

# MOORHEAD AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT #152



## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

2016-2017

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Sections marked with a \* have been updated in this edition of the handbook

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This is the Moorhead Area Public School District #152 Employee Handbook effective September 2016. The Handbook contains basic information for all employees regarding employment in the Moorhead Area Public School District and designed to provide general guidelines on work rules, benefits and other issues related to your employment, and help answer many of the questions that may arise in connection with your employment. This Handbook does not create a contract, express or implied, guaranteeing any specific term of employment, nor does it obligate continued employment for a specific period of time. The Employee Handbook should be used in conjunction with all applicable policy and procedure set forth by the School Board of the Moorhead Area Public Schools. For clarification or further explanation of policies, please contact the Human Resources Office at 284-3350.

Moorhead Area Public Schools reserves the right to modify any the information covered in this handbook at any time. Notification of changes will be made by email and other appropriate means. However, such a notice is not required for changes to be effective. All prior versions of this handbook are hereby revoked.

Kristin Dehmer  
Executive Director of Human Resources  
Moorhead Area Public Schools

September 1, 2016

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **Welcome**

Welcome to the Moorhead Area Public Schools. We are pleased you have chosen to work here and to become part of our organization. We are committed to offering high quality education to our students, and a great place to work for our employees.

At Moorhead Area Public Schools, we work to provide the best services to students, whether we are teaching in the classroom; working in a supportive role; providing a supportive learning atmosphere by providing food, heat or transportation; or keeping track of pay, policies or many other details. We encourage you to join with us in this endeavor, and are happy to have you with us.

Moorhead Area Public Schools welcomes you!

### **Mission Statement**

“The mission of the Moorhead Area Public Schools is to develop the maximum potential of every learner to thrive in a changing world.”

### **Organizational Philosophy/Culture/Values**

The School Board, under [Policy 103, Philosophy of Education of Moorhead Area Public Schools](#), has defined the philosophy of the school district in the following manner:

Our democratic society depends upon citizens, who think effectively, read critically, discuss intelligently, evaluate ideas constructively and creatively, and choose to act wisely based on a commitment to ethical values. The complexities and global nature of today’s world require that education work in partnership with the rest of society to promote excellence, accountability, life-long learning, and receptiveness to change. Each individual has inherent value and dignity and every individual has the right to a public education throughout life.

Our philosophy of education recognizes the inevitability of change. As knowledge expands; society will continue to be challenged in its ability to comprehend new information and deal with its implications. It is our belief that the principles outlined in this statement of philosophy are compatible with society as we anticipate it to be in the future, and a prerequisite for a future of which we can be proud.

The policy further defines needs of learners, parents, families, school staff members, community and the educational system.

## **II. YOUR RESPONSIBILITY AS AN EMPLOYEE**

### **Success in the Moorhead Area Public School District**

Your position with the Moorhead Area Public School District is an important one. Each and every job contributes to the successful operation of the school district, and realization of our mission of developing the maximum potential of every learner to thrive in a changing world.

Although there are many different types of jobs within the District, there are four basic elements common to every position that we believe are key to your success:

1. *Customer Service*: constantly and consistently meeting the needs of our students, employees, and community and treating all with respect.
2. *Job Performance*: the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform a job well.
3. *Teamwork*: the way we work together to achieve our goals.
4. *Personal Appearance*: the standards for the way we look and present ourselves to others.

### **Attendance**

Providing service to the students of the district and to the people we work with is the reason the school district exists. Any time you are late or absent will impact our ability to deliver these services, and also place an extra burden on your coworkers.

All scheduled employees are expected to notify their supervisors as soon as possible of any absence. Absences must be reported by the employee in the Substitute Employee Management System (SEMS). This system is used to record employee absences and to obtain substitutes for certain job classifications. You will receive a PIN number and instructions on how to access and utilize SEMS. It is your responsibility to record absences in the proper category when you are going to be absent. The system can be accessed by either calling 284-SEMS or by using Web Center on the district's Web site <http://www.moorheadschoools.org>.

Excessive absenteeism or tardiness may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees are expected to report to their assigned work location on time each scheduled workday.

### **Licensure/Certification**

Each employee who requires licensure or certification by law must maintain a current license or certificate with the Human Resources Department. Individuals are expected to know the date of expiration of their license/certification, and meet the requirements for re-licensure or certification in a timely manner in order to remain employed in that capacity. Please refer to [School Board Policy 412: Employee License Status](#).

Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year all teachers must be highly qualified as required under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. In Minnesota this was accomplished through the licensing process for all teachers licensed after the year 2000. Teachers licensed before the year 2000 can

visit <http://education.state.mn.us/mde/edexc/licen/highqualteach/> for more information regarding highly qualified requirements. If you have any questions regarding licensing, please contact Human Resources.

## **Confidentiality**

Information obtained as the result of employment with the school district is confidential. Respect for the privacy of our students requires that you discuss any student issues only with those staff members and parents who need to know the information. In addition to student information, confidentiality is expected in other areas including staff information or school district business information.

The District will comply with requests for public information as they are received in accordance with state law and school district policy. Requests should be directed to the proper department for processing. Please refer to [School Board Policy 504: Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records](#), and [School Board Policy 414: Employee Public and Private Personnel Data](#).

## **Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest is defined as any judgment, action or relationship that may benefit you or another party because of your relationship with the Moorhead Area School District. All employees are asked to avoid outside activity involving obligations that may compete or be in conflict with the best interests of the school district. Employees are asked to disclose the facts of any transaction that may be considered a conflict of interest before the fact or as soon as the facts become known to you. If you are currently in a situation that may present a conflict of interest, contact Human Resources. Please refer to [School Board Policy 440: Employee Copyright/Royalties](#), [School Board Policy 441: Employee Use of Facilities for Private Gain](#), and to [School Board Policy 445: Employees as Vendors of Schools Supplies](#).

## **Documentation**

Integrity is a core value in the Moorhead Area Public School District. Therefore, intentional inaccuracies on official school district documents such as time sheets, job applications, etc. are prohibited and are grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Gifts and Gratuities**

As a representative of a public employer, it is essential that your work be perceived as being free from external influences. It is our policy to decline gifts, gratuities or favors from any outside organizations or individuals doing business or seeking to do business with the school district. Gifts of nominal value may be accepted. Larger gifts should be graciously declined or referred to the Moorhead Area Education Foundation. Please refer to [School Board Policy 449: Gifts to Employees](#). If you have any questions regarding gifts, please contact Human Resources.



## **Meal and Break Periods**

The district recognizes that appropriate breaks are important to you and your effectiveness on the job. If you work 8 or more consecutive hours, you will be given a 30-minute duty-free, unpaid meal break. Generally, you may take a paid 15 minute break for every four hours worked if work load and staffing needs allow, however, this is considered paid work time and does not apply to the calculation of overtime or comp time. Meal periods should not be forfeited to alter a daily schedule without the approval of a supervisor.

Break periods may vary based on contract language. If you have any questions regarding meal or break periods, please contact Human Resources.

## **Personal Appearance**

As Moorhead Area Public School District employees we are judged not only by our service, but also by our appearance and presentation to others. Our expectation is that employee appearance is consistent with the high standards we set for ourselves as a district. You are expected to present a well-groomed and business-like appearance, avoiding extremes in clothing or appearance such as graphic, violent or otherwise offensive clothing, tattoos or body piercings and to practice good personal hygiene.

In a casual work setting, employees should wear clothing that is comfortable and practical for work, but not distracting or offensive to others. Any clothing that has words, terms, or pictures that may be offensive to other employees is unacceptable. Clothing that is too revealing, such as low-cut or midriff-baring tops or excessively low-rise pants, is not appropriate for a place of business. In our work environment, clothing should be clean and free of wrinkles. Clothing that is torn, dirty, or frayed is unacceptable.

Positions that require work with heavy equipment, hazardous materials, or positions that may require physical support of students, should avoid loose clothing, shorts, open toed shoes or sandals, and excessive jewelry.

Remember that some students and/or employees could be allergic or sensitive to the chemicals or smells of perfumes, colognes, and lotions, so please wear these substances in moderation or avoid wearing them if possible.

No dress code can cover all contingencies so employees must exert a certain amount of judgment in their choice of clothing to wear to work. If you experience uncertainty about acceptable casual attire for work, please ask your supervisor or your Human Resources staff. If clothing fails to meet these standards, as determined by a supervisor and/or Human Resources staff, the employee will be asked not to wear the inappropriate item to work again.

Remember, to our students, parents and the public, you are the Moorhead Area Public Schools.

## **Name Badges**

Your name badge is an important part of your work attire. It lets students, parents, co-workers, vendors, and the general public, identify you as an employee of Moorhead Area Public Schools. It is an important part of providing a secure environment for our students, and to ensure that everyone who enters our schools is identified. Your name badge should be worn anytime you are at work and should be worn in a visible spot on the upper portion of your body.

Persons not wearing name badges in district facilities should be questioned as to their purpose within the facility to encourage safety of our students and employees. Employees who are not wearing their school district provided name badge, will be asked to wear their name badge or be provided a temporary visitor badge.

## **Personal Property**

The Moorhead Area Public School District does not assume any responsibility for loss, theft or damages to personal property. In order to minimize risk, we advise you to not carry unnecessary amounts of cash or other valuables. If you bring personal items to work, you are expected to exercise reasonable care to safeguard them. Personal appliances such as refrigerators, coffee makers, lamps, etc. may be utilized if the appliance meets applicable safety codes.

## **District Property**

The school district may supply you with equipment or supplies to assist you in performing your job duties. You are expected to show reasonable care for any equipment issued and to take precautions for theft as well. Any equipment, keys and key fobs issued must be returned prior to your last day of employment. Lost equipment, keys, and key fobs will be replaced at the expense of the employee.

## **Solicitations**

Individuals, groups and organizations often wish to solicit employees to support a particular activity or organization. This solicitation may be charitable, political, union or for other purposes. Solicitations that are sanctioned by the district such as the Moorhead Area Education Foundation or the United Way are permitted. All others need to be approved by administration in advance. The selling of tickets or merchandise by employees is permitted only on personal time in designated break areas.

## **Teamwork**

Providing a quality education for students and a quality work experience for employees involves teamwork between each employee in the district. Some important actions are:

1. Get to know your co-workers and their capabilities,
2. Create a pleasant, respectful, caring and enjoyable work atmosphere, and
3. Work together towards achieving the mission of Moorhead Area Public Schools

Teamwork is demonstrated by showing respect, cooperation and leadership at all times. Serving as an effective member of your team is key to accomplishing the district's mission.

## **School Board Policies and Administrative Procedures**

It is the responsibility of each employee to read and become familiar with School Board Policies and Administrative Procedures of the district. These policies and procedures are found on the extranet as well as the district web site. Some policies and procedures are mentioned specifically in this handbook; however, all need to be reviewed on a regular basis by all employees. Refer to [School Board Policy 499: Policies Incorporated by Reference for Employees/Personnel](#).

## **Reporting**

A mandated reporter must immediately report abuse, which he or she knows or has reason to believe is happening or has happened, within the preceding three years to the local welfare agency, police department, county sheriff, or agency responsible for assisting or investigating maltreatment. Please refer to [School Board Policies 534 Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse](#), [535 Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults](#), and [552 Corporal Punishment](#) or more information about mandated reporting required by state statute for the protection of students

Employees are also required to report incidents of bullying as defined by state statute. Please refer to [School Board policy 578: Bullying Prohibition](#) for more information.

You are required to comply with these statutes to maintain a safe and civil environment for students.

## **Acceptable Use**

Please refer to [School Board Policy 731: Moorhead Area Public Schools Electronic Network Acceptable Use and Safety](#), [School Board Policy 732: Use of All School Equipment and Materials for Instructional Purposes off School Premises](#) and [School Board Policy 447 Employee Responsible Use of Social Media](#), along with their associated Administrative Procedures. You are expected to read and follow the directions of these policies at all times.

## **III. EMPLOYMENT LAWS**

### **Equal Opportunity Employment**

The Moorhead Area Public School District prohibits discrimination in any form on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, familial status, or status with regard to public assistance. This policy includes but is not limited to the following: employment, promotion, demotion, transfer, layoff, recall, corrective actions, termination, rate of pay, other compensation, and the application of policies and training. Please refer to [School Board Policies 401 Equal Employment Opportunity Statement](#); [402 Grievance Procedures for Equal Opportunity](#); and [404 Employment Disability Nondiscrimination](#), which all speak to equal employment opportunity.

Employees who engage in discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

If you feel you have been the victim of discrimination, please refer to [404 Employment Disability Nondiscrimination](#).

### **Federal and State Wage and Hour Standards**

To the extent that the terms and condition of a district employee's employment is not governed by an existing individual or collective bargaining agreement, he or she is an hourly, non-exempt employee under Federal and State wage and hour standards, based on verification of hours worked.

### **At-Will Employment Status**

All non-contract employees are employed at the will and discretion of the district. As such, there shall be no individual continuing contract status, in fact or implied. Non-contract employees may be employed, promoted, demoted, or terminated at the will of the district so long as the requirements of cause, procedures, and the rights of the individual as mandated under law have not been violated.

### **Rights to Views**

Nothing contained in this handbook shall be construed to limit, impair or affect the right of any employee to the expression or communication of a view, grievance, complaint or opinion on any matter related to the conditions or compensation of public employment or their betterment, so long as the same is not

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Moorhead Area Public Schools is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans With Disabilities Act ("ADA"). It is policy not to discriminate against any qualified employee or applicant with regard to any terms or conditions of employment because of such individual's disability or perceived disability so long as the employee can perform the essential functions of the job. Consistent with this policy of nondiscrimination, the Company will provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, as defined by the ADA, who has made the Company aware of his or her disability, provided that such accommodation does not constitute an undue hardship on the Company.

Employees with a disability who believe they need a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of their job should contact the Human Resources Department. Moorhead Area Public Schools encourages individuals with disabilities to come forward and request reasonable accommodation.

### **Procedure for Requesting an Accommodation**

On receipt of an accommodation request, a member of the Human Resources Department and your supervisor will meet with you to discuss and identify the precise limitations resulting from the disability and the potential accommodation that may be made to help overcome those limitations. Reasonability of the requested accommodation will be made considering various factors, including, but not limited to the nature and cost of the accommodation, the availability of tax credits and deductions, outside funding, overall financial resources and organization, and the accommodation's impact on the operation of the organization, including its impact on the ability of other employees to perform their duties and the organization's ability to conduct business.

Human Resources will inform the employee of its decision on the accommodation request or on how to make the accommodation. If the accommodation request is denied, employees will be advised of their right to appeal the decision by submitting a written statement explaining the reasons for the request. If the request on appeal is denied, that decision is final.

The ADA does not require employers to make the best possible accommodation, to reallocate essential job functions, or to provide personal use items (i.e., eyeglasses, hearing aids, wheelchairs etc.).

An employee or job applicant who has questions regarding this policy or believes that he or she has been discriminated against based on a disability should notify the Human Resources Department. All such inquiries or complaints will be treated as confidential to the extent permissible by law. For further information, please contact Human Resources or see [School Board Policy #404: Employment Disability Nondiscrimination](#)

## **Employee Background Checks**

The school district requires a criminal history background check on all individuals employed by the school district, including athletic coaches, according to [MN Statute 123B.03](#). A person is employed after they successfully complete a criminal background check and the background check is reviewed by the school district.

Employees have the right to request and obtain a copy of the background check report from the district, which may be provided to the employee at a cost not exceeding the actual cost of the report. Employees have the right to challenge the accuracy and completeness of information contained in a background check report. Additional information can be found by reviewing [School Board Policy 413 Employment Background Checks](#).

## **Immigration Law Compliance**

The Moorhead Area Public School District is committed to employing only United States Citizens and Aliens who are authorized to work in the United States, and to comply with the Immigration and Nationality Act. As a condition of employment, you must properly complete, sign and date the first section of the Immigration and Naturalization Service Form I-9 on your date of hire and provide documentation of information requested within three (3) business days of the date employment begins. Newly re-hired employees must also complete the form (I-9) prior to beginning work if: they have not previously filed an I-9 with the school district; if their previous I-9 is more than three years old; or if their previous I-9 is no longer valid.

Employers cannot specify which documents an employee can use for Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification.

## **Employment of Minors**

No one under 18 years of age will be employed without providing proper proof of age in an age certificate, birth certificate, or driver's license. Minors will be employed only in accordance with the state child labor laws and school district policies. No one under 14 years of age will be employed in any capacity

This policy is in accordance with both state and federal laws that regulate hiring of minors - persons less than 18 years of age. In the Fair Labor Standards Act the minimum age of 14 was set for general employment, but for those occupations that the Secretary of Labor determined to be hazardous, the minimum age is 18.

A high school student under the age of 16 may not work before 7:00 a. m. or after 9:00 p.m., or for more than 40 hours per week or more than eight hours in a 24-hour period. During the school year, an employment certificate must be issued by the superintendent to work during school hours, and hours are restricted to no later than 7:00 p.m., no more than three hours per day, and not more than 18 hours per week.

A high school student under the age of 18 will not be permitted to work after 11 p.m. on an evening before a school day or before 5 a.m. on a school day. ([Minnesota Statutes 181A.05](#))

## **Harassment**

The purpose of the school district policy on harassment is to maintain learning and working environments that are free from religious, racial, national origin or sexual harassment and violence. The Moorhead Area Public Schools prohibits any form of religious, racial, sexual orientation, national origin or sexual harassment and violence. Please refer to [School Board Policy 570 - Prohibition of Harassment and Violence](#).

### **GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY**

It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of the school district to harass a pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel through conduct or communication of a sexual nature or regarding religion, national origin and race as defined by this policy. For purposes of this policy, school personnel include School Board members, school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors or persons subject to the supervision and control of the district.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of the school district to inflict, threaten to inflict or attempt to inflict religious, racial, sexual orientation, national origin or sexual violence upon any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel.

The Moorhead Area Public Schools will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of religious, racial, sexual orientation, national origin or sexual harassment or violence,

and to discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

The school district encourages the reporting party or complainant to use [Administrative Procedure 570.1: Harassment and Violence Report Form](#) available from the administrator of each building or available from the school district office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well. Nothing in this policy shall prevent any person from reporting harassment or violence directly to the school district's Human Rights Officer (Director of Human Resources) or to the Superintendent.

The Human Rights Officer (Executive Director of Human Resources) will undertake or authorize and investigation upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging harassment or violence prohibited by this policy. The School District will take appropriate action based on the findings of the investigation.

### **Retaliation**

The law forbids retaliation when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits, and any other term or condition of employment in response to filing a charge of discrimination; making a complaint to an employer or other covered entity about discrimination; or because of participation in a discrimination proceeding.

The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged harassment, violence, or discrimination in accordance with School Board Policy or any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation, or who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such harassment or violence. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment.

### **Comparable Worth/Pay Equity**

It is the policy of the Moorhead Area Public School District to comply with the Minnesota State Law on comparable worth/pay equity. After the initial study a board policy has been put into place to maintain results for current job classifications and to process new or revised job descriptions through the study mechanism in order to continue compliance with the law. Further details are available in Human Resources. Please refer to [School Board Policy 403: Comparable Worth Review Process](#).

### **Public and Private Personnel Data**

Private and public personnel data is defined by Federal law, state statute and School Board Policy. The district will follow these laws, and it is important that you, as an employee, understand what information the district maintains about you is private and what information is public. Please refer to [School Board Policy 414: Employee Public and Private Personnel Data](#).

## **IV. COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Website**

The school district maintains a website at <http://www.moorheadschoools.org>. It contains a wide variety of information about the district, our schools, programs, employment, policies, telephone numbers, upcoming events, community education, etc. There are two separate and distinct parts to the district Web site: the public Web site and the district extranet.

The public website is accessible to anyone who has a computer with Internet access. This site has a wealth of information about the school district, the schools, community education, district news and recognition, district and athletic event calendars, and employment opportunities.

The district extranet requires a username and password for entry. Employees receive a username and password to access the extranet. The extranet includes: bulletins, calendars, the Substitute Employee Management System (SEMS), access to your payroll/leave information, a staff directory, links to Flexible Spending account balances and many other areas. Please become familiar with the extranet as this will allow for enhanced communication and benefit to you as an employee.

### **Publications**

In addition to the electronic school and district announcements found on the extranet, there are several publications available to you as an employee to keep you connected to the many activities, programs, and newsworthy events occurring in the school district. Some of these include:

1. District Calendar
2. District Messages announcements/newsletters
3. Annual Report

### **Staff Meetings**

Staff, team and other meetings are an important link for you and your co-workers. Talk with your supervisor about the frequency and location of meetings and plan to attend. Periodically, staff meetings may be held for the purpose of hearing guest speakers, holding open forums, obtaining new information, the opportunity for employee input and/or education/training or receiving updates on what is happening in the school district.

### **Telephone and Mail**

You are encouraged to use district telephones, computers, fax machines, and other communication devices for school district business purposes only. Employees may use personal cell phones to make personal telephone calls/text messages or other electronic correspondence during their breaks, meal periods or prep periods, but may not use them during scheduled work time. All communication with students should be professional and related to the education process.



Personal correspondence should be written on your own time. The district is not to be used as a personal mailing address.

Refer to Appendix A for building telephone numbers.

## **Other Communication**

Voice Mail - Voice Mail is assigned to designated employees. Employees with voice mail should listen to their messages frequently during the day and return messages in a timely and responsive manner.

Mailboxes - An individual mailbox may be assigned to employees at their work site.

E-mail/Internet/Extranet - E-mail, Extranet and Internet use are for school business use only. All electronic communication on district equipment can be requested and is discoverable. Please review [School Board Policy 731](#) and [Administrative Procedure 731.1: Moorhead Area Public Schools Information Network Acceptable Use and Safety](#).

Social Media – Moorhead Area Public Schools recognizes the importance of online social media networks as a communication and e-learning tool. The school district acknowledges the value of teacher inquiry, investigation, and innovation using new technology tools to enhance the learning experience. Employees are responsible for their behavior or activity on these networks. Employees must report inappropriate student behavior or activities including incidents governed by mandated reporting to their supervisor. The school district takes no position on employees' decision to participate in the use of social media networks for personal use on personal time. However, use of these media for personal use during district time and/or on district equipment is prohibited.

Personal devices – The use of personal devices for work-related correspondence is highly discouraged. All work-related documents or correspondence on a personal device (phone, computer, tablet, etc.) could be subject of review in litigation towards the district and/or individual employees.

Please review School Board Policy [447 Employee Responsible Use of Social Media](#); [Administrative Procedure 447.1 Social Media Guidelines for employees](#); [450 Employee and Student Relationships](#), and [School Board Policy 448: Electronic Communication Between Employee and Students](#).

## **V. JOB PERFORMANCE**

### **Job Responsibilities**

Your position has specific responsibilities which, you are expected to perform. It is important that the responsibilities of each job are fully understood. Please speak with your supervisor if you have any questions about the functions you are able to perform in your job. In addition, most jobs will require employees to be flexible and willing to take on new assignments as a result of their responsibilities changing over time. Therefore, it is very important that you clearly understand what

your supervisor expects of you and that you keep abreast of changes in your job. Check with your supervisor if you have questions regarding your job description duties.

### **Corrective Action**

Corrective action may be taken by supervisors to address the behavior or performance of employees, whose conduct disrupts the activities and goals of the school district. Corrective action may also be taken to address work rule violations and other prohibitive acts. This process may include oral warnings, written warnings, suspension, demotion or termination. Through this process, employees are provided with the information needed to understand what aspect of their work performance and/or behavior is unacceptable and what improvements are needed to demonstrate success.

Moorhead Area Public Schools reserves the right to combine or skip steps depending upon facts of each situation and the nature of the offense. The level of disciplinary intervention may also vary. Specific steps of corrective action may vary based on contract language. If you have questions about corrective action, please refer to your contract or contact Human Resources.

### **Your Supervisor**

We encourage open communication throughout the district. Your supervisor should be the first person you talk to regarding most questions or concerns you may have. He/she can explain operations, protocols and procedures and can refer you to written materials or other resources for additional information.

### **Initial Evaluation and Performance Review**

The initial performance evaluation and periodic performance review varies by contract/agreement. Please refer to your contract regarding how the evaluations are completed, and whether you are under a probationary period and the length of that probationary period.

Evaluation of probationary and continuing contract teachers is described in the Teacher's Master Agreement. Please refer to [School Board Policy 470: School District Evaluation of Personnel](#).

### **Staff Development**

The district has an established Staff Development program to assist you in remaining current and up-to-date in your job duties. Work time is scheduled on the school calendar each year for staff development. You are encouraged to take advantage of this time to increase your knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform your job, which is a benefit to you, our students, and our co-workers. Offsite staff development is also available by supervisor approval. Please refer to [School Board Policy 446: Staff Development](#).

The district staff development funds are also utilized in this manner. Please refer to [School Board Policy 824: Reimbursement for Travel, Professional Meetings and Conferences](#).

## **VI. JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Posting of Open Positions**

All open positions are advertised on the district website under the Employment Opportunities section. If you are interested in being considered for one of the jobs posted you are asked to apply for the job in the district assigned application system. . All qualified applicants who apply are considered for job openings as they occur.

### **Hiring of Relatives**

The school district may employ immediate family of employees provided they are not placed in positions with direct supervision of one another.

### **Right of Assignment**

The school district has the right of assignment of all employees in the district.

## **VII. EMPLOYEE PAY AND RECORDS**

### **Wage Disclosure**

Under the Minnesota Wage Disclosure Protection law, you have the right to tell any person the amount of your own wages. Your employer cannot retaliate against you for disclosing your own wages. Your remedies under the Wage Disclosure Protection law are to bring a civil action against your employer and/or file a complaint with the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry at (651) 284-5070 or 1-800-342-5354.

### **Personal Information Changes**

For a variety of reasons (such as tax, pension, or benefit reporting) it is important that your records are current. If there are any changes in your name, address, telephone number, number of dependents, insurance beneficiaries, etc., it is your responsibility to notify Human Resources and/or Payroll

### **Payday**

Payday is the last working day of each month with the exception of December when employees are paid before winter break. Those employees working less than a twelve (12) month year can choose to be paid in 10 or 12 installments by completing a form in the Payroll Office. Employees are required to have their check deposited directly to the bank account of their choice. There are limited exceptions to this requirement.

Payroll and leave information is available via the extranet and may be printed by employees.

You may review your paycheck information in My Demographics by clicking on your name in the upper left corner of the extranet.

## **Personnel Files**

During your employment with the school district, information about you must be kept on file. Your confidential personnel record will include basic information such as your address, phone number, social security number and employment related information - performance reviews/assessments, applications, salary data, corrective action records, etc. A separate medical file is maintained for each employee, which has limited access. You may review your personnel file by contacting Human Resources for an appointment and/or making a written request.

## **Overtime Eligibility (Exempt and Non-Exempt Employees)**

Each employee is designated as either exempt or non-exempt from federal and state wage and hour laws. Non-exempt or hourly employees are entitled to overtime pay under specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws. Non-exempt employees are entitled to time and one-half their regular rate of pay for each hour worked over a 40-hour period in a work week period.

Exempt employees are excluded from specific provisions of federal and state wage and hour laws and must meet the criteria of specific tests outlined in wage and hour provisions. The status of an employee from exempt status to non-exempt status, or vice-versa, may only be changed upon written notification by the School District and by agreement with any union contract affected.

Exempt and non-exempt employees may receive wages on a salaried basis based on the daily hours that they are scheduled to work. Non-exempt employees who are paid on a salaried basis continue to be entitled for overtime per the Fair Labor Standards Act.

## **Overtime**

Ideally, all jobs will be structured so that normal work assignments can be completed during a regular workweek. There may be instances, however, when you will need to work overtime to meet special demands. Overtime is paid at the rate of one and one half times the employee's regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 in a workweek. District overtime guidelines are:

1. All overtime must be authorized by your supervisor in advance, and
2. Exempt employees are ineligible for overtime.

Under certain prescribed conditions, employees of State or local government agencies may receive compensatory time off, at a rate of not less than one and one-half hours for each overtime hour worked, instead of cash overtime pay. An employee must be permitted to use compensatory time on the date requested unless doing so would "unduly disrupt" the operations of the agency. There are limitations on the number of hours that may be accumulated.

Moorhead Area Public Schools workweek begins on Sunday at midnight (12:00 a.m.) and ends on Saturday at 11:59 p.m.

If you have any questions regarding overtime, please contact Human Resources, 284-3350

### **Storm Days/Inclement Weather**

If school is closed in the Moorhead Area Public Schools due to inclement weather, twelve-month employees are expected to report to work as usual. If you as an employee judge that it may be unsafe or potentially injurious for you to report to work, or you report to work on a storm day and feel that it is necessary for you to leave early, you have a choice to use vacation time, a personal leave day (if available) or a deduct day. Work time taken as a deduct may be made up during the work week at the discretion of your supervisor and if there is sufficient time left in the workweek to make up the time.

Operation and Maintenance employees are required to work on all storm days falling on regular workdays, even though school may be closed because of inclement weather. Contract language under Article VI, Section 9 would be followed in that event.

If you determine that it is unsafe for you to report to work due to inclement weather, please call your supervisor and inform them at the start of your normally scheduled workday. Call all absences into the SEMS system at the beginning of your normally scheduled workday to record your choice of vacation day, personal day or deduct day. The number for the SEMS system is 284-SEMS (7367). Please have your pin number ready when you call.

If you report to work on a storm day and you are sent home, you will receive credit for working the entire day. The decision to dismiss employees early will be made only by the Superintendent or designee.

### **VIII. TIME AWAY FROM WORK**

There are a number of reasons for employees to be gone from the work setting. Generally, whenever you miss work there are two procedures you need to follow: notify your supervisor to receive authorization/permission to be absent from work and record your absence on the Substitute Employee Management System (SEMS).

Quick reference guides for how to use the system by either telephone or computer can be found by logging on to the district's extranet then clicking on your name in the upper left hand corner and following the link found in your demographic information.

Planned absences should be recorded into the system as far in advance as possible, particularly for those employees who need substitutes. Please follow instructions and timelines to ensure the best functioning of the system.

## **Sick Leave**

Eligible employees have available sick leave to use for personal illness and in some contracts/agreements, for family illness. The district will comply with MN Statute to allow employees to use sick leave for specified family members in the same manner as they use leave for themselves. Certain contracts/agreements have expanded family definitions for sick leave usage. In certain circumstances, a physician's certification may be required for personal or family illness.

Available sick leave may also be utilized for "Safety Leave", defined by MN Statute as leave for the purpose of providing or receiving assistance because of sexual assault, domestic abuse or stalking. Safety leave can be used for assistance to the employee or assistance to the relatives described in the previous paragraph.

An employee is responsible for the appropriate use of sick leave. Sick leave abuse occurs when an employee used sick leave for unauthorized purposes or misrepresents the actual reason for charging an absence to sick leave. Abuse may also occur when an employee establishes a pattern of sick leave usage over a period of time such as the day before or after a holiday, on Mondays and Fridays, after paydays, any specific day, half-day, or a continued pattern of maintaining zero leave balances. Abuse of sick leave by an employee may result in discipline, including and/or up to termination from employment.

Please use the Substitute Employee Management System (SEMS) - 284-SEMS or Web Center Online to record a sick leave absence. Please review contract language or contact Human Resources for further information.

## **Parental Leave**

The district has provided provisions under contracts/agreements for employees to take time off for birth or adoption of a child. Each contract has specific provisions, usually involving the use of sick leave under certain conditions for a specific length of time and an unpaid provision for extended leaves of absence.

Minnesota Parental leave allows up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for female employee for pre-natal care, or incapacity due to pregnancy, childbirth or related health conditions for eligible employees. Eligible employees are those who have worked at least 12 months and worked an average number of hours per week equal to one-half the full-time equivalent of their job classification during the 12 months preceding the leave.

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a federal law that also allows up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave, and is defined further later in this section.

Employees need to request the leave in writing to their supervisor and then it should be forwarded to Human Resources for processing 30 days in advance of the beginning of the leave when possible.

Leave taken based on contract eligibility; parental leave (MN) and FMLA are to be taken concurrently by the employee.

## **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

**PURPOSE:** To outline the conditions under which an employee may request time off without pay for a limited period with job protection and no loss of accumulated service if the employee returns to work.

**DEFINITION:** A family or medical leave of absence is defined as an approved absence available to eligible employees for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period under particular circumstances that are critical to the life of a family. To determine the amount of leave to which an employee is entitled, the 12-month period is measured backward from the date that the employee uses any leave under FMLA. In other words, any leave that was taken by the employee during the 12 months preceding the date that the employee takes additional leave will be counted to determine the amount of leave remaining.

### **Leave may be taken:**

- On the birth of an employee's child;
- On the placement of a child for adoption or foster care with an employee;
- When an employee is needed to care for a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
- When an employee is unable to perform at least one of the essential functions of his or her position because of the employee's own serious health condition.

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to all family and medical leaves of absence including leaves that are covered under paid employment benefit plans or policies for any part of the 12 weeks leave to which the employee may be entitled under this policy. In other words, if an employee is entitled to both family medical leave and paid leave under another benefit plan or policy, the employee is required to use all applicable paid leave plans or policies before unpaid leave. Family medical leave and the paid leave will run concurrently.

**ELIGIBILITY:** To be eligible for leave under this policy, an employee must have been employed at the district for at least 12 months and must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period preceding the beginning of the leave.

**Exception:** If an employee on leave is salaried and among the highest paid 10% of district employees within 75 surface miles, and keeping the job open for the employee would result in substantial and grievous economic injury to the district, the employee can be denied job restoration after leave. In this situation, however, the employee will be given an opportunity to return to work during leave.

## **BASIC REGULATIONS AND CONDITIONS OF LEAVE:**

**Medical certification** The district will require medical certification to support a claim for leave for an employee's own serious health condition or to care for a seriously ill child, spouse, or parent.

For the employee's own medical leave, the certification must include a statement that the employee is unable to perform at least one of the functions of his or her position. For leave to care for a seriously ill child, spouse, or parent, the certification must include an estimate of the amount of time that the employee is needed to provide care.

The district may require a second medical opinion and periodic re-certifications at its own expense. If the first and second opinions differ, the district may require the binding opinion of a third health care provider, approved jointly by the district and the employee and paid for by the district.

**Intermittent or reduced leave.** Leave may be taken on an intermittent or reduced-leave schedule if it is medically necessary for a serious health condition of the employee or his or her spouse, child or parent. If leave is requested on this basis, however, the district may require the employee to transfer temporarily to a part-time schedule or an alternative position that better accommodates recurring absences. The alternative position will have equivalent pay and benefits.

**Spouses combined leave.** Spouses who are both employed by the district are entitled to a joint total of 12 weeks leave (rather than 12 weeks each) for the birth or placement for adoption or foster care of a child. For any other qualifying FMLA reason, each eligible spouse will be entitled to the full 12 weeks of family medical leave, or that portion of leave remaining in the relevant 12-month period.

**NOTIFICATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:** When the need for leave is foreseeable, such as the birth of a child, the placement for adoption or foster care of a child, or planned medical treatment, the employee must provide reasonable prior notice and make an effort to schedule leave so that it does not unduly disrupt district operations. Employees who are ill will be required to report periodically on their status and their intention to return to work.

#### **STATUS OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS DURING LEAVE OF ABSENCE:**

**Health Insurance.** Group health care coverage will continue for employees on leave as if they were still working. Employees who are granted an approved leave of absence under this policy are advised to arrange to pay their share of premiums during the absence.

If the leave is paid, premiums will continue to be paid through payroll deductions. If the leave is unpaid, employees are responsible for making sure the district receives premium payments by the normal payroll dates. The Human Resources Department will provide a schedule of payment amounts and due dates at the beginning of any unpaid leave of absence.

**Recovery of premiums.** If an employee chooses not to return to work, or does not stay at work for at least 30 days upon return (for reasons other than retirement), after an approved unpaid leave of absence, the district may recover from the employee the cost of any payments made to maintain the employee's health insurance, unless the failure to return is because of a serious health condition or reasons beyond the employee's control. Benefit entitlements based on length of service will be calculated as of the last paid workday before the start of the unpaid absence.

**Return to Work** A fitness for duty certification or release to return to work is required for all employees returning from consecutive family medical leave. The release must come from the employee's healthcare provider must address the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of their job, the date the employee may return to work and specify any restrictions, if applicable.

Upon return from leave, eligible employees must be restored to their original or equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. While an employee is on an intermittent or reduced-schedule leave, the company may temporarily transfer the employee to an available



alternative position that better accommodates the recurring leave and that has equivalent pay and benefits.

**PROCEDURES:** The employee must fill out a Request for Family and Medical Leave of Absence Form. This form must be completed in detail, signed by the employee, submitted to the immediate supervisor for proper approvals, and forwarded to the Human Resources Department. If possible, the form should be submitted 30 days before the effective date of the leave.

All requests for family and medical leaves of absence due to illness must include sufficient medical certification stating:

1. The date on which the serious health condition began;
2. The probable duration of the condition; and
3. The appropriate medical facts that the health care provider knows about the condition.

In addition, for leave to care for a child, spouse, or parent, the certificate must include an estimate of the amount of time that the employee is needed to provide such care.

For leave for an employee's illness, the certificate must state that the employee is unable to perform at least one of the functions of his or her position.

For certification of intermittent leave or leave on a reduced-leave schedule for planned medical treatment, the certificate must state the dates on which such treatment is expected to be given and the duration of the treatment.

**Military Family Leave.** There are two types of Military Family Leave available.

1. Qualifying exigency leave. If you (1) have been employed by the district for at least 12 months and (2) have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12-month period, you are entitled to use up to 12 weeks unpaid leave to address certain qualifying exigencies.
  - Short-notice deployment (up to seven days of leave)
  - Attending certain military events
  - Arranging for alternative childcare
  - Addressing certain financial and legal arrangements
  - Periods of rest and recuperation for the service member (up to five days of leave)
  - Attending certain counseling sessions
  - Attending post-deployment activities (up to ninety (90) days after the termination of active duty status)
  - Other activities arising out of the service member's active duty or call to active duty and agreed upon by the Moorhead Area Public School District
  - Leave to care for a covered service member. There is also a special leave entitlement that permits employees who meet the eligibility requirements for FAMILY MEDICAL leave to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period.
2. Leave to care for a covered service member. There is also a special leave entitlement that permits employees who meet the eligibility requirements for FMLA to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period.

A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has been rendered medically unfit to perform his or her duties due to a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty while on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

When both husband and wife work for the same employer, the aggregate amount of leave that can be taken by the husband and wife to care for a covered service member is 26 weeks in a single 12-month period.

### **Parenting Leave**

If you (1) have been employed by the district for at least 12 months and (2) have worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12-month period, you are entitled to use up to 12 weeks unpaid leave upon the birth of your child or placement of a child in your home for adoption or foster care.

The Moorhead Area School District mandates the use of paid time to run concurrently. You are required to use other available paid leave (sick leave or vacation) at the same time as parenting leave. The district will continue to pay its share of your group health insurance premiums during the leave.

Parenting leave must be arranged through your supervisor. You are encouraged to alert your supervisor and/or management at least 30 days prior to the date you will begin parenting leave, if possible. At the end of the leave, you will be reinstated to your old position or one that is substantially the same, if your old position is not available. If you are not able to, or choose not to return to work at that time, you will be considered to have voluntarily terminated your employment.

If you do not return to work for reasons beyond your control or because you have a serious health condition which prevents you from returning to work, then you will not be required to repay health insurance premiums paid by the district during your leave. If you do not return to work for any other reason, then you will be required to repay the district for those premiums.

Employees who do not work the requisite hours stated above, but have been employed at least 12 consecutive months and work an average number of hours equal to one half the full-time equivalent position, are eligible for leave under the Minnesota Parental Leave Act (Minnesota Statute 181.941). Such employees shall be entitled to up to six weeks of unpaid leave of absence when they are a natural or adoptive parent. The employee at his or her own expense may continue group health coverage.

Instructional employees, defined as one whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, a small group, or an individual setting, are subject to special rules under the Family and Medical Leave Act. These employees include, but are not limited to, teachers, coaches, driver's education instructors, and special education assistants.

Further details may be obtained from your supervisor or management. Please refer to [School Board Policy 422: Family and Medical Leaves](#).

## **Personal Leave**

Under contracts/agreements, school district employees may qualify for a personal leave. Please refer to your contract for additional information or contact Human Resources. Also, please record the absence on the Substitute Employee Management System (SEMS) at 284-SEMS or on Web Center Online.

## **Military Service Leave**

The Moorhead Area Public School District provides time off for employees who are members of the military. The district follows federal and state law for this type of leave.

## **Funeral/Bereavement Leave**

Time off with pay is granted in various ways in different contracts/agreements to allow an employee to attend the funeral, be with a relative prior to death, or to assist with final arrangements. The list of relatives varies by contract/agreement, as well as the allowed provisions of paid time off; many contracts provide funeral/bereavement leave as a part of emergency leave.

## **Jury Duty**

Employees are given paid time to serve on a jury. An employee called to serve on a jury must notify his or her supervisor as soon as possible after receiving notice.

Employees excused from jury duty, or not chosen as a juror, are expected to report back to work for the remainder of their workday during the entire time they are designated to be on jury duty.

## **Deduct Days**

Deduct days are days taken voluntarily by an employee without pay, and require the approval of a supervisor. These days are to be arranged as far in advance as possible in order to provide as little disruption to students and coworkers as necessary.

Deduct days are not to be used in place of other leaves of absence in the various contracts/agreements. Deduct days must be recorded in the Substitute Employee Management System at 284-3352 or on Web Center Online.

## **Other Leaves of Absence**

Certain contracts/agreements have provisions for other leaves of absence. These leaves are normally without pay and may vary in length from a few days to up to five years. Included are sabbatical leaves, extended leaves and leaves that do not fit other leave provisions. Please check your contract/agreement for leave provisions in this category.

## **IX. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

### **Insurance**

#### **Health**

The school district provides the choice of several health insurance plans, which offer both employee and/or family coverage. These choices include different plan designs and premium cost for each choice. Detailed information can be found in the Summary Plan Description (SPD) and other relevant plan documents located on the extranet.

Eligibility and district contribution toward the cost of health insurance coverage will be identified by each master agreement. Costs in excess of the provided premium will be borne by the employee through payroll deduction. Employees will be eligible for participation in District group insurance starting the first day of the month after their Hire Date through the last day of the last month of employment. The opportunity for enrollment is within the first thirty (30) days of initial employment or within thirty (30) days of a change in employment status or life changing event, such as the birth or adoption of a child, death, marriage, divorce or loss of coverage.

Employees who are not covered by a master agreement or contract and who meet the minimum threshold of hours to be considered full-time under the affordable care act, will be notified of eligibility to enroll in district health insurance benefits prior to the end of a 90-day probationary period. Premiums will be at the cost of the employee.

If you have questions about health insurance, or the various plans and premiums, please contact the Human Resources department.

#### **Life**

In most contracts/agreements the school district pays the premium for a basic life insurance policy for eligible employees. This insurance currently has an accidental death and dismemberment provision. Supplemental coverage for the employee is available at his/her own expense.

Dependent coverage is available for spouse and children, in most instances, up to maximum amounts. Please contact Human Resources or Payroll for more information. Insurance coverage is effective on the first day of the month following the employment start date for new employees.

#### **Dental**

An optional, employee paid dental insurance is currently available through the school district under some contracts/agreements. Please contact Human Resources or Payroll for details on coverage and cost options available. Dental insurance must be applied for within 30 days of the employment start date, and employees must meet eligibility requirements.

#### **Vision**

An optional, employee paid vision insurance is currently available through the school district under some contracts/agreements. Please contact Human Resources or Payroll for details on coverage and cost options available. Vision insurance must be applied for within 30 days of the employment start date, and employees must meet eligibility requirements.

### Disability Insurance

The school district pays the premium for a long-term disability insurance policy for eligible employees. There is a 60 continuous workday waiting period for eligibility. The policy pays 60% of an employee's normal wage, subject to taxation, up to age 65 if necessary for continuing disability. Please contact Human Resources or Payroll for details if you are disabled. If you were hurt on the job you would be covered by Workers' Compensation, which will be discussed later in this handbook.

### Unemployment/Re-employment Insurance

If you are terminated from your job or laid off from your job you may be eligible for this insurance. Please contact your local Job Service to apply for benefits on the Job Service link on the district Web site under Career Resources. The Career Resources section also has many other forms of assistance listed, ranging from interviewing skills, resume building, other Web sites listing jobs and employee assistance.

### Cancer/Intensive Care Insurance

An optional, employee paid cancer/intensive care insurance is currently available through the school district under certain contracts/agreements. Please contact Human Resources or Payroll for details on coverage and cost options available. Cancer/intensive care insurance must be applied for within 30 days of the employment start date, and employees must meet eligibility requirements

## **Vacation**

Vacation is paid time off earned by eligible employees to take off for any reason. The amount earned varies by contract/agreement and by the amount of hours worked.

Vacation may not be available until after a probationary period, depending on the contract/agreement. Advance requests are always required and should be submitted to your supervisor for approval.

Vacation days must be recorded on the Substitute Employee Management Systems at 284-SEMS or Web Center Online.

Leave requested after statement of resignation, retirement or termination may be approved based on the discretion of the supervisor and/or relevant contract language.

## **Retirement**

### PERA and TRA

All employees in the Moorhead Area Public School District who meet minimum state plan requirements are covered under either the Public Employee's Retirement Association or the Teacher's Retirement Association. The school district and the employee both contribute to the mandated state retirement plans in an amount set by law. Further information is available on the PERA Web site at <http://www.mnpera.org> or the TRA Web site at <http://www.tra.state.mn.us>.

### Deferred Annuities - 403(b)

The school district sponsors district-approved companies who provide 403(b) deferred annuities/mutual funds. Employees may contribute to these annuities with pre-tax dollars up to the maximum allowed by law. In some contracts/agreements, the employer will match a portion of the employee contribution up to the maximum specified in the contract/agreement. Please refer to your contract/agreement to confirm if you are eligible for this benefit. Please contact Payroll if you are interested in signing up to participate in the 403(b) program or if you have further questions.

### Social Security (FICA)

As an employee of the Moorhead Area Public School District you are automatically covered under the Federal Insurance Contribution Act. The employee and the district contribute a percentage of the employee's gross salary to Social Security, up to a maximum gross earning specified by the law. Any earnings above this contribution are not subject to taxation.

Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI) are deducted from your check at the rate of 6.2% of gross earnings. Deductions will occur up to an annual limit, which is subject to change annually.

Medicare, as part of Social Security, is also deducted from your check at the rate of 1.45% of gross earnings, with no maximum limit on earnings.

Social Security that is paid to you is based on a complex formula that uses your high thirty-five years of earnings. You may begin drawing it upon retirement as early as age 62. The longer you wait until retirement, the higher amount you are paid upon retirement.

There are provisions built into Social Security for disability, death of spouse, etc. Social Security may be contacted directly for more information at its Web site at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) or the Fargo office at 239-5607 or 1-800-453-7255.

### **Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA)**

The school district maintains a flexible spending plan to which eligible employees may contribute pre-tax dollars from their pay to cover any or all of the following areas:

1. Unreimbursed Medical Expenses.
2. Child Care Expenses.

The plan year for flexible benefits runs from July 1 – June 30 thereafter to coincide with the health insurance plan year. Employees hired during that time may participate for the remainder of the plan year. Please contact Payroll prior to enrolling in the Flexible Spending Account if you participate in a Healthcare Saving Plan (HSA).

Please contact Payroll for more information or use the link to the site in the demographics box by clicking on your name in the upper left corner of the extranet.

## **Employee Assistance Program**

The Moorhead Area Public School District Employee Assistance Program is available to all district employees and their immediate household members. The program provides help to employees and family members with personal problems such as marital and family issues, mental or emotional problems, finances, alcoholism, drug abuse, legal problems or other concerns. Please refer to [School Board Policy 426: Employee Assistance](#).

All information shared with the EAP Coordinator is held in a confidential manner and may not be disclosed to anyone without a signed release from the employee. Participation in the Employee Assistance Program is voluntary and there is no charge for assessment interviews. EAP programs can be obtained by telephone at 1-866-326-7194, or hearing impaired the telephone number is 1-866-228-2809, or at <http://www.hpeap.com>

## **Employee Discounts**

Occasionally, local businesses offer discounts to employees of the school district. This information will be posted on the Extranet in the announcement section and on the HAIKU page for Human Resources. For current information on available discounts, please contact Human Resources.

## **Worker's Compensation**

All employees are covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance. Please contact the Work Injury Hotline at **1-855-675-3501** to report any injury. There are strict timelines to fill out the form in order to be covered and failure to report or file the form on a timely basis could result in a rejection of a Workers' Compensation claim.

Workers' Compensation will provide compensation for the following:

- Medical care for your work injury as long as it is reasonable and necessary
- Wage-loss benefit for part of your lost income. Requires a three (3)-calendar-day waiting period
- Compensation for permanent damage to or loss of function of a body part
- Benefits to your spouse or dependents if you die as a result of a work injury
- Vocational rehabilitation services if you cannot return to your pre-injury job or employer

Each contract should be reviewed for specific information regarding compensation during the three (3) day waiting period and subsequent loss of work time due to an injury.

## **X. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Our district is committed to providing a healthy and safe work environment for all employees. Regard for safety of our students and employees is of utmost concern. Safety does not occur by chance. It is the result of careful attention to all school district operations. Providing a safe place to work, a work environment conducive to safe work practices, and effective safety policies are primary concerns for the administration. It is our belief that employees at every level have a

responsibility for maintaining safety and occupational health within the district, and are expected to cooperate fully with the district's health and safety policies. Violations of health and safety policies should be reported to the Executive Director of Human Resources or the Director of Transportation/Buildings and Grounds. Please review the specific Health and Safety Information on the district Web site. Please refer to [School Board Policy 425: Health and Safety Protection](#).

## **Tobacco Free Environment**

Smoking and/or the use of tobacco products are prohibited on all school district property, including district-owned and contracted vehicles.

### Enforcement

Signs will be placed at the entrance to each school district building stating that it is a tobacco free environment. "No Smoking" signs shall be placed in the halls and common areas of each district building.

The success of this tobacco free environment policy will depend on the thoughtfulness, consideration and cooperation of students, staff and citizens. All individuals on school premises share the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing this policy.

Although any individual may report observed violations, school district employees shall be expected to report all observed violations in accordance with the procedures listed below.

### Violations - Staff

Any violation of the tobacco-free environment policy by an employee of the district shall be referred to the appropriate supervisor. One verbal warning shall be issued to the staff member. Further violations shall be considered insubordination and shall be dealt with accordingly, based on applicable collective bargaining agreements, if any, and Minnesota Statutes. Please refer to School Board Policy 573: Tobacco-Free Environment.

## **Drug Free Workplace/Drug-Free School**

The Moorhead Area Public [School District Policy 572: Drug Free Schools](#), prohibits the use, possession, sale, transfer or dispersing of any drug on school property. You need to familiarize yourself with this policy and be in compliance with its requirements.

It is also important that you review, be familiar and comply with [School Board Policy 420: Chemical Use and Abuse Policy](#), [Policy 421: Employee Drug and Alcohol Testing \(DOT\)](#), [Policy 421: Employee Drug and Alcohol Testing \(Other\)](#), [Policy 532: Medication](#), and [Policy 551: Student Discipline](#).

## **Employee Right-to-Know**

The school district has identified hazardous substances, harmful physical agents or infectious agents in the school district and provides training and information for employee protection. Under [School Board Policy 424 Employee Right to Know](#)—Exposure to Hazardous Substances, there is more



information regarding the policy and coverage. Please familiarize yourself with the policy, identify the hazards around your workstation and ensure you have read the Material Safety Data Sheets about those hazards in order to minimize risk to yourself. Please review [Administrative Procedure 424.1, Personal Protective Equipment](#), regarding personal protective equipment and follow up to use this equipment properly.

## **Emergency Closings/Crisis Management**

When conditions prevail at the school which a building administrator considers to be of an emergency nature or hazardous to staff and students, he or she shall notify the superintendent or designee of the circumstances.

Building administrators will follow individual building action plans as outlined in [School Board Policy 710: School District Crisis Management](#), [School Board Policy 711: Severe Weather-Related School Closing](#) and [Administrative Policy 712.1](#). The superintendent or designee may determine an alternate plan of action. Once the plan is determined school district staff will contact the media, other public and non-public schools, and other organizations or individuals in which may be necessary to notify. Twelve-month employees should also refer to Appendix B for additional information regarding snow days and inclement weather.

Emergency or hazardous conditions are defined as those situations that make it impossible to carry on the normal teaching activities in the school and/or create a situation that could be harmful to the safety of the students and staff. Examples include, but are not restricted to, bomb threats, weather and utility failures.

The automated notification system may be used in these situations. Each school within the district has a specific policy. Please locate the policy for your building and familiarize yourself with its provisions.

## **Health and Safety Protection**

The Moorhead Area Public Schools consider health and safety protection an important part of every operation. The district will establish, provide, and maintain safe and healthful working conditions and insist upon safe work methods and practices at all times. Please refer to [School Board Policy 425: Health and Safety Protection](#) and [Policy 531: Communicable Disease Control and Infectious Conditions](#).

All employees and students shall follow safe working practices, obey rules and regulations, and work in a manner that maintains the high safety and health standards developed and sanctioned by the district.

## **Fire Safety**

The school district seeks to provide a safe environment for employees and students. Fire Safety is an essential element of this environment.

Employees should know:

1. Location of fire alarms.
2. Location of fire extinguishers.
3. Evacuation routes.
4. Who to notify in case of fire.

Employees need to remain calm in situations involving danger to self and others, and to take precautions to prevent fires from occurring. In the event of a fire, the most important task is to sound the alarm and clear the building. Employees should not risk their safety in fighting fires. Please review [School Board Policy 710: School District Crisis Management](#).

### **Automated External Defibrillator (AED)**

The Moorhead Area School District maintains AEDs in the Middle School, the High School and the Moorhead Sports Center for use if needed. Please refer to [School Board Policy 713: Automated External Defibrillator \(AED\)](#) and Administrative Procedure [713.1 School District Automated External Defibrillator \(AED\)](#) Procedure for use of the device.

### **Weapons**

All district employees are expected to follow all provisions of School Board Policy 576: Moorhead Area Public Schools Weapons Policy. It is essential that a safe and civil environment be maintained in order to meet the mission of the district.

### **Wellness**

Although [School Board Policy 536: Wellness](#) was developed primarily for students, the school district values the health and well being of each staff member. The school staff should act as role models to students for good nutrition and physical activity. The Moorhead Area Public Schools encourages the involvement of administrators, School Board, students, parents, teachers, food and nutrition personnel and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring and reviewing school district nutrition and physical activity policies.

## **XI. TRANSPORTATION**

### **Driving for Work Related Purposes**

If you use your vehicle for work related purposes you are expected to:

1. Drive defensively;
2. Wear your seat belt;
3. Allow plenty of time;
4. Make accommodations for bad weather; and,

5. Carry appropriate equipment in your vehicle to ensure your safety (i.e., in the winter: blankets, boots, shovel, etc.).

### **Seat Belt Use**

All employees are required to use seat belts when operating or riding in a motor vehicle on school district business.

### **Vehicle Insurance**

All employees who use a vehicle for work related purposes must carry insurance on their vehicle as required by the State of Minnesota. You may not use your vehicle for work related purposes if your vehicle is not covered by the required insurance. You may be required to show proof of current vehicle insurance.

### **Driver's License**

All employees who use a vehicle for work related purposes are required to have a valid driver's license.

### **Parking**

Please contact your supervisor or site/department for the specific policy on parking issues.

Appendix C is a map of all district building sites.

### **Mileage**

Employees who use their own car for district business will be reimbursed at the rate determined by the school district. Employees will be reimbursed for miles driven in excess of their normal commute to their principle place of work. Please refer to [School Board Policy 722: School District Owned Vehicle Reservation](#).

## **XII. RESIGNATION FROM EMPLOYMENT**

### **Notice of Resignation**

The school district requires notice if you are resigning from employment. The district requests as much advance notice as possible in order to have some time to advertise and hire your replacement. This notice should be in writing utilizing a personal letter or the district form for resignation, which is available under Human Resources~Employee Forms on the district web site.

Failure to give notice may jeopardize future employment with the district.

## **Return of District Property**

At the time of resignation or retirement, and prior to leaving the district you will need to return all district property to your supervisor. Keys, key fobs, identification badges and all other district property is to be given to your supervisor, who will ensure that all property is returned to the department where it originated.

## **COBRA Benefits**

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

If you are covered by the district’s group health insurance plan and lose your coverage because of a reduction in your hours of employment or the termination of your employment, whether voluntary or involuntary (except for reasons of gross misconduct on your part), you have the right to choose continuation coverage. If you choose continuation coverage, you will be provided with coverage that is identical to the coverage being provided to similarly situated employees (or their family members). If you do not choose continuation coverage, your group health insurance coverage under the plan will end.

COBRA requires that you be offered the opportunity to maintain continuation coverage for three years unless you lost group health coverage because of a termination of employment or reduction in hours. In that case, the required continuation coverage period is 18 months, unless the Social Security Administration determines that you (either employee or dependent) were disabled at the time termination or reduction of hours, and you inform Moorhead Area Public Schools before the end of the 18-month period, in which case your coverage may be extended up to 29 months. Minnesota Statute requires that a unit of local government must allow a former employee and the employee’s dependents to continue to participate indefinitely in the employer-sponsored hospital, medical, and dental insurance group that the employee participated in immediately before retirement, under certain conditions. Please refer to [MN Statute 471.61](#) for more information.

If you are covered by the district’s group health insurance plan, your spouse will have the right to choose continuation coverage for himself/herself if group health coverage is lost for any of the following four reasons:

1. Your death;
2. Termination of your employment with the district (for reasons other than gross misconduct) or reduction in your hours of employment with the district;
3. Divorce or legal separation from you; or
4. You become entitled to Medicare.

Your dependent children have the right to choose continuation coverage if group health coverage is lost for any of the following five reasons:

1. Your death;
2. Your termination from employment with the district (for reasons other than gross misconduct), or reduction in your hours of employment with the district;

3. Your divorce or legal separation;
4. A parent becomes entitled to Medicare; or
5. The dependent ceases to be a “dependent child” under the terms of the group insurance plan.

You or your family member has the responsibility to inform the Plan Administrator of a divorce, legal separation, or a child losing dependent status under the Plan, within sixty days of the date of the event or the date on which coverage would end under the group Plan because of the event, whichever is later. The district will notify the Plan Administrator of your death, termination of employment, reduction in hours of employment or Medicare entitlement.

You have sixty days from the later of

1. The date you ordinarily would have lost coverage because of one of the events described above, or
2. The date of the notice of your right to elect continuation coverage to inform the Plan Administrator that you want continuation coverage.

Additional qualifying events can occur while the continuation coverage is in effect. Such events may extend an 18-month continuation coverage period to 36 months, but in no event will coverage extend beyond 36 months after the initial qualifying event. Under certain circumstances, your continuing coverage may be cut short.

If you or your family member elects to continue coverage, you must pay the district the cost of continued coverage monthly. Once your continuation coverage terminates for any reason, it cannot be reinstated.

1. The federal COBRA law applies to employers with 20 or more employees. Provisions for continuation of health benefits under Minnesota law have been amended to substantially follow the federal COBRA law, without the 36-month limitation for surviving descendants. The Minnesota Act applies to all group insurance policies. COBRA ensures that employees and beneficiaries do not lose health insurance coverage because of death, termination, reduction of employment hours, divorce or separation, retirement, or other qualifying event. Employees are allowed to continue on the group health plan at their own expense after a qualifying event.
2. The employee has up to 60 days in which to decide whether to take advantage of this continuation coverage. No evidence of insurability is needed for such continued coverage.
3. Upon learning of a qualifying event, the district should provide the employee with a COBRA notice and election form.
4. Generally, former employees may elect to maintain their COBRA coverage for up to 18 months after their termination or reduction in hours while dependents generally may elect to maintain their coverage for 36 months after the date of an employee’s death, divorce, or legal separation, the employee’s entitlement to Medicare, or a dependent’s loss of dependent status.
5. Former employees or dependents that elect to continue coverage under COBRA must pay the entire premium for the continuation coverage.
6. In order to be certain that the district is complying with its obligation under COBRA it is important that the administrators/supervisors notify the Human Resources Department of any qualifying events to an employee in their department including an employee’s termination whether voluntary or involuntary, an employee’s reduction in hours, the

employee's death, divorce, legal separation, the employee's entitlement to Medicare or a dependent's loss of independent status.

Employees who are laid off and who carry district health insurance may have a portion of their health insurance paid for a limited amount of time if they meet eligibility requirements.

If you have any questions regarding continuation of benefits under COBRA, please contact Human Resources.

### **Exit Interviews**

The Human Resource Department would like to schedule an exit interview when you leave employment. This interview gives you the opportunity to tell us how we can improve our working conditions, policies, supervisory techniques and other areas. It also gives you the opportunity to tell us what is good about the district. Exit interviews will be provided electronically, however paper copies will be available upon request. If you would prefer to make an appointment to discuss your experience as an employee of Moorhead Area Public Schools, please contact the Human Resources department.

## District Directory

## Appendix A

<b>Ellen Hopkins Elementary School</b> -- 2020 11th Street South Principal: Ryan LaDage      Asst. Principal: Diana Johnson	284-4300
<b>Robert Asp Elementary School</b> -- 910 11th Street North Principal: Chris Triggs      Asst. Principal: Lynnelle Dirksen	284-6300
<b>S.G. Reinertsen Elementary School</b> --1201 40th Avenue South Principal: Carla Smith      Asst. Principal: Josh St. Louis	284-5300
<b>Probstfield Elementary</b> -- 2410 14th Street South Principal: Robin Grooters      Asst. Principal: Nancy Wilson	284-3800
<b>Horizon Middle School</b> -- 3601 12th Avenue South Principal: Dr. Jeremy Larson      Asst. Principal: Jennifer Stiles	284-7300
<b>Moorhead High School</b> -- 2300 4th Avenue South Principal: Dave Lawrence      Asst. Principals: Josh Haag and Angela Doll	284-2300
<b>Red River Area Learning Center</b> -- 2777 34th St S, Moorhead Director of Alternative Services: Deb Pender	284-2200
<b>Detention Center</b> -- 915 9th Avenue North Director of Alternative Services: Deb Pender	284-5150
<b>Adult Basic Education</b> -- 2777 34th St S, Moorhead Director of ABE: Tammy Schatz	284-3451
<b>Community Education</b> -- 1587 30th Ave S Director of Community Education: Lauri Winterfeldt	284-3330
<b>Early Intervention Services</b> -- 2410 14th Street South Ashley Nelson      Principal: Robin Grooters	284-3800
Superintendent, Dr. Lynne Kovash	284-3330
Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations, Brandon Lunak	284-3375
Assistant Superintendent of Learning and Accountability, Missy Eidsness	284-3345
Executive Director of Human Resources, Kristin Dehmer	284-3355
Executive Director of Learner Support Services, Duane Borgeson	284-3710
Executive Director of Information Systems and Instructional Support, Dan Markert	284-3345



