and all other times off duty. Employees are expected to clock-in and clock-out within 7 minutes

of their scheduled time. On rare occasions, and for special reasons ONLY, a *payroll exception sign in/sign out form* may be used.

Section 8: Compensation

Compensation is paid only as authorized by the Board of Education. Employment agreements will provide a salary or hourly rate of pay that will be in effect until the beginning of the next school year. New employees may be credited with up to 3 years of prior experience in a comparable position.

Section 9: Payroll

Pay stubs for classified staff are available via email or by U.S. mail. Payday is the 20th of each month. Paydays, in accordance with the terms of the teacher's contract, will be the 20th day of September and the 20th day of each month thereafter up to and including August 20th. If the 20th of the month falls on Saturday, Sunday, or recognized holiday, the paychecks may be secured on Friday. During the summer months, pay stubs will be emailed or mailed to the employee's home address. Employees should always verify pay amounts. If any adjustment should be made, the Payroll Office should be called.

Direct deposit is required for **all** regular employees of the district. Contact the payroll office in the Administration building in writing if you need to make any changes, i.e. account number change, bank change, address change, etc.

Before an employee's pay can be issued he/she must fill out a direct deposit authorization, provide an I-9 form with proper ID, and have a W-4 form on file.

Section 10: Payroll Deductions

Federal income tax, state income tax, social security, and retirement withholding, etc., as required, are deducted from each paycheck.

Regular payroll deductions, if necessary, for the approved health insurance, disability insurance, and/or life insurance. Section 125, 403(b) contributions, dues, etc will be made if any employee requests such deductions in writing to the Administration Building.

United Way—A payroll deduction procedure offers a convenient way to pay a pledge to the Columbus United Way Fund. Deductions begin in September of each year and continue as authorized on the deduction authorization form.

Section 11: Benefits

Health Insurance: Provided for all classified staff who work 35 hours a week for at least nine months of the year (possibly at employee's expense or a portion of expense). See the Payroll office for current rates and benefit information.

The Columbus Public Schools will use August 1 through the following July 31 as the look-back period for calculations necessary under the Affordable Healthcare Act. To calculate average hours per week for those employees eligible for benefits under the Patient Protection and Affordable Healthcare Act, an employee's hours for the time period beginning August 1 and ending July 31 of the following year will be divided by the total number of weeks worked during that period of time, inclusive of break periods of less than 4 consecutive weeks.

Employees who do not participate in the District sponsored health insurance program must provide proof of creditable coverage for health insurance provided by another insurance carrier. Such employees may be eligible for Cash In Lieu of insurance benefits.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) provide rights and protections for participants and beneficiaries in group health plans. HIPAA includes protections for coverage under group health plans that limit exclusions for preexisting conditions; prohibit discrimination against employees and dependents based on their health status; and allow a special opportunity to enroll in a new plan to individuals in certain circumstances. HIPAA may also give you a right to purchase individual coverage if you have no group health plan coverage available, and have exhausted COBRA or other continuation coverage. Further information may be obtained from the Plan Administrator of the group health plan.

Disability Insurance (Long-Term): Provided for all classified staff who work 35 hours a week for at least nine months of the year.

Life Insurance: Provided for all classified staff who work 35 hours a week for at least nine months of the year.

Employees shall make annual benefit elections by September 1 of each school year. Should an employee fail to make such election, the employee election from the immediately preceding school and contract year shall be continued. Each employee is responsible for informing the Business Office in writing of any changes in benefit status. All employee benefit elections are deducted through the District's 125 Plan. Once the elections are designated, they cannot be changed or dropped unless there is a life changing circumstance. This is per the IRS regulations governing Section 125 Plans.

YMCA Subsidy: The District provides a monthly subsidy for classified staff members based on the number of months employed. Contact the payroll office during August to sign up for this benefit.

Employee Assistance Program: The District provides an Employee Assistance Program staff may access when needing to deal with issues such as depression, stress management, anxiety, marital difficulties, family conflict, alcohol or drug addiction, financial or legal concerns, problem gambling, eating disorders, childcare and eldercare, etc.

Section 12: Expense Reimbursement

Reimbursement for authorized mileage will be paid to employees required to drive their own vehicles during their regular scheduled working hours between two or more work sites. Claims for reimbursement should be submitted on a monthly basis to their employee's immediate supervisor. The allowable rate shall be governed by board policy, unless otherwise required by law. The District is not liable for physical damage to employee vehicles.

Necessary materials and supplies are provided by the District. If an employee needs additional materials for performance of duties, the request should be made to the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees who purchase materials or supplies without advance approval may not be reimbursed.

Reimbursement for meals or other expenses related to District-required travel must be submitted to and approved by either the Principal or, if the expense is related to an activity, by the Activities Director. The request for reimbursement should include a voucher sufficient to establish that the expense with detailed receipt was actually incurred and that the expense was reasonable and related to a school-purpose. All individuals names must be included on the back of the detailed meal receipt.

When an employee travels to a supervisor-requested conference/workshop, he/she will be compensated for expenses incurred traveling to and from including the conference/workshop fees. School vehicles

should be requested first. If no vehicle is available, mileage will be paid. Receipts must be turned in and the appropriate form signed.

Section 13: 403(b) Salary Reduction Agreements

The Columbus Public Schools will cooperate with any employee who chooses to participate in an investment program under an Internal Revenue Code Section 403(b) provided that the employee executes a Salary Reduction Agreement provided by the District and the vendor of the 403(b) plan elected by the employee has entered into a Service Provider Agreement with the district holding the District harmless from any liability that may arise out of such 403(b) Plan, including, but not limited to, the calculation of the maximum exclusion allowance, tax reporting, notices and income withholding. Contact Scott Smejkel for any questions regarding such 403(b) Plans.

Section 14: Overtime

Overtime is paid to classified employees in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). A publication provided by the federal government which provides more information about the FLSA is attached as Appendix 2 in this handbook.

Classified employees may be classified as either exempt or non-exempt for overtime purposes. Employees who are classified as exempt employees are not eligible for overtime, while those who are non-exempt are eligible for overtime.

Non-exempt employees will be expected to accurately report hours worked. Falsification of time cards is a serious offense.

Non-exempt employees must receive prior approval from their supervisor to work additional hours beyond their regular work schedule. Non-exempt employees will be paid for each hour worked in excess of 40 hours in a work week and are expected to accurately and timely report overtime hours to their supervisor. The regular workweek for overtime purposes is from 12:00 a.m on Sunday through 11:59 p.m. on Saturday. The administration may establish a different 7-day period work week from time to time for specified employees or employee groups.

Overtime pay for non-exempt employees will be paid at the rate of not less than 1.5 times the employee's regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of the 40 hour work week. Employees with two or more non-exempt positions may be eligible for overtime pay based upon the total number of hours worked in one work week. If applicable, the employee and the Superintendent will agree upon the overtime rate, in compliance with FLSA regulations.

A non-exempt employee may request compensatory time in lieu of overtime pay, with approval of the employer, with the rate figured as 1.5 times the number of hours worked in excess of 40 hours in any work week. Accumulated compensatory time must be used within the pay period immediately following the conversion of overtime hours. The conversion of overtime hours to compensatory time must be approved by the employee's direct administrator. The use of compensatory time must be approved in advance by the employee's direct administrator. The FLSA limits the accumulations of compensatory time. The District's policy is to not permit improper deductions from the salary of exempt employees who are required to meet a salaried basis test for the overtime exemption to be applicable. An employee who feels an improper deduction relative to exemption status has occurred may submit a complaint to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee, who shall promptly investigate the complaint. Reimbursement shall be made and a good faith commitment to comply in the future will be given in the event it is determined that an improper deduction of overtime exemption has been made.

Section 15: Retirement

Columbus Public Schools' employees participate, as required by law, in the Nebraska Public Employees' Retirement System. Employees will have that percentage of their gross salary as determined by law deducted for retirement. Additional money for the retirement fund is provided by legislative appropriation and mandatory contribution from the school district.

The methods for determining retirement benefits have been revised periodically by the Nebraska Legislature and each employee is encouraged to contact the Nebraska Retirement System for additional information. Write to: Nebraska Public Employee Retirement Systems, PO Box 94816, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4816.

Section 16: Transfer

A classified staff member who wants to transfer to another advertised opening within the district must submit a transfer request for the desired position through the AppliTrack system. If computer access is not available, contact Human Resources for an application form. The District reserves the right to transfer employees to other positions as deemed necessary.

If an in-house transfer is allowed, the salary schedule of the new position will be used. In some instances, this could result in a decrease in hourly wages.

Section 17 : Vacancy Posting

Prior to publicly advertising the opening, the vacancy will, whenever possible, be announced in-house. Current employees will, if possible, be given first consideration to transfer to the new opening provided they complete a successful interview.

Section 18: Address/Phone Number Change

It is necessary that an accurate directory of all employees of the school district be kept in the Payroll office. Employees changing their address or phone number should report in writing such changes to the Payroll office as soon as possible. (E-mail is acceptable.)

Section 19: Resignation

If you plan to leave the Columbus Public Schools, the employee must submit a written notice to their principal or supervisor. It would be beneficial to the district if you will give at least a two-week notice, so there will be sufficient time to find a replacement for you.

If you submit a resignation with the intent to retire from work, please specify that you will be retiring rather than resigning. Selecting retirement entitles employees who have worked at least 5 consecutive years for the District to receive recognition (unused sick leave compensation, if applicable, retirement gift, and banquet tickets) at the end of the year staff recognition banquet. In the event an employee retires, later returns to work for the District, and then retires again, the retiree will be provided tickets to the end of year staff recognition banquet but no additional retirement gift or unused sick leave compensation.

Section 20: COBRA Insurance

COBRA is a supplemental insurance policy that provides temporary health insurance to eligible workers and their dependents when they are between jobs by extending the coverage of the most recent employer. Because gaps in health care coverage can cause problems when enrolling in a new plan, it's important that families stay insured in times of transition.

When a qualifying event occurs, federal law requires the Columbus Public Schools to send their

employees and/or his or her eligible dependents written notice within 14 days from the date of loss of coverage for the right to continue health insurance. Continuation of coverage is available to all who qualify at the group rate, plus an additional 2% administrative fee. If the employee was previously covered under a family membership, he or she can retain a family plan under COBRA or select two single membership plans: one for the retiree/terminated employee and one for the spouse.

Continuation of Coverage (COBRA) Notification: The employee must choose to continue coverage by notifying Pay Flex in writing. The employee has 60 days to choose to continue coverage, starting with the date of the continuation notice or the date coverage ended, whichever is later. Failure to choose continuation within the required time period will make the individual ineligible to do so at a later date. The individual has 45 days from the date of choosing continuation coverage to pay Blue Cross and Blue Shield the first month's premium. If coverage for a dependent ends because of divorce, legal separation or any other change in status, the employee or dependent must notify the employer within 60 days of the qualifying event.

When Continuation of Coverage (COBRA) Ends: COBRA coverage will end on the earlier of:

- The day the individual becomes covered under any other group health plan (after COBRA election) which does not exclude or limit any pre-existing conditions or to whom such exclusion does not apply, due to creditable coverage;
- The day a covered person is entitled to benefits under Medicare (after COBRA election);
- The day health coverage has been continued for the maximum period of time allowed (18, 29, 36 months).

Section 21: Letters of Recommendation

It is acceptable to ask your supervisor for a letter of recommendation once you have provided him/her written notice. It will remain your supervisor's decision, however, about whether or not such a letter will be written. You may also ask others to write you letters of recommendation or allow their names to be used as references for you. Again, it is their decision as to whether or not they want to do this.

Section 22: Termination of Employment

The employee's immediate supervisor or administrator will provide the Support Staff Vacancy form to the Executive Director of Finance/Human Relations specifying that the vacancy is as a result of termination.

ARTICLE 3: ABSENCES FROM WORK

Section 1: Sick Leave

Classified employees, upon completion of one (1) full day of work during his/her first year of employment, shall be eligible for sick leave. Paid sick leave provides employees protection against loss of income during absences from work due to illness or injury that prevent performance of duties. It is intended to cover the needs of the employee and provide a reasonable amount of coverage for situations related to the illness or injury of an immediate family member that requires direct care by the employee. Sick leave is intended to be used only for the purposes set forth herein.

Sick leave may be used for the personal illness of the employee or members of the immediate family (husband, wife, child, mother, father, sister, brother, mother/father-in-law, brother/sister-in-law, grandparents, son/daughter-in-law, stepchild, stepmother, stepfather, stepbrother, stepsister, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece and nephew). Sick leave, when used for anyone other than a member of the immediate family residing in the household, can be used only in instances of serious illness.

Full-time classified staff members earn one (1) day of sick leave per month of service, with a minimum of 10 days per year. The number of days that can be accumulated is 80 and all may be used in one school year. Ten (10) of the eighty (80) available sick leave days may be used for a member of the immediate family not residing in the household.

Part-time employees earn the equivalent of five (5) sick days of pay per year. Part-time sick leave is non-accumulative.

Full-time classified staff members who have completed 15 or more years with the District will be compensated at the rate of \$5 for each accumulated sick leave day at the time of their separation from the District.

Eligible employees who work a normal work day on a fixed schedule (an established number of hours per week on a predetermined schedule), and who have sick leave hours accumulated, will be paid for absence due to illness during the normally scheduled work day. Workday in general, means the period between the time on any particular day when such employee commences his/her principal activities and the time on that day at which he/she ceases such principal activity or activities. Eligible employees who work a normal work day on a variable schedule (an established number of hours per week with no predetermined schedule), and who have sick leave hours accumulated, will be paid for absence due to illness in an amount not to exceed the difference between the number of hours scheduled and the number of hours actually worked per day. No sick leave payments will be made during any week in which the actual number of hours worked equals or exceeds the number of hours scheduled.

Exception sheets and leave forms must be received by Payroll by the end of the current pay period. If the Payroll office does not receive an exception sheet or leave form, pay will be added to next pay period.

Requests for Leave

Advance reporting of the need to take a leave is important. A classified employee who becomes ill and is unable to work is to contact their administrator/supervisor as soon as possible. Before the end of the school day on the first day of the sick leave, and on each subsequent day of absence, a report should be made to the administrator/supervisor as to whether the classified employee will be able to return to duty on the next duty day. For illnesses or medical situations where the need for the leave can be determined in advance, the classified employee is to make such advance report of need for leave as possible.

For vacation and other leaves, a Request for Leave form is to be submitted to the administrator/supervisor at least five school days prior to the leave, or such other advance notice as is practicable under the circumstances.

Return from Leave

Upon return from leave, classified employees are to review information supplied by the substitute classified employee as to progress made in the classified employee’s area of responsibility. The substitute should be contacted directly if the written information supplied is not adequate.

A classified employee who is absent for any period of time because of injury requiring care from a physician or health care provider, or for a period of one week or more due to illness, must present a written statement to the Principal from the classified employee’s physician or health care provider stating that the classified employee is physically able to return to duty. This statement is to be presented in person before the classified employee returns to duty in order that the present stage of convalescence can be observed and discussed.

Should an employee be absent from work in excess of the employee’s accumulated sick leave or other paid leaves, the employee’s salary and fringe benefits (including the cost of premiums for group health insurance) shall be reduced by the day or days of work missed. In the case of hourly employees the reduction will be made on an hourly basis.

Section 2: Vacation

Vacation leave is available to employee when the following specific conditions are met: (1) the employee is currently employed by the District; (2) the leave day is taken on a day the employee would otherwise be expected to work; and (3) the employee has met the conditions that are applicable to the type of paid leave that has been requested.

The leave year for paid leave is August 12th through August 11th.

Vacation leave is available only to those employees who are specified to receive paid leave. For purposes of eligibility for vacation, a 12-month employee is an individual whose duties are performed over a 12 month period and who is scheduled to work 1,820 hours or more per leave year.

1. An employee who changes from part-time to full-time status during a leave year becomes eligible for paid leave at the beginning of the next leave year.
2. An employee who changes from full-time to part-time status during a leave year becomes ineligible for vacation leave at the time the change in status occurs. The employee will not be required to reimburse the District for any days that were used prior to the change in status. The employee will be required to use any leave balance during the leave year the change in status occurs.

Classified employees eligible for paid leave shall have vacation days available for each year as follows:

Complete Years of	
Continuous Employment	Vacation Days
1	5
2-10	10
11-15	15
16 or More	20

A year of continuous employment is determined based on a full leave year. When an employee has a break in employment and is re-hired by the District, the prior employment is not considered for

determining years of continuous employment. Periods of employment in an employment status in which the employee is ineligible for paid leave are not considered for determining years of continuous employment. Any employee that is hired on March 1st or after will receive a prorated amount for vacation. This employee will earn one vacation day per two months of work.

Advance notice of taking vacation leave is required. All vacation leave is to be arranged with the employee's direct supervisor.

Classified employees are required to take their vacation leave within each leave (fiscal) year.

Employees will be paid at the employee's daily rate of pay for all unused vacation leave upon separation from the District.

Section 3: Bereavement Leave

The Columbus Public Schools provide the following bereavement leave procedures:

Five (5) days shall be granted in the event of the death of a child, spouse, parent, brother, sister, or sole responsibility, which shall not be charged against sick leave accumulation. Five additional days may be granted which shall be charged against accumulated sick leave.

Three (3) days shall be granted in the event of the death other immediate family members, which shall not be charged against accumulated sick leave. Three additional days may be granted which shall be charged against accumulated sick leave.

Up to two (2) days per year may be allowed to attend the funerals of relatives or personal friends not covered by the immediate family definition, which shall not be charged against accumulated sick leave. Two additional days may be granted during the current school year, which shall be charged against accumulated sick leave.

The maximum number of bereavement leave days shall be no more than twelve (12) days in any one year. Bereavement leave is non-cumulative.

Section 4: Election Worker and Jury Leave

An employee who is appointed as an election worker or summoned for jury service shall promptly notify the employee's immediate supervisor of such appointment or summons. The employee's salary will continue during time spent in jury service, and no deduction of leave time shall occur, except that the District may reduce the pay by an amount equal to any compensation, other than expenses paid by the court for jury duty. Employees are to notify their supervisor of the amount received for such jury duty.

If an employee, upon reporting for jury duty in the morning, is dismissed from jury duty for the remainder of the day, the employee is to report for duty and resume duties for the balance of the day. When an employee is entirely dismissed from jury duty, the employee is directed to report for duty.

Employees are expected to promptly notify the employee's immediate supervisor of any other form of legal summons which may require an absence from duty. In the event the summons involves a school-related matter, the matter shall be treated similar to a jury duty absence. In the event the summons involves a personal matter, the employee will be required to use available leave days.

Section 5: Military Leave

Employees who are members of the National Guard, Army Reserve, Naval Reserve, Marine Corps

Reserve, Air Force Reserve, or Coast Guard Reserve (hereinafter, “reserves”), are entitled to a military leave of absence from their respective duties, without loss of pay, when employed with or without pay under the orders or authorization of competent authority in the active service of the state or of the United States. Teachers who normally work or are normally scheduled to work 120 hours or more in three consecutive weeks shall receive a military leave of absence of 120 hours each calendar year. Teachers who normally work or are normally scheduled to work less than 120 hours in three consecutive weeks shall receive a military leave of absence each calendar year equal to the number of hours they normally work or would normally be scheduled to work, whichever is greater, in three consecutive weeks. Such military leave of absence may be taken in hourly increments and shall be in addition to the teacher’s regular annual leave.

When the governor of this state shall declare that a state of emergency exists, and any teacher who is a member of the reserves is ordered to active service of the state, the teacher shall be granted a state of emergency leave of absence until released from active service by competent authority. The leave of absence shall not be a military leave of absence; other forms of leave may be granted. The teacher shall receive normal salary or compensation minus the state active duty base pay the teacher receives in active service of the state.

Section 6: Professional Leave

Professional leave may be granted in advance only by the employees direct supervisor, principal, or administrator. Refer to the out of district travel claim section of this document.

Section 7: Weather Related Absence

In the event that inclement weather or other reasons cause a shortage of instructional hours, one or more missed days may be made up. Each year on the school calendar there will be two (2) make-up days identified and used as needed.

Section 8: Paid Holidays

All nine month employees shall receive six paid holidays per school year. These holidays are:

- Labor Day or Memorial Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Thanksgiving Friday
- Christmas
- New Year’s Day
- Good Friday

All ten month employees shall receive seven paid holidays per school year. These holidays are:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Thanksgiving Friday
- Christmas
- New Year’s Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day

All twelve month employees shall receive nine paid holidays per school year. These holidays are:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Thanksgiving Friday
- Christmas Eve Day
- Christmas
- New Year’s Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July

If a holiday falls on a Sunday, it will be observed on the following Monday. If it falls on Saturday, it will be observed on the preceding Friday. Holiday pay will be based on the number of hours the employee works on a regular workday.

Section 9: Personal Leave

Personal Leave is provided to allow the employee to deal with situations that may not be dealt with outside the employee's typical work schedule (i.e. before or after work, during lunch break, or during evenings or weekends). Personal Leave may be used at the employee's discretion, but is subject to approval of the employee's immediate supervisor and the Executive Director of Business Operations and Human Relations.

Two (2) non-accumulative days per year will be allowed for full-time employees. One (1) non-accumulative day of Personal Leave will be allowed each year for other classified staff. Personal Leave will not result in loss of pay to the employee. Personal leave pay will be based on the number of hours the employee works on a regular workday.

Application for Personal Leave shall be made no less than one week prior to the requested date of leave on the Classified Application for Leave form to the employee's immediate supervisor. Sufficient detail regarding the need for Personal Leave must be provided so that the employee's immediate supervisor may consider all factors related to the employee's request while also taking into consideration the needs of the building or department, and recommend to the Executive Director of Business Operations and Human Relations approval or denial of the leave. The Executive Director of Business Operations and Human Relations shall consider the employee's request for Personal Leave and the immediate supervisor's recommendation, and will respond to the employee and employee's supervisor regarding approval or denial of the request for leave.

The Board of Education reserves the right to reject all requests for Personal Leave if it is determined by the Board, Superintendent, or Executive Director of Business Operations and Human Relations that such leave is not in the best interest of the school district.

Section 10: Family and Medical Leave Act

Family and medical leaves shall be allowed under the terms and conditions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, as amended (FMLA).

Basic Leave Entitlement. FMLA provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

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

The "leave year" for purposes of the FMLA is a "rolling" 12-month period, measured backward from the date of any FMLA leave usage.

Military Leave Entitlement. Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember during a 12-month period. A covered servicemember is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the servicemember

medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the servicemember is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

Benefits and Protections. During FMLA leave, your health coverage under a "group health plan" will be maintained on the same terms as if you had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

Your use of FMLA leave will not result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of your FMLA leave.

Eligibility Requirements. You are eligible if you have been employed with Columbus Public Schools for at least one year, for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if there are at least 50 employees of Columbus Public Schools within 75 miles of your work location.

Definition of Serious Health Condition. A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents you from performing the functions of your job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities.

Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

Use of Leave. You do not need to use FMLA leave entitlement in one block. Leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. You must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the District's operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave. Columbus Public Schools requires the use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, you must comply with the District's normal paid leave policies.

Employee Responsibilities. You must provide sufficient information for the District to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that you are unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. You also must inform the District if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. You also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

Employer Responsibilities. The District must inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice must specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the District must provide a reason for the ineligibility.

The District must inform employees if leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement. If the District determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the District must notify the employee.

Unlawful Acts by Employers. FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA;
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

Enforcement. An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

For additional information you may refer to FMLA posters on employee bulletin boards or contact the U.S. Wage and Hour Division at:

1-866-4US-WAGE ([1-866-487-9243](tel:1-866-487-9243)) TTY: [1-877-889-5627](tel:1-877-889-5627) or www.wagehour.dol.gov

Section 12: Consideration of Elective Leave

Staff members are to submit requests for all forms of elective leave (personal leave, vacation leave, and unpaid leave) to their immediate supervisor. Such requests may be approved or denied. Denial of elective leave will be based on relevant issues such as: a) the number of other regular employees who will be absent during the requested leave, b) the availability of substitutes, if necessary, c) special activities occurring in the building during the requested leave, d) if sufficient prior notice has not been provided, or e) if provided leave has already been utilized. Denied leave requests may be resubmitted for consideration on alternate dates.

ARTICLE 4: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 1: Hours of Work

Regular, dependable attendance at work is an essential function of a classified employee's employment position. The Board of Education recognizes that employees are entitled to regular time and work schedules on which they can rely in the ordinary course of events and which will be fairly and evenly maintained to the extent possible throughout the school system.

Section 2: Arrival to Duty Assignments

Schools have differing starting and ending times for the student day. Classified employees' work assignments may or may not be related to the regular school day. Classified employees are expected to know their duty dates and times, and to be on time for work.

Section 3: Leaving School

Employees are to be on duty at all times during the assigned work day. Employees may not leave school or their assigned area during duty hours without approval of the Principal. Employees who leave the school during their designated lunch period must clock out. Employees who leave during their work hours for an approved absence or personal business must clock out and clock back in upon return. Employees who need to leave during the school day for reason of illness or emergency are to clock out and make sure that a responsible person has been notified of their unexpected absence so work coverage may be provided.

Section 4: School Procedures

Employees are expected to adhere to the following classroom and school procedures in the performance of their duties:

- *Use of Cell Phones:* Employees shall not use personal cell phones for any non-school purpose when the staff member is responsible for students or other work expectations.
- *Use of School Telephone:* Personal telephone calls shall not be made nor accepted during times when the staff member is responsible for students except in the event of an emergency. Long distance calls on school telephones must be made from the office. You will need to promptly log long distance calls and be responsible for any charges which are for personal use.
- *Equipment and supplies* which are needed for work duties should be requested through the Principal's office. No equipment or supplies ordered through the District may be directed to the personal use of an employee or another District employee.
- *E-mail:* Each staff member will be assigned a school e-mail address for purposes of intra-school and inter-school e-mail correspondence. Staff members should check for e-mail throughout the day, and should timely respond to e-mails which require a response, but should avoid checking and responding to e-mails during instructional time. Use of the District's e-mail system for personal communication is subject to the rules governing overall computer usage found in Board policy and this handbook. Employees who use the District-provided email system for personal reasons will have the annual District fee deducted from their October paycheck.
- *Mailbox:* Employees may be assigned a mailbox. Employees should check for mail each morning and also later in the school day, if possible. If something requires an answer, employees are responsible for responding promptly. Employee mailboxes are to be limited to communication regarding school business.
- Duties of classified employees often involve keeping detailed records. Make sure to complete these records as directed by your supervisor.

Section 5: Supervision of Students

Proper supervision of students is an important responsibility for employees. Employees who have

responsibilities for student supervision are expected to meet the four P's of student supervision and safety. All employees of the school should be familiar with these principles to the extent they may be involved in supervision of students or interaction with students.

Proper Supervision

You must report to all duty assignments on time.

Circulate through your duty area. Pay particular attention to areas and activities that pose an increased risk of injury.

Be vigilant while supervising students. Never leave students unattended; the need to make a copy is not greater than the need to supervise your students. If an emergency requires that you leave students who you are supervising, request that another nearby staff member provide supervision for you, or notify the office so someone can provide assistance. If you are assisting with recess duty, your responsibility is to supervise the students in your assigned area. When talking with other adults or students, remember that your primary duty is supervision and make sure you are aware of what all students who you are to be supervising are doing.

Be accountable for students who are assigned to you from the beginning of the supervision assignment to the end. Do not dismiss students early. If a student needs to leave class, make sure they have a hall pass. If the student is to report to the office, inform the office to be expecting the student. If the student is to be returning to your class after a brief absence (e.g., after using the restroom), contact the office if the student has not returned by the time expected.

If you have seen or have been informed that a particular student has a propensity to act dangerously or in an unpredictable manner, your supervision of that student must increase with the known risk of injury. (Remember, though, that this type of information may be confidential. Do not share confidential information about students except with other staff who need to know the information to perform their jobs).

Be careful with touching students. Use of corporal punishment is prohibited in our school district. Touching students should be limited to that necessary to protect the student from harm (e.g., falling from playground equipment) and that which professional educators determine appropriate for purpose of proper student relationships.

Be careful with your language. Profanity or abusive language should not be used by you. Be a good role model for students. If a student uses such language, you should make a report to the student's teacher or administration.

Proper Instructions

Proper instructions are important to reduce the risk of injury when students undertake an activity, especially an activity that has an increased risk of harm to students.

Repeat the instructions on how to complete a task that has a heightened risk of danger as often as needed. Do not assume because students heard the directions once that they will be remembered.

When you go over safety rules with students note it in your written records. If any students are absent when you review the rules contact the student(s) to review the same information and also note that contact in your written records.

Proper Maintenance of Buildings, Grounds, and Equipment

Conduct periodic inspections of equipment under your control or in your area of supervision.

If equipment is broken and presents a risk of injury, immediately take it out of service. If it can't be moved, tape a Do Not Use sign and notify the office so those repairs may be undertaken.

Check your communication device (whether it be a school phone in your supervision area, a walkie-talkie, or a cell phone) periodically to make sure you can communicate with the office immediately in the event of an emergency.

Proper Warnings

If you have knowledge of a hazard that can likely cause injury, take steps to warn other staff and students. Tell the office so additional warnings may be given. Contact the office for Assistance

The office administration should be contacted immediately when a situation exists which could cause injury to students or others.

Section 6 : Student Searches

Office administration and the student's teacher should be contacted in the event a search of a student or their belongings needs to be done. Do not conduct such a search yourself without a teacher or administrator being present or having given you clear directions. You may direct a student suspected of having an item in violation of school rules to wait with you until another adult is present, or to follow you to the office if you can leave your assigned area without causing risk of harm to others. Do not use physical force to detain the student or to make the student accompany you except as reasonably necessary to protect the student or others.

Section 7: Student Rights

Students should be treated fairly and given the same treatment without consideration of race, color, religion, gender or disability. Students who need special accommodations should be given those accommodations as needed for them to participate in school and in school activities. Further, students have the right to have their school records kept confidential. Such information should be shared only with other school staff with a need to know the information to perform their duties.

Section 8: Role of Paraeducators

Paraeducators provide valuable assistance in the educational process and allow teachers to carry out their responsibilities in a more efficient and effective manner. A paraeducator must not, however, assume teaching responsibilities. The teacher must maintain the role of leadership and responsibility for the students, with the paraeducator in a supportive role. Paraeducators may assist the teacher by, among other tasks, assisting with instructional activities under the direction of the teacher, helping to supervise students, copying tests and other written material, organizing class materials, preparing bulletin boards, grading tests or class work, and calculating and recording grades. Paraeducators are to work only on their assigned work days and within their assigned work day. If a teacher requests a paraeducator to work hours other than the assigned work hours or assigned work day, the administration should be contacted for approval.

Section 9: Dispensing Medication

Employees are not permitted to give any medication to students unless trained under the Medication Aid Act. Students who need to take prescription medicine must have a signed parent release form on file in the office. Medications are to be taken in the presence of the office staff, the nurse, or medication aide and are to be stored in the office. Medical procedures are not to be administered in the classroom except

in accordance with the District's Safety and Security Management Plan and the District's Emergency Protocol (asthma/anaphylaxis protocol). If students must take medication and/or perform medical procedures prescribed by a duly licensed physician during school hours, it is the responsibility of the parents or guardians to sign permission to dispense the medicine at the school and to submit a note or prescription from the physician authorizing the medicine and/or medical procedure. School district personnel will not administer medicine, including over the counter medicine, without the signed form and not without the prescription. Any medication brought to school needs to be properly labeled. The label should include the following information: Student's name, name of medication, dosage needed, and time of dispensing the medication.

Section 10: Reporting Child Abuse

Nebraska State Law and school policy mandates school officials to make a report to the proper law enforcement agency or the Department of Health and Human Services (Child Protective Services) when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected, or a child is in a situation which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect. According to Nebraska State Law, abuse or neglect means knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child to be:

- Placed in a situation that endangers his or her life or physical or mental health;
- Cruelly confined or cruelly punished;
- Deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or care;
- Left unattended in a motor vehicle if such minor child is six years of age or younger;
- Sexually abused; or
- Sexually exploited by allowing, encouraging, or forcing such person to solicit for or engage in prostitution, debauchery, public indecency, or obscene or pornographic photography, films, or depictions.

Employees are to inform their school counselor, social worker, principal or supervisor in the event they become aware of child abuse or neglect. Be as specific as possible with what, when, and where you observed the abuse or neglect and anything which you may have heard said by the student or others. It is vital that your report to school officials be made as accurately and as soon as possible. Timeliness in making a report will assist in minimizing further risk to the child.

Do not talk about the matter directly with the parent or others, as that may violate confidentiality restrictions, affect the ability of authorities to investigate, create problems with relationships and create legal problems. The school administration will consider your information, conduct any further investigation needed to justify a report, and determine whether a report of child abuse or neglect is to be made. If the person who you have reported to does not make a report to the police or Child Protective Services, and you feel a report should be made, report the matter directly to the Superintendent.

Section 11: Law Enforcement Officers

Law enforcement or juvenile officers shall not be allowed to question or counsel a student at school during the school day without consent of the parents involved or unless parents give such consent in person to the building administrators. An exception to the above is the building Principal may grant permission to the probation officer to contact pupils who are on probation, or in cases of suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

Section 12: Accidents

All staff members are required to file an accident report and workers compensation forms each time an employee is injured on the job. This form must be filed with the Executive Director of Business Operations/Human Relations within 24 hours regardless of whether or not medical assistance is required.

Section 13: Funds

Collections: The secretary of the Board of Education and the Principals of the Middle and Senior High Schools are the only persons authorized to keep or maintain a bank account of any school money. Such money may be collected only by permission of the building principal.

Receipts: No assessments against students (other than fines) shall be made until permission is secured from the building Principal and/or the Superintendent. New organizations requiring payment of dues, fees, or assessments may not be organized without permission of the building Principal and/or the Superintendent.

Certain monies collected by Middle School instructors or Senior High instructors shall be checked in to their respective secretaries.

Secretaries shall give a receipt for all money paid to them, showing to what fund the same is credited.

The office secretary shall make a monthly report for all subsidiary accounts to persons concerned if requested to do so. These funds cannot be drawn on except through the secretary under the direction the authorized persons concerned and with the approval of the building Principal or the Superintendent of Schools.

No money shall be kept in the offices, library, teacher's desks, or in file cabinets overnight. During the day such funds should be kept under lock and key.

Section 14: Corporal Punishment

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IS PROHIBITED. The Nebraska State Legislature has prohibited corporal punishment in public schools. However, corporal punishment is not to be confused with physical force used by a teacher or employee to protect another person from personal attack or threat of attack; to protect himself or herself; to remove a student from a class or from one part of the building to another; or to protect a student from doing harm to himself, herself, others, to school property, or property of others. Nor should corporal punishment be confused with grasping or touching a pupil with no intent to inflict bodily harm, school detentions, strategies written into an individual plan, or usual and reasonable punishments such as (but not limited to) running laps, push-ups, or sit-ups. Corporal punishment would include such force as striking, hitting, or kicking with an appendage or object with the intent of physical punishment or the infliction of pain. Any act determined by the building Principal or administrator after investigation to be corporal punishment shall be recorded and filed in the employee's permanent file. Teachers or employees committing a corporal punishment act shall be subject to oral and/or written reprimand, suspension, or termination.

Each pupil is under the control and direction of the Principal or teacher in charge of school:

- During the time he or she is being bused to or from school at public expense.
- During the time he or she is on the school premises or off the school premises on a school-sponsored function.

ARTICLE 5: CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEE PERSONAL CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE

Section 1: Ethics Standards

The Columbus Public Schools expects its classified employees to adhere to ethics standards which are modified from those established by the Nebraska Department of Education for certificated employees. The classified school employment job ethic standards which classified employees are expected to adhere to include those set forth below.

Principle I Commitment as a School Employee:

Employees shall exhibit good moral character, maintain high standards of performance and promote equality of opportunity. In fulfillment of the employee's contractual and personal responsibilities, the employee:

- Shall not interfere with the exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities of students, colleagues, parents, school patrons, or school board members.
- Shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, marital status, age, national origin, ethnic background, or handicapping condition.
- Shall not use coercive means, or promise or provide special treatment to students, colleagues, school patrons, or school board members in order to influence personal decisions.
- Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact for which the employee is responsible.
- Shall not exploit school relationships with students, colleagues, parents, school patrons, or school board members for personal gain or private advantage.
- Shall not sexually harass students, parents, school patrons, employees, or board members.
- Shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in the performance of job duties.
- Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported a violation of this rule.

Principle II Commitment to the Student:

Mindful that the employee's classified position exists for the purpose of serving the best interests of the school district's students and patrons, the classified employee shall perform his/her job duties with genuine interest, concern, and consideration for the student. The employee shall work to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worth goals. In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the employee:

- Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions which interfere with the learning process or are harmful to health or safety.
- Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information that has been obtained in the course of employment, unless disclosure is approved by the administration or is required by law.
- Shall not discipline students using corporal punishment.

Principle III Commitment to the Public:

The magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the education process required dedication to the principles of our democratic heritage. The classified employee bears responsibility for instilling an understanding of the confidence in the rule of law, respect for individual freedom, and a responsibility to promote respect by the public for the integrity of the profession. In fulfillment of the obligation to the public, the employee:

- Shall not misrepresent an institution with which the employee is affiliated, and shall take added precautions to distinguish between the employee's personal and institutional views.
- Shall not use institutional privileges for private gain or to promote political candidates, political issues, or partisan political activities.

- Shall neither offer nor accept gifts or favors that will impair judgment to be exercised in the course of employment.
- Shall support the Principle of due process and protect the political, citizenship, and natural rights of all individuals.
- Shall not commit any act of moral turpitude, nor commit any felony under the laws of the United States or any state or territory.
- Shall, with reasonable diligence, attend to the duties of the employee's position.

Principle IV Commitment to Classified Position Employment Practices:

The employee shall regard the employment agreement as a pledge to be executed both in spirit and in fact. The employee shall believe that sound personnel relationships with governing administration and Board of Education are built upon personal integrity, dignity, and mutual respect. In fulfillment of the obligation to professional employment practices, the employee:

- Shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or responsibility on the basis of preparation and legal qualifications.
- Shall not knowingly withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or employer, or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
- Shall give prompt notice to the employer of any change in availability of service.

Section 2: Evaluations

Evaluations of employees will be conducted in accordance with the Board policy. Supervisors reserve the right to observe, appraise or evaluate employees more frequently than required by policy or as needed basis. Employees are expected to participate constructively and positively in the evaluation process and to accept and implement constructive suggestions and improvement strategies developed by the administration.

Section 3: Role Model

Employees serve as role models for students and their actions and conduct reflect on the school as a whole. Employees are in all respects to conduct themselves in a manner supportive of the mission of the school.

Section 4: Relationships

It is important for employees to maintain an effective working relationship with the administration, co-workers, students, and parents. Appropriate relationships are established by extending social courtesies, following through on commitments and promises, complying with administrative directives and Board policies, being honest and consistent, and not intruding into personal matters outside the scope of duties or gossiping or spreading rumors about others.

Section 5: Professional Attire

It is important for employees to project a responsible, adult image to students, parents, and co-workers. Appropriate attire and grooming is one of the means of projecting such an image. Employees are expected to maintain conservative attire and grooming when on duty. As a minimal guide, employees should not wear clothing which students would not be permitted to wear at school. Employees should wear clothing which is safe and suitable for their work assignments; and avoid clothing which may be caught in machinery. The administration may establish more detailed guidelines for individual employees should that become necessary.

Section 6: Outside Employment

Employees shall not perform other work or engage in activities unrelated to District employment during duty hours. In addition, employees shall not engage in employment which conflicts with their school

duties. Any full-time employee who wishes to engage in gainful employment during the contract period in addition to his obligations to the school district must submit details including the nature of the work and the time involved in the work to his/her immediate supervisor prior to the commencement of such employment. The supervisor shall keep this information on file and will transmit a copy of this information to the Superintendent of Schools. If the proposed employment will interfere in any way with the employee's duties or obligations to the school system, the employee shall be so informed. If the employee accepts the employment after he/she has been informed of the reservations held by the supervisor, this matter will be reported to the Associate Superintendent for Business for whatever action he/she deems appropriate.

Section 7: Improving Job Performance Warning

The primary purpose of warnings is the improvement of performance. There shall be a conference between the employee and the supervisor following every warning. The supervisor and employee shall cooperatively examine the results of the warning.

Section 8: Religious Beliefs & Customs

The Columbus Public School District recognized that one of its educational goals is to advance the students' knowledge and appreciation of the role that our religious heritage has played in the social, cultural, and historical development of civilization. It is accepted that no religious belief or non-belief should be promoted by the school district or its employees, and none should be disparaged. Instead, the school district should encourage all students and staff members to appreciate and be tolerant of each other's religious views. The school district should utilize its opportunity to foster understanding and mutual respect among students and parents, whether it involves race, culture, economic background, or religious beliefs. In that spirit of tolerance, students and staff members should be excused from participation in practices which are contrary to their religious beliefs unless there are clear issues of overriding concern that would prevent it.

Religious holidays and religious symbols associated with the holidays are a significant part of customs and traditions of Columbus students and community patrons. Such holidays may be recognized and observed by the district. Observance shall be as follows:

- The historical and contemporary values and the origin of religious holidays may be explained in an unbiased and objective manner without sectarian indoctrination.
- Music, art, literature, and drama having religious themes or basis are permitted as part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs if presented in a prudent and objective manner and as a traditional part of the cultural and religious heritage of the particular holiday.
- The use of religious symbols such as a cross, menorah, crescent, Star of David, crèche, symbols of Native American religions or other symbols that are part of a religious holiday are permitted as teaching aids or resources provided such symbols are displayed as an example of the cultural and religious heritage of the holiday and are temporary in nature. Among these holidays are included Christmas, Easter, Passover, Hanukkah, St. Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, and Thanksgiving.

Religious institutions and organizations are central to human experience, past and present. An education excluding such a significant aspect would be incomplete. It is essential that the teaching about, and not of, religion be conducted in a factual, objective, and respectful manner. Inclusion of religion in the curriculum shall be practiced as follows:

- The district supports the inclusion of religious literature, music, drama, and the arts in the curriculum and in school activities provided it is intrinsic to the learning experience in the various fields of study and is presented objectively.
- The emphasis on religious themes in the arts, literature, and history should be only as extensive

as necessary for a balanced and comprehensive study of these areas. Such studies should never foster any particular religious tenets or demean any religious beliefs.

- Student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments which reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme shall be accommodated. For example, students are free to express religious beliefs or non-belief in compositions, art forms, music, speech, and debate.

Traditions are a cherished part of the community life and the Columbus Public School district expresses an interest in maintaining those traditions which have significance to the community. Such ceremonies should recognize the religious pluralism of the community. Dedications and ceremonies shall be practiced as follows:

- A dedication ceremony should recognize the religious pluralism of the community and be appropriate to those who use the facility. An open invitation should be extended to all citizens to participate in the ceremony.
- Baccalaureate service is provided as a non-mandatory attendance portion of commencement exercises. The program is supplied by the Columbus Ministerial Association.
- Employees may not wear religious garb indicating membership in or adherent of any religious order, sect, or denomination.

ARTICLE 6: USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

Section 1: Drug Free Workplace

The District has established the school as a drug-free workplace. The drug-free workplace for this purpose includes school grounds, school utilized vehicles, and places in which school activities are held. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, disposition, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace. The possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol, the use of glue or aerosol paint or any other chemical substance for inhalation, and being under the influence of illicit drugs, alcohol, or inhalants, is prohibited in any place while employees are on duty time. Any level of impairment from illicit drugs, alcohol, or inhalants, and/or the presence of any odor of illicit drugs (such as marijuana) or alcohol on an employee in the workplace or on duty time shall be considered a violation of the drug-free workplace. The possession or distribution of a look-alike drug or look-alike controlled substance is prohibited. In addition, employees are expected to serve as role models for students and will be considered to have violated the District's expectations in the event the employee commits a criminal drug or alcohol offense off the work place or off duty time.

As a condition of employment, employees will abide by the District's drug-free workplace policies and notify the Superintendent of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction. Disciplinary sanctions up to and including termination of employment and referral for prosecution will be imposed for violations of the District's drug-free workplace policies. Sanctions may include the requirement that the employee complete an appropriate rehabilitation program, a reprimand, and termination of employment. Drug and alcohol counseling and rehabilitation and reentry programs are available through local health agencies.

Section 2: Smoke and Tobacco-Free Workplace

The use of tobacco products in the District's buildings and on school grounds, all owned or leased facilities and vehicles is prohibited.

Section 3: Weapon-Free Workplace

The District prohibits any person from being in possession of a weapon at a school attendance facility, on school property, at a school-supervised activity, or at a school-sponsored function. Any employee found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The term weapon means an instrument or object used, or which may be used, as a means of attack, defense, or destruction, including, without limitation:

- Any object which will, or is designed to, or may readily be converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other means.
- The frame or receiver of any object described in the preceding example;
- Any firearm muffler or silencer;
- Any explosive, incendiary or gas (a) bomb, (b) grenade, (c) rocket, (d) missile, (e) mine, or similar device.;
- Any bludgeon, sand club, metal knuckles, or throwing star;
- Any knife is prohibited other than as used for strictly instructional or personal care or eating purposes. A pocket knife with a blade of 2-1/2 inches or more is a prohibited weapon. A switch-blade knife is prohibited regardless of size of the blade. A switch-blade knife is defined as a knife with a blade that opens automatically by hand pressure applied to a button, spring, or device in the handle of a knife, or any knife having a blade that opens or falls or is ejected into position by the force of gravity or by an outward, downward, or centrifugal thrust or movement;
- Any electronic device designed to discharge immobilizing levels of electricity, commonly known as a stun gun;

An employee may possess mace or other similar chemical agents in quantity and/or concentration typically designed for individual personal defensive purposes shall not be considered as possession of a weapon. Possession of larger quantities and/or concentrations of mace or other similar chemical agents than is typically designed for individual personal defensive purposes will be considered as possession of a weapon. Usage of mace or other similar chemical agents will be considered as usage of a weapon if the usage is found to be for non-defensive purposes. An employee who is negligent in their possession of mace or other similar chemical agents will be subject to disciplinary action.

An employee may possess an item which may be considered a weapon where such item is used for instructional purposes and the employee has received approval of the administration to possess the item, provided it is used in the manner approved and is maintained in such manner as the administration has directed.

Any other object that is designed for or intended for use as a destructible or injurious device is also prohibited.

The phrase possession of a weapon includes, without limitation, a weapon in an employee's personal possession, as well as, in an employee's motor vehicle, desk, locker, briefcase, backpack, or purse.

Section 4: Acceptable Use of District Computer Network and Internet

Staff members have access to the District's computer network and the Internet for the enhancement and support of student instruction. It is important to remember that the equipment and the software are the property of the school district.

The expectation of the Board of Education is that employees will conduct themselves in such a way as to promote a positive school atmosphere through professional and appropriate dress code, interpersonal relationships, and employee conduct. This includes any communication, verbal, written or electronic. As public employees all staff should recognize that students, peers, parents, and community members are continuously observing their actions. All staff must be aware that their actions and demeanor are reflected in the conduct of students, which may impair their effectiveness as employees.

The personal life of an employee, when communicated by texting, social networking, or other personal communication portrayed via the Internet, or any other form of communication will be a concern of the Administration and Board of Education if it impairs the employee's ability to effectively perform his/her job or it violates local, state or federal laws or contractual agreements. This not only includes communication through devices provided by the district, but also personal or privately owned systems or electronic equipment if said communication merits disciplinary actions consistent with State law, Federal law, and/or Board Policy.

It is the expectation that all employees will maintain appropriate and professional boundaries with students at all times, both inside and outside of school. No employee shall engage in inappropriate or unprofessional conduct, especially conduct of a sexual nature, with a student at any time. This includes inappropriate communications, be it verbal, written or electronic, through any manner such as in person, via telephone, cell phone, computer, personal data assistant, text messaging, instant messaging or any and all social networking mediums.

In using the computers and the Internet, users agree to the following:

1. Since copyright laws protect software and other content, users will not make unauthorized copies of software or content on school computers. If a user downloads public domain programs for personal use or non-commercially redistributes a public domain program, the user assumes all risks regarding the determination of whether a program is in the public domain.
2. Users shall not access material that is obscene, pornographic or otherwise inappropriate for educational, work-related, or personal uses or contrary to the District's mission. Users are not permitted to knowingly access information that is profane, obscene or offensive toward a group or individual based upon race, gender, national origin or religion.
3. Users will protect the privacy of other computer users' areas by not accessing their passwords.
4. Users will not engage in "hacking" or otherwise attempt to gain unauthorized access to system programs or computer equipment. Attempts to harm, destroy, or remove computer software or equipment is prohibited unless removed by authorized CPS personnel.
5. Users will not use computer systems to disturb or harass other computer users by sending unwanted mail or by other means.
6. Users will not attempt to log in to the districts' local system administrator account.
7. Users understand that the intended use of all computer equipment is to meet instructional and educational objectives. All district related content and materials are required to be stored within a district domain account.
8. Users will not use the network for financial gain or for any commercial or illegal activity.
9. The District will not be responsible for any liabilities, costs, expenses, or purchases incurred by the use of the District's telecommunications systems such as the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the purchase of online services or products. The user is solely responsible for any such charges.
10. Users are responsible for the integrity of information accessed and any software downloaded. If the computer becomes inoperable, the computer will be restored by the tech department to the state in which it was originally received by the user. Users will be responsible for reloading any lost material or programs.
11. Users will be responsible for back up of all data on the computer. The district recommends that all important data be stored within your district Google Drive account or saved to an external hard drive. The district is not responsible for lost data.
12. The District reserves the right to inspect a users' computer and computer usage at any time. Users have no privacy rights or expectations of privacy with regard to use of the District's computers or Internet system. Computers are the property of Columbus Public Schools, and are therefore subject to changes or modifications as deemed necessary by the district.
13. A technology protection measure is in place that blocks and/or filters Internet access. The Internet filter is designed for preventative access to Internet sites that are not in accordance with policies and regulations. Inappropriate bypassing of the filter is prohibited. When an authorized user bypasses the filter, the user takes responsibility for content that appears and is displayed for classroom viewing or on their device.
14. All district purchased software through the App store must utilize the user's @discoverers.org Apple ID (iTunes account). This includes the Apple suite (Pages, Numbers, Keynote) downloads on your district computer.

As the user, you are taking sole responsibility for all activity on any school issued device, whether activity be attended or unattended. Any violation of any part of this agreement or any other activity which school administrators deem inappropriate will be subject to disciplinary action. Discipline could include but would not be limited to, the immediate suspension or termination of the user's Internet account and computer privileges, reprimand, suspension, or termination.

Occasional Personal Use

The purpose of technology provided to staff at Columbus Public Schools is to meet the educational needs of the district. The occasional personal use agreement allows Columbus Public Schools staff to have occasional personal use. It is understood and accepted that any use of technology provided by the district is not private. It is important to remember that the equipment and the software are the property of the school district.

Important Information Concerning CPS Technology

Reporting lost or stolen technology during the school day:

- If your iPad or computer is missing or stolen, contact your building principal AND someone in the Tech Dept IMMEDIATELY: Leonard Kwapnioski (c-402-910-3282) or (x11517), Jeff Uchtman (c-402-276-1015) or (x12352), Corey Underdahl (c-402-650-6731) or (x12450), or Troy Medinger (x2020). If no one answers these extensions please send a text message to Jeff at 402-276-1015.
- Machines covered by AppleCare will follow Apple's troubleshooting protocol to determine if machine damage is covered. Employees may elect to purchase a damage protection plan through payroll deduction in October. All non-covered damages will be the responsibility of the employee. Under no circumstances shall an employee try to repair any district owned device. All repairs shall be reported to and coordinated by CPS District Technology as soon as possible.
- Be aware of the CPS policy regarding the use of student images and/or names in digital or paper media produced by you or in your classroom.
- Follow correct copyright procedures when using images and materials that you do not own.
- District owned and managed software will be updated by user through the self-service portal, On Demand. The self-service portal for On Demand software is currently found in System Preferences | Absolute Manage | Software Updates | Show On Demand Software.
- Self-installed software will be updated and maintained by the user who installed the software.

Reporting lost or stolen technology at times other than the school day:

- **Call the CPS Technology Hotline at [402-563-7069](tel:402-563-7069).**
- When calling in to report a lost or stolen device, please be prepared to provide the following information. If there is no answer, please leave this information on the answering machine:
 - Name of person the equipment is assigned to
 - Person's name making report
 - Location where computer was when it went missing
 - Contact number to be called back

Section 5: Use of School Facilities

Employees who are issued keys to the school are expected to not lose their keys and to not allow others to have access to or to use their keys. Employees are permitted to have access to school facilities during non-school time provided your Principal or supervisor has given permission and such access is for work-related purposes. When employees leave the building, they are to close all windows, lock doors, and make sure that the entry door is fully closed and locked. This is especially important when employees are using the school facilities prior to the beginning of the school year and during any weekend or evening usage.

School property is to be used for approved work-related purposes and not for personal purposes or for personal gain or benefit. Use of school supplies (paper, staples, etc.), school equipment (copiers, fax machines, telephones, etc.), and school postage is to be used for approved school-related purposes only. Excess or surplus supplies or equipment, including items which have been placed in the trash, should not

be removed for non-school use without approval from the administration.

Building and grounds must be kept in a clean and orderly condition. It should not be necessary for the Executive Director of Operations to call attention of the Principal to conditions that need to be remedied. Scotch tape should be used only on glass and wood; never on chalkboards or plastered walls. Masking tape should be used only for a very limited period of time.

Students are not to be in buildings without adequate supervision. A staff member must be responsible for the supervision of every student in the building at all times. Building principals will see that this rule is observed. **STAFF MEMBERS SHOULD NEVER, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, LEND THEIR KEYS TO ANYONE. THIS REFERS TO BOTH OUTSIDE DOOR KEYS AND KEYS USED INSIDE THE BUILDING.**

Should a key be lost or stolen the staff member will be responsible for paying the cost of re-keying or replacing all locks the key opens in the building(s).

Custodians should be in attendance whenever the building is in use unless exceptions are approved by the building administration.

Section 6: Care of School Property

Employees are responsible for the proper care of all books, equipment, supplies and furniture supplied by the school. If an item is in need of maintenance or repair, report it to the Principal. If you learn that a student or staff member has damaged school property or equipment, or if you are responsible for damage to school property, promptly report it to the Principal so the item may be replaced or repaired if possible and appropriate responsibility for the cost of replacement or repair may be determined.

School equipment and buildings should be kept in first-class condition. Custodians are instructed to make all minor repairs, if possible, by the close of the day. If repairs are such that the building custodian cannot take care of it, then fill out a work order, retain one copy, and send two copies to the office of the Executive Director of Operations. In case of emergency, when repair must be made at once, call either the supervisor of Buildings and Grounds or the Executive Director of Operations.

Custodians are to notify their respective Principal of work neglected, repairs required, or building conditions that need to be corrected. Custodians are limited in the amount of time available for any individual room. Employees may materially assist in seeing that the work of custodians is not hindered by carelessness on the part of students or others using respective rooms.

Section 7: Video Surveillance

The Board of Education has authorized the use of video cameras on School District property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, students, and visitors to District property, and to safeguard District facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent.

In the event a video surveillance recording captures a student or other building user violation school policies or rules or local, state or federal laws, the video surveillance recording may be used in appropriate disciplinary proceedings against the employee or other building user and may also be provided to law enforcement agencies.

Section 8: Bulletins & Announcements

Bulletin boards and display cases are available for school-related and approved materials to be posted

and displayed. Posters to be used in the halls or materials for distribution will need to be approved by the Principal's office. Posters are not to be attached to any painted wall surfaces. The person or organization responsible for distributing the posters is responsible to see that all posters are removed within 48 hours after the event.

Section 9: Copyright & Fair Use Policy

It is the school's policy to follow the federal copyright law. Employees are reminded that, when using school equipment, they also must follow the federal copyright laws. The federal copyright law governs the reproduction of works of authorship. Copyright works are protected regardless of the medium in which they are created or reproduced; thus, copyright extends to digital works and works transformed into a digital format. Copyrighted works are not limited to those that bear a copyright notice.

The fair use doctrine allows limited reproduction of copyrighted works for educational and research purposes. The relevant portion of the copyright statute provides that the fair use of a copyrighted work, including reproduction for purposes such as criticism, news reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship or research is not an infringement of copyright. The law lists the following factors as the ones to be evaluated in determining whether a particular use of a copyrighted work is a permitted fair use, rather than an infringement of the copyright:

- The purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes
- The nature of the copyrighted works
- The amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole
- The effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work. Although all of these factors will be considered, the last factor is the most important in determining whether a particular use is fair. Employees should seek assistance from their immediate supervisor or the Principal if there are any questions regarding what may be copied.

Section 10: Lost & Found

Employees who find lost articles are asked to take them to the office, where the articles can be claimed by the owner.

Section 11: Safety Program and Committee

The District has established a Safety and Security Management Plan which includes safety and security plans and procedures, including plans and procedures to address emergency and crisis situations. Employees are expected to be familiar with and to comply with the Safety and Security Management Plan. The Plan may be obtained for review or copy from the Principal or the Superintendent.

The District also has a safety committee to address employee accidents, injuries, and work place conditions. A representative from each bargaining group plus representatives appointed by the administration serve on the committee. If you have a desire to serve on the committee, you should contact your supervisor or the Superintendent. Employees can make suggestions and/or report concerns to the safety committee by contacting a member of the safety committee or the Superintendent.

Safety Practices

Guidelines for safe work practices, which employees should follow include the following:

- Never stand on chairs, counters, tables, etc. Only use step stools, ladders and locking stools to stand, climb, etc. to reach high places, put things on bulletin boards, etc.
- Always wear protective equipment (i.e., goggles, aprons, gloves, and ear protection).
- Wipe up spills or report promptly to appropriate personnel. DO NOT assume someone else will do it.

- Be aware of your surroundings. Pick up clutter, keep your work area or room clean and free of clutter, debris, etc.
- Identify and report all hazards (i.e., broken equipment, broken or uneven floor surfaces, non-operating tool, windows, doors, etc.). Follow up if not repaired.
- Do not use equipment if you are not familiar with it or operate machinery without proper training.
- Do not carry heavy or bulky objects beyond your physical abilities. Get a cart, dolly or assistance. Know how to properly lift.
- Report any injuries or medical problems to your supervisor immediately and complete the Employee Accident Report.
- Wear seatbelts when in vehicles where provided.
- Do not do repetitive tasks for long periods of time (i.e., keyboarding, cutting out things, filing, typing, etc.). Take breaks, learn and do stretching exercises, etc.
- Do not engage in horseplay. Such conduct is a common cause of injuries and is not consistent with job duties.

As required by law, approved safety glasses will be required of every student and employee while participation in or observing vocational, technical, industrial technology, science, and art classes. All visitors to these areas must check out a pair of safety glasses when entering any of these areas.

Section 12: Use of Personal Vehicles

Employees who drive school vehicles or volunteer to use their personal automobile to transport students must have a valid driver's license and proof of insurance. Employees will be asked to verify this information and to be given instruction on emergency evacuation and first aid. Employees who drive school vehicles are responsible for following safe driving practices, including use of seat belts by all occupants, and are responsible for any injury or accident. Employees are not to use cell phones or text while driving a school vehicle or while transporting children.

Section 13: Asbestos

You are hereby notified that current federal regulations require all schools to inventory asbestos-containing material and to develop a management plan to identify and control asbestos in their buildings. In addition, each parent, teacher, and employee organization must be notified annually about inspections, re-inspections, response actions, and past response actions and activities, including periodic surveillance that is planned or in progress. This handbook insert shall serve as that official notice to each employee. Each school building in the Columbus Public Schools has had a six-month surveillance inspection and a three-year inspection, with the last three-year inspection currently being conducted by certified in-house personnel. All other types of asbestos activities are posted in the Public Notice ads of the Columbus Telegram as the district needs to address those types of activities. The plan for each building is available at the Central Administration Building and at each school for that particular school for inspection (without cost) to any interested person. The district may charge for copies of the plan. The plan for each building has also been submitted to the Nebraska Department of Health, Division of Environmental Health and Housing surveillance in accordance with federal regulations. For more information on the Asbestos Management Plan, contact the Director of Business Services, 2508 27th Street, Columbus, Nebraska 68601, 563-7000.

Section 14: Political Campaigns & Issues

Political office campaigns or issue campaigns may not be conducted within school facilities or on school premises, nor may materials relating to them be distributed. An exception to this is when such is part of an instructional unit where both sides of the issue, or both candidates, are treated fairly. Students or student groups may not participate or perform on occasions which are strictly partisan or sectarian in

character or purpose except if requested by the President of the United States on a political visit to Columbus. Bond issues, referendums, initiatives, and legislative issues may be discussed and materials distributed at Board approved meetings on school property and at the invitation of organizations or school groups using school facilities. Public schools may be used as a public polling place where all election laws will be observed. Political candidates and issues may be discussed at employee organization meetings held on school premises.

Section 15: Flags

The statutes of Nebraska require that flags (American and State) shall be raised upon respective staffs on all national holidays and special school occasions, and they shall remain thereon from nine o'clock in the morning until four o'clock in the afternoon when weather conditions are favorable. Outdoor flags shall be prominently displayed on the school grounds each day that school is in session. Principals are responsible for insuring that the flag is taken in during stormy weather.

The statutes of Nebraska require that an American flag shall be continuously displayed on the interior wall of every classroom and auditorium in the public school buildings in Nebraska.

Section 16: District-Employee Communications

The District sends regular communication to employees regarding upcoming events and activities to keep them informed. Under the Federal Telephone Consumer Protection Act, all calls whether live, automated, or prerecorded voice calls or text messages made to cellular phones using automated dialing technology are prohibited unless the calls are made for emergency purposes or made with prior express consent of the cellular phone subscriber. In order to comply with the Federal Consumer Protection Act, Columbus Public Schools needs your consent to call the cellular phone number. By signing receipt for this handbook, you give Columbus Public Schools permission to call all cell phones registered in District records for District communication purposes.

ARTICLE 7: STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Section 1: Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Columbus Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, marital status, disability, religion or age in admission or access to, or treatment of employment, in its programs and activities. The Coordinators listed in Section 2 have been designated to handle inquiries regarding complaints, grievance procedures or the application of these policies of nondiscrimination. Local complaint or grievance procedures are provided for by the District and set forth in this handbook. If an employee does not feel that a complaint of nondiscrimination has been satisfactorily resolved at the school level, the employee may file a complaint with the appropriate federal or state agency. Complaints are to be filed with the regional Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, where the complaint relates to Title IX (discrimination, harassment or lack of equity based on gender), Title VI (discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin) or Section 504 (discrimination, harassment or failure to accommodate a disability). Complaints are to be filed with the regional U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) if the complaint relates to Title VII (discrimination or harassment based on race, color, gender, national origin, or religion), the Americans with Disabilities Act (discrimination, harassment or failure to accommodate a disability), or the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (discrimination based on age). The contact information for the OCR and the EEOC in this regard are:

Office for Civil Rights
8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037
Kansas City, MO 64114
816-268-0550

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
1801 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20507
800-669-4000; TDD: 800-669-6820

Section 2: Designation of Coordinators

Any person having inquiries concerning the District's compliance with anti-discrimination laws or policies or other programs should contact or notify the following person(s) who are designated as the coordinator for such laws, policies or programs. The contact address for each coordinator is: Columbus Public Schools, 2508 27 Street, Columbus NE 68601.

Section 3: Anti-Discrimination & Harassment

Elimination of Discrimination

The Columbus Public Schools hereby gives this statement of compliance and intent to comply with all state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination or harassment and requiring accommodations. This school district intends to take necessary measures to assure compliance with such laws against any prohibited form of discrimination or harassment or which require accommodations.

Preventing Harassment and Discrimination

Purpose: The Columbus Public Schools is committed to offering employment and educational opportunity to its employees and students in a climate free of discrimination. Accordingly, unlawful discrimination or harassment of any kind by administrators, employees, co-workers, students or other persons is prohibited. In addition the Columbus Public Schools will try to protect employees and students from reported discrimination or harassment by non-employees or others in the work place and educational environment.

For purposes of this policy, discrimination or harassment based on a person's race, color, religion, disability or national origin constitute harassment when they unreasonably interfere with the person's work performance or create an intimidation at work, instructional, or an educational environment.

Age harassment (40 years of age and higher) has been defined by federal regulations as a form of age discrimination. It can consist of demeaning jokes, insults or intimidation based on a person's age.

Sexual harassment is defined by federal and state regulations as a form of sex discrimination. It can consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature by supervisors or others in the work place, classroom or educational environment. Sexual harassment may exist when:

- Submission to such conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment or of participation and enjoyment of the school's programs and activities;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used or threatened as a basis for employment related decisions, such as promotion, performance, evaluation, pay adjustment, discipline, work assignment, etc., or school program or activity decisions, such as admission, credits, grades, school assignments or playing time;
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, classroom or educational environment.
- Sexual harassment may include explicit sexual propositions, sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, sexually orientation, kidding, teasing, practical jokes, jokes about gender-specific traits, foul or obscene language or gestures, displays of foul or obscene printed or visual material, and physical contact, such as patting, pinching, or brushing against another's body.

Complaint and Grievance Procedures

Employee Complaints or Concerns: Employees are to inform their supervisor of any complaints or concerns about the operations of the District using the established chain of command (immediate supervisor, building principal, Director of Human Resources, Superintendent) on all matters that require administrative attention; that is, on all matters or issues that their job responsibilities require them to report to a supervisor. It is important to the efficient and successful operation of the District and a duty of all employees to share any such complaints or concerns in a responsible, professional manner so as to:

- not disrupt the proper functioning of their duties;
- not undermine the authority of their co-workers, supervisors, or superiors;
- maintain appropriate and productive working relationships with their co-workers, supervisors, and superiors; and,
- ensure that all applicable laws and regulations are followed.

Communications from employees regarding complaints or concerns must be accurate, demonstrate sound judgment, and promote the District's mission, and must be submitted to the employee's immediate supervisor (or the next higher level, if the supervisor is responsible for the problem) in written form and signed. Further, the employee is to maintain confidentiality of the report so that the problem can be appropriately corrected in the best interests of the District. Employees are to use the appropriate complaint or grievance mechanism for matters involving anti-discrimination or harassment as noted elsewhere in this Handbook.

Section 4: Grievance Procedure for Persons with a Disability

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act address discrimination, harassment or failure to provide reasonable accommodations to persons with a disability. The following grievance procedure shall be used for resolution of complaints of alleged violations of the ADA or Section 504:

- Complaints shall be filed with the ADA and Section 504 Coordinator. Complaints shall be made in writing, unless the Complainant's disability prevents such, in which event the Complaint can be made verbally.
- Complaints shall set forth: (a) the name of the Complainant, (b) the address and telephone

number or other such information sufficient to enable the Coordinator to contact the Complainant, (c) a brief description of the alleged violation, and (d) the relief requested by the Complainant.

- Complaints shall be investigated by the Coordinator or the Coordinator’s designee. Investigations shall be thorough, but informal, and the Complainant shall be given a full opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint.
- The Coordinator shall make a decision on the Complaint within thirty (30) days of the filing of the Complaint, unless such time period is extended by agreement of the Complainant. The decision shall be made in writing, shall set forth the Coordinator’s proposed resolution of the Complaint, and shall be forwarded to the Complainant.
- The Complainant shall have ten (10) days from the date the Coordinator’s decision is sent to the Complainant to accept or reject the Coordinator’s proposed resolution, and shall be deemed to have accepted the proposed resolution unless the Complainant rejects the proposed resolution within such time period. In the event the Complainant rejects the proposed resolution, the Complainant shall be given the opportunity to file a request for reconsideration within the ten (10) days from the date the Coordinator’s decision is sent to the Complainant. The request for reconsideration shall be filed with the Coordinator. The Coordinator shall consider any

Law, Policy or Program	Issue or Concern	Coordinator
Title VI	Discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin; harassment	Executive Director of Business Operations & Human Relations
Title IX	Discrimination or harassment based on sex, gender equity	Executive Director of Business Operations & Human Relations
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the American With Disabilities Act Homeless Student Laws	Discrimination, harassment or reasonable accommodations of persons with disabilities Children who are homeless	Executive Director of Student Services Executive Director of Student Services
Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities	Safe and Drug Free Schools	Executive Director of Student Services

additional information provided in the request for reconsideration and make a decision on the request for reconsideration within ten (10) days after the request for reconsideration was filed.

Section 5: Confidentiality of Student Records (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) give parents and students over 18 years of age rights of access and confidentiality with respect to education records. Employees are expected to provide access rights and maintain the confidentiality of education records in accordance with FERPA and Board policy. Further information about FERPA and the District’s policies under FERPA are found in Board policy and in the student handbook.

Section 6: Breakfast and Lunch Programs

The District participates in the National School Lunch Program. Employees are expected to keep information about the participation of students in the program confidential.

Section 7: Confidentiality of Protected Health Information

It is the policy of the District to develop and implement all necessary practices, policies, and procedures to comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) where and to the extent applicable and to maintain the privacy of protected health information (PHI), as that term is defined by HIPAA, that it receives, obtains, or transmits for employees and students. The District designates the Superintendent as its HIPAA privacy officer. Student and employee records containing PHI shall be accessible only to those who require such information to carry out their duties.

ARTICLE 8: MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Section 1: Crisis Response Team

People in crisis often experience anxiety, feelings of vulnerability and difficulty. Events such as the death of a teacher or student, natural or accidental disasters, and real or threatened violence may produce a crisis for students and faculty alike. The need to cope effectively is necessary. The purpose of the Columbus Public Schools Crisis Response team is to evaluate crisis situations and plan intervention strategies. Guidelines are written to help address these concerns and to establish procedures for situations.

Section 2: Advertisement & Promotions

Advertisements, promotions, soliciting, and fund drives conducted in the school buildings or on school grounds are sometimes inevitable, sometimes necessary, and sometimes important. Care shall be taken to consider the effects of such activities upon the students, parents, and the community. Board policy and administrative rules and regulations provide guidance for decisions regarding these topics. (Copies of all promotional materials to be distributed directly to students must be provided by the promoter in both English and Spanish.)

- The Board recognizes that modern production, packaging, and distribution methods make it all but inevitable that some materials and equipment will carry advertising or promotional slogans to which students will be exposed.
- Where advertising or promotions are presented to students as part of any program or is present on any instructional material, the overall benefits of the program or material must outweigh adverse effects of the advertising or promotion.
- Advertisements and promotions for school events, for school sponsored programs, for athletic events, for use in sponsoring the school paper or school annuals are approved forms of advertisement and promotion. However, advertising which refers to tobacco, alcoholic drinks, or unlawful drugs is forbidden in any school publication.
- Students or employees while on school premises shall be protected from unauthorized solicitation for the purchase of goods or services, for participation in an organized campaign to raise funds, and for the donation of money or goods to an organized campaign.
- Teachers may not permit such campaigns, drives, or solicitation within their classrooms except for those outlined in policy or in administrative regulations.
- Any and all community fund drives officially recognized and permitted on school premises will be determined by the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, and/or the Board of Education.
- Fund raising activities sponsored by school clubs, school classes, and parent organizations are part of approved school activity. In the conduct of any approved campaign for funds, no quotas may be set for individual and donations must be entirely voluntary without any pressure which compares the giving of one individual with the giving of another individual.

Section 3: Distribution of Information

Cooperation with community service and youth serving agencies through assisting these agencies in the distribution of information of value to students and their families shall be as follows:

- Each distribution must be approved by the Executive Director of Student Services.
- Principals shall notify teachers of the distribution.
- Representatives of agencies wishing to distribute information through the schools shall:
 - Package and label by building and by classroom enough materials to go to each child or family as targeted for distribution.
 - Deliver material to the Central Administrative Office at least one day prior to mail delivery or, after approval, deliver directly to the buildings.

- Material with political, commercial, or religious content will not be approved for distribution, nor will materials containing art or composition which is in bad taste or otherwise inappropriate for distribution to students.

Section 4: Parent-Teacher Organizations

We recognize the Parent-Teacher Association, School Site Councils, and other school/parent groups as some of our strongest allies. Staff members are asked to cooperate with the officials of these organizations and do all within their power to assist in the work.

Section 5: Requisitions

No student, teacher, or employee of the Board shall have power to purchase, or agree to purchase, any supplies or materials for use in the public schools, whether or not to be sold to student or used in any department whatsoever, except by a proper requisition for a purchase order through the appropriate office. This also applies to purchase of services, such as printing, etc.

When ordering supplies or materials through the Warehouse, a requisition form signed by the Principal/supervisor must be submitted to the Administration Office for processing. The requisitioner should specify item number and description and make a copy for his/her records. Be sure to include budget code numbers on the requisition.

Supplies and materials may be requisitioned through the Principal. When ordering from the Warehouse, specify item number and description.

All requisitions are to be made electronically, and must be approved by the respective Principals. The building principal will assign the purchase order number and forward the electronic submission based on the District's requisition process.

Section 6: Soliciting

Employees while on school premises, shall not be solicited for the purchase of goods or services, not be requested to participate in an organized campaign to raise funds or not be requested to donate money or goods to an organized campaign. Approved fund drives must be entirely voluntary. Exceptions are:

- Columbus Public Schools Foundation, United Way Fund Drive, Combined Health Agencies Drive (CHAD), and the Community Health Charities.
- Fund-raising activities sponsored by school clubs, school classes, and parent organizations approved by the building principals/supervisors.
- Contribution to courtesy funds for serious illness of a staff member or student and to the retirement of staff members approved by the building principal/supervisor.
- Solicitation of students to produce services and materials for community organizations or groups to the extent that such production furthers the students' educational development and does not exploit them and are approved by the building principal.
- Internal fund drives of employee organizations.
- Other solicitations, sales, or drives approved by the Executive Director of Business Operations.

Section 7: Visitors

All visitors to any school building are required to report immediately to the buildings main office. No visitor will be allowed in the building without the prior approval of the building Principal and/or the Principal's designee. All visitors must have a visitor badge. Staff members are expected to notify the office if a visitor does not have a badge. Any child visiting school must be accompanied by an adult.

Section 8: Pay for the Performance of Other Duties

Classified, non-exempt employees can only earn overtime pay on their regularly scheduled duties. If an individual employee volunteers to sell tickets, keep score, work a concession stand, they may be paid an amount that is different from their regular hourly wage.